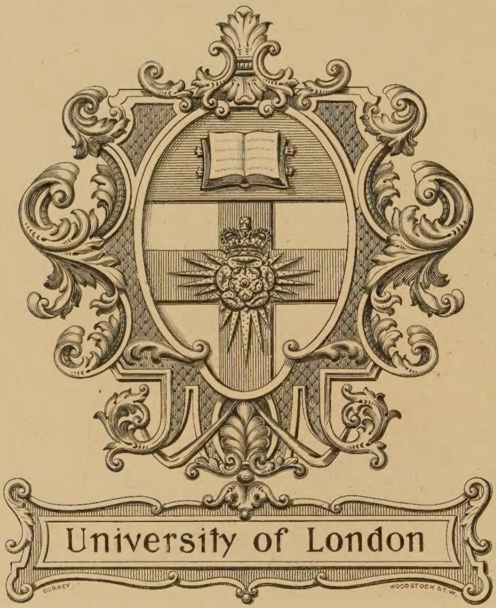
THIS BOOK
MUST NOT BE REMOVED
FROM THE LIBRARY

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON LIBRARY

REFERENCE ONLY

PARL. PAPERS
FOR REFERENCE ONLY.



620123

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2026

https://archive.org/details/parliamentary-debates_march-26-may-6-1881_260

HANSARD'S

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES,

THIRD SERIES:

COMMENCING WITH THE ACCESSION OF

WILLIAM IV.

44° VICTORIÆ, 1881.

VOL. CCLX.

COMPRISING THE PERIOD FROM

THE TWENTY-SIXTH DAY OF MARCH 1881,

TO

THE SIXTH DAY OF MAY 1881.

Fourth Volume of the Session.

LONDON:
PUBLISHED BY CORNELIUS BUCK,
AT THE OFFICE FOR "HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES."
22, PATERNOSTER ROW. [E.C.]

1881.

8995

BIBL. LONDIN. UNIV.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TO

VOLUME CCLX.

THIRD SERIES.

LORDS, SATURDAY, MARCH 26.

Page

Consolidated Fund (No. 2) Bill—
Brought from the Commons; read 1^a; to be read 2^a on *Monday* next; and Standing Order No. XXXV. to be considered in order to its being dispensed with,—(*The Earl Granville*) 1

LORDS, MONDAY, MARCH 28.

LANDLORD AND TENANT (IRELAND) ACT, 1870, COMMISSION (THE EARL OF BESSBOROUGH'S)—THE EVIDENCE—Question, Observations, Lord Monteagle; Reply, Earl Spencer; Observations, Lord Dunsany .. 2

Consolidated Fund (No. 2) Bill—
Read 2^a (according to order); Committee *negatived:* Then Standing Order No. XXXV. *considered* (according to order), and *dispensed with:* Bill read 3^a, and *passed* .. 4

COMMONS, MONDAY, MARCH 28.

QUESTIONS.

THE PARKS (METROPOLIS)—ST. JAMES'S PARK—Question, Mr. W. H. James; Answer, Mr. Shaw Lefevre 5
POOR LAW (ENGLAND)—THE OLDHAM GUARDIANS—CATHOLIC CHILDREN—Question, Mr. Bellingham; Answer, Mr. Dodson 5
NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—MODEL SCHOOLS—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 5
THE CIVIL SERVICE—THE "PLAYFAIR SCHEME"—Question, Mr. John Hollond; Answer, Lord Frederick Cavendish 6
THE BERLIN CONFERENCE — THE FRENCH AT TUNIS — Questions, Mr. Rylands, Mr. Montague Guest; Answers, Sir Charles W. Dilke .. 8
ARMY DISCIPLINE AND REGULATION (ANNUAL) BILL—SUMMARY PUNISHMENTS—THE 4TH CLAUSE—Question, Sir R. Assheton Cross; Answer, Mr. Childers 9

[*March* 28.] Page

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—PRISONERS IN KILMAINHAM GAOL—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 9

SOUTH AFRICA—BASUTOLAND (NEGOTIATIONS)—Questions, Mr. W. H. James, Sir Wilfrid Lawson; Answers, Mr. Grant Duff 10

AFGHANISTAN — CANDAHAR (POLITICAL AFFAIRS)—Questions, Sir Henry Tyler, Mr. Onslow; Answers, The Marquess of Hartington .. 10

NAVY—QUARTERMASTERS OF ROYAL MARINES—Question, Mr. Gorst; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 11

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—LEGAL PROCEEDINGS OF LANDLORDS—Question, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster.. .. 11

ARMY RE-ORGANIZATION — DISTINGUISHED SERVICE PENSIONS — Question, Mr. O'Shea; Answer, Mr. Childers 12

LANDLORD AND TENANT (IRELAND) ACT, 1870, COMMISSION (THE EARL OF BESSBOROUGH'S)—THE EVIDENCE—Questions, Sir Hervey Bruce, Mr. Plunket; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster 12

MERCANTILE MARINE — TRAWLER'S LIGHTS COMMITTEE — Question, Mr. Heneage; Answer, Mr. Evelyn Ashley 13

DOMINION OF CANADA—IRISH EMIGRATION—Question, Mr. Anderson; Answer, Mr. Grant Duff 13

ARMY RE-ORGANIZATION (AUXILIARY FORCES)—PROMOTION IN THE MILITIA —Question, Mr. Dalrymple; Answer, Mr. Childers 14

CONFERENCE AT BERLIN—GREEK INHABITANTS OF CEDED TURKISH PROVINCES —Questions, Lord Randolph Churchill; Answers, Sir Charles W. Dilke 15

CUSTOMS RE-ORGANIZATION—CUSTOMS CLERKS (LIVERPOOL)—Question, Lord Claud Hamilton; Answer, Lord Frederick Cavendish 16

POST OFFICE — INDICATORS TO PILLAR LETTER-BOXES—Question, Mr. Bryce; Answer, Mr. Fawcett 17

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL (NEGOTIATIONS)—Questions, Sir Stafford Northcote, Mr. Gorst, Sir John Lubbock; Answers, Mr. Grant Duff .. 17

STREET TRAFFIC (METROPOLIS)—THE VESTRIES—Question, Mr. Carington; Answer, Sir William Harcourt 18

TURKEY AND GREECE—THE FRONTIER QUESTION—Question, Mr. Coope; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 19

HIGHWAYS—MAINTENANCE OF MAIN ROADS—Question, Mr. Heneage; Answer, Mr. E. W. Harcourt 19

MOTION.

ORDERS OF THE DAY—

Ordered, That the Orders of the Day, subsequent to the Order for the Second Reading of the Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual) Bill, be postponed until after the Notices of Motions relating to the Maintenance of Main Roads and Fishing Vessels' Lights,—(*Mr. Gladstone*) 19

ORDER OF THE DAY.

Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual) Bill [Bill 123]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Osborne Morgan*) 20

After debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Thursday*.

MOTION.

HIGHWAYS—MAINTENANCE OF MAIN ROADS—RESOLUTION—

Moved, "That, in the opinion of this House, it is expedient so to amend 'The Highway Act, 1878,' that part of the maintenance of main roads may be defrayed from other sources than county rates,"—(*Mr. Harcourt*) 42

Amendment proposed,

To leave out all the words after the word "expedient," in order to add the words "to amend 'The Highway Act, 1878,' and especially those portions of the said Act which relate to main roads,"—(*Mr. J. W. Pease,*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"— After long debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 145, Noes 159; Majority 14.—(Div. List, No. 170.)
Words *added:*—Main Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to.*

ORDER OF THE DAY.

Leases Bill [Bill 108]—
Bill *considered* in Committee 85
After short time spent therein, Bill *reported;* as amended, to be considered *To-morrow.*

Agricultural Holdings Act (1875) Amendment Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Staveley Hill, Mr. Monckton*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 127] 88

LORDS, TUESDAY, MARCH 29.

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL (MILITARY OPERATIONS)—SURRENDER OF POTCHEFSTROOM — Questions, Viscount Cranbrook, Earl Cairns; Answers, The Earl of Kimberley 89

CANDAHAR—Question, Lord Waveney; Answer, Viscount Enfield .. 90

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS—FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE—Question, The Marquess of Lansdowne; Answer, Earl Spencer .. 90

Local Courts of Bankruptcy (Ireland) Bill [H.L.]—*Presented* (*The Lord O'Hagan*); read 1ª (No. 56) 95

COMMONS, TUESDAY, MARCH 29.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

Thames River Bill (*by Order*)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time," — (*Mr. Evelyn Ashley*) 96

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "the character and objects of this Bill are such as to constitute it a measure of public policy, which ought not to be dealt with by any Private Bill,"—(*Mr. Ritchie,*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After long debate, Amendment and Motion, by leave, *withdrawn:*—Bill *withdrawn.*

[*March* 29.] *Page*

QUESTIONS.

CONTROVERTED ELECTIONS—KNARESBOROUGH—REPORT OF THE ROYAL COMMISSIONERS—Question, Mr. Jackson; Answer, Mr. Gladstone .. 147
PUBLIC HEALTH—VACCINATION—COW-POX—Question, Mr. P. A. Taylor; Answer, Mr. Hibbert 148
PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—PRISONERS IN KILMAINHAM GAOL—Question, Mr. Justin M'Carthy; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 149
EVICTIONS (IRELAND)—MOHILL, CO. LEITRIM—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 150
EVICTIONS (IRELAND)—Question, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 150
EVICTIONS (IRELAND)—PROPORTION OF RENTS TO VALUATIONS—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 151
STATE OF IRELAND—LAND LEAGUE MEETINGS—GOVERNMENT REPORTERS—Questions, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster, Sir William Harcourt 151
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (ENGLAND)—SCHOOL ACCOMMODATION—Question, Mr. Lyulph Stanley; Answer, Mr. Mundella 152
INLAND REVENUE — BEER LICENCES (IRELAND) — Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 153
HALL-MARKING—REPORT OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE, 1879—Question, Mr. C. M'Laren; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain 154
THE LORD CHAMBERLAIN'S DEPARTMENT—FIRES IN THEATRES—Questions, Mr. Macfarlane; Answers, Sir William Harcourt 154
LAW AND POLICE—RIOT AT BASINGSTOKE—Question, Mr. M'Coan; Answer, Sir William Harcourt 155
MERCANTILE MARINE—BRISTOL CHANNEL PILOTS—Question, Sir Philip Miles; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain 155
SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL (NEGOTIATIONS)—RELIGIOUS TOLERATION—Question, Mr. O'Donnell; Answer, Mr. Grant Duff 156
ARMY RE-ORGANIZATION — THE 87TH AND 88TH REGIMENTS—Question, Major Nolan; Answer, Mr. Childers 156
SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL (MILITARY OPERATIONS)—SURRENDER OF POTCHEFSTROOM—Questions, Sir John Hay, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answers, Mr. Childers 156
CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS—FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE—Questions, Mr. Stanley Leighton, Sir Walter B. Barttelot; Answers, Mr. Mundella 157
ENTAIL (SCOTLAND) BILL—Question, Mr. Warton; Answer, Mr. Baxter .. 158

MOTIONS.

COINAGE (DECIMAL SYSTEM)—RESOLUTION—

Moved, "That, in the opinion of this House, the introduction of a Decimal System of Coinage, Weights, and Measures ought not to be longer delayed,"—(*Mr. Ashton Dilke*) 158

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "a Select Committee be appointed to inquire whether any basis can be found for a decimal system that would not so seriously disturb existing conditions as to make it practically inexpedient to change,"—(*Mr. Anderson*,)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Question put, and *negatived.*

Question put, "That those words be there added:"—The House *divided*; Ayes 28, Noes 108; Majority 80.—(Div. List, No. 171.)

PATRONAGE OF BENEFICES (CHURCH OF ENGLAND)—RESOLUTION—

Moved, "That, in the opinion of this House, the simoniacal evasions of the law, and other scandals connected with the exercise and disposal of private patronage in the Church of England, are such as to call for remedial measures of the most stringent and radical character,"—(*Mr. Edward Leatham*) 178

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "House" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "the Reports of the Select Committee of the House of Lords on Church Patronage, and of the Royal Commission on the sale, exchange, and resignation of Ecclesiastical Benefices, disclose evils connected with the exercise and disposal of Church Patronage which call for legislation at the earliest possible moment,"—(*Mr. Stuart Wortley*,)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Amendment and Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Cheshire Salt Districts Compensation Bill—

Viscount EMLYN, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. LYULPH STANLEY, and Sir HENRY TYLER nominated Members of the Committee:—And Three to be added by the Committee of Selection,—(*Lord Richard Grosvenor*.)

COMMONS, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 30.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Metropolitan Open Spaces Act (1877) Amendment Bill—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. W. H. James*) 217

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months,"—(*Earl Percy*.)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Main Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Tuesday* 26th April.

Infectious Diseases Notification (Ireland) Bill [Bill 40]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Gray*) .. 227

After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Monday* 25th April.

Elections (Closing of Public Houses) Bill [Bill 58]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Carbutt*) .. 231

Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Litton*:)—After debate, Question put, and *agreed to*:—Debate *adjourned* till *Monday* 25th April.

Municipal Corporation Act (1859) Amendment Bill [Bill 25]

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. William Fowler*) 248

Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Friday*.

LORDS, THURSDAY, MARCH 31.

Local Courts of Bankruptcy (Ireland) Bill (No. 56)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a,"—(*The Lord O'Hagan*) .. 249

Motion *agreed to*:—Bill read 2^a accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House *To-morrow*.

South Africa—The Transvaal (Negotiations)—The Peace Arrangements—Observations, Earl Cairns; Reply, The Earl of Kimberley:—Debate thereon 249

COMMONS, THURSDAY, MARCH 31.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

Guildford, Kingston, and London Railway Bill (*by Order*)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Cubitt*) .. 319

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words, "upon this day six months,"—(*Sir Henry Peek*:)—Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 275, Noes 49; Majority 226.—(Div. List, No. 172.)

Main Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed.*

London City (*Parochial Charities*) *Bill* (*by Order*)—

Moved, "That the Order for the Second Reading of the Bill upon Wednesday next be discharged, and that the Bill be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills,"—(*Mr. Bryce*) 341

Motion *agreed to*:—Leave given to the Examiners to sit and proceed forthwith.

QUESTIONS.

Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, 1881—Arrests—Kilmainham Gaol—Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 343

Post Office Act, 1837—Detention and Opening of Letters—Question, Mr. A. M. Sullivan; Answer, Mr. Fawcett 343

Criminal Law—Arrest of the Editor of the "Freiheit"—Questions, Mr. Gregory, Lord Randolph Churchill, Mr. J. Cowen; Answers, Sir William Harcourt 344

South Africa—The Transvaal (Political Affairs)—Question, Mr. Wodehouse; Answer, Mr. Grant Duff 347

The Suez Canal Company—The British Shares—Questions, Mr. Labouchere, Lord George Hamilton; Answers, Mr. Gladstone .. 348

Railways (India)—Question, Sir George Campbell; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 349

Brazil—Claims of a British Subject—Question, Mr. Anderson; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 350

Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, 1881—Joseph B. Walsh—Question, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland 350

The Customs Service—Out-door Officers—Competitive Examination—Question, Mr. A. M. Sullivan; Answer, Lord Frederick Cavendish .. 351

The West Indies—The Currency—Question, Mr. Parker; Answer, Mr. Grant Duff 352

Parliamentary Elections Act, 1868—The Reported Boroughs—Questions, Sir R. Assheton Cross, Colonel Taylor; Answers, The Attorney General 352

Parliamentary Oath (Mr. Bradlaugh)—Question, Mr. Gibson; Answer, The Attorney General 353

Poor Law—Workhouse Inmates—Religious Attendance—Question, Mr. Summers; Answer, Mr. Dodson 353

South Africa—The Transvaal—The 94th Regiment—Protection of Native Interests — Slavery — Questions, Sir John Hay, Mr. Grantham, Mr. R. N. Fowler, Sir Wilfrid Lawson, Mr. Macfarlane; Answers, Mr. Grant Duff 354

State of Ireland—Alleged Outrage by Soldiers—Co. Cork—Questions, Mr. Parnell, Mr. A. M. Sullivan, Mr. O'Donnell; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster 356

Education Department—Board and Voluntary Schools—Question, Mr. Lyulph Stanley; Answer, Mr. Mundella 357

Afghanistan—Political Affairs — Question, Mr. O'Donnell; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 358

South Africa—Basutoland (Peace Negotiations)—Questions, Sir Wilfrid Lawson, Sir George Campbell; Answers, Mr. Grant Duff .. 359

South Africa—The Transvaal (Political Affairs)—Land Ownership —Question, Mr. Cropper; Answer, Mr. Grant Duff 359

State of Ireland—Riot at Midleton, Co. Cork—Question, Earl Percy; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 360

The British Museum—Electric Lighting—Question, Mr. Albert Grey; Answer, Mr. Spencer Walpole 360

Licensing Acts—Sunday Services in Music Halls—Question, Mr. P. Edwards; Answer, Sir William Harcourt 361

State of Ireland—Evictions, Mohill Union, Co. Leitrim—Questions, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Parnell; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster .. 362

Coolies (Indian) — The Hurricane in La Reunion — Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke.. 362

Public Health (Metropolis) (Law Costs)—Hampstead Hospital Case —Question, Mr. Firth; Answer, Mr. Dodson 363

India—The Nagas Territory—Question, Mr. O'Donnell; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 364

Public Health — Cholera at Chicago — Butterine — Question, Mr. O'Shaughnessy; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain 364

State of Ireland—Convictions for "Boycotting"—Question, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland .. 365

Army—Crime and Punishment, 1879—Question, Mr. Caine; Answer, Mr. Osborne Morgan 365

South Africa—The Transvaal (Military Operations)—Surrender of Potchefstroom—Questions, Sir Walter B. Barttelot, Lord Randolph Churchill, Mr. Parnell, Mr. A. M. Sullivan; Answers, Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Grant Duff 366

Parliament—Public Business—Scotch Bills—Question, Mr. Ramsay; Answer, The Lord Advocate 368

Army Re-organization—Infantry and Cavalry Majors—Question, Mr. Montague Guest; Answer, Mr. Childers 368

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual) Bill [Bill 123]—

Order for Committee read:—*Moved,* "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair,"—(*Mr. Secretary Childers*) 369

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "it is undesirable that the punishment to be awarded by Courts Martial for grave offences committed by soldiers on active service should be regulated by the Secretary of State, and thereby withdrawn from the direct control of Parliament,"—(*Viscount Emlyn,*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Army Discipline and Regulation (*Annual*) *Bill*—continued.

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *agreed to.*

Bill *considered* in Committee 380

After some time spent therein, Bill *reported;* as amended, to be *considered* upon *Monday* next.

Teinds (Scotland) Bill [Bill 118]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*The Lord Advocate*) 417

Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Dick-Peddie* :)—After short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question put, and *agreed to* :—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Thursday* next.

Alkali, &c. Works Regulation Bill [*Lords*] [Bill 119]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Dodson*) .. 427

Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. R. N. Fowler* :)—After short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*

Original Question put, and *agreed to* :—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Monday* 25th April.

Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention Bill [*Lords*]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Dodson*) .. 430

Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Chaplin* :)—After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 36, Noes 78; Majority 38.—(Div. List, No. 174.)

Original Question again proposed:—*Moved,* "That this House do now adjourn,"—(*Mr. Arthur O'Connor* :)—After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 29, Noes 69; Majority 40.—(Div. List, No. 176.)

Original Question again proposed:—*Moved,* "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Long* :)—After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to* :—Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

Agricultural Holdings Act (1875) Amendment Bill [Bill 127]

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Staveley Hill*) 442

Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Brand* :)—After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 54, Noe 1; Majority 53.—(Div. List, No. 177.)

Bridges (South Wales) Bill—*Ordered* (*Viscount Emlyn, Sir Hardinge Giffard, Mr. Hussey Vivian, Mr. Henry Allen, Mr. Pugh*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 129] 444

LORDS, FRIDAY, APRIL 1.

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL (MILITARY OPERATIONS)—WITHDRAWAL OF TROOPS—Questions, Lord Lamington, The Marquess of Salisbury; Answers, The Earl of Kimberley 445

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL — SLAVERY—Observations, Questions, Lord Brabourne, The Marquess of Salisbury; Answers, The Earl of Kimberley 446

Local Courts of Bankruptcy (Ireland) Bill (No. 56)—

House in Committee (according to Order) 450

Bill *reported,* without Amendment; and to be read 3ª on *Monday* next.

PRIVATE BILLS—

Ordered, That no Private Bill brought from the House of Commons shall be read a second time after *Tuesday* the 14*th day of June* next: [and other Orders] .. 451

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

COMMONS, FRIDAY, APRIL 1.

Page

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

London and South Western Railway Bill (by Order)—
Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. W. B. Beach*) 452
After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed.*

QUESTIONS.

Poor Law (Ireland)—Out-door Relief to Wives of Prisoners—Questions, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster 456
Ordnance Survey—The Neighbourhood of Hertford—Question, Mr. Abel Smith; Answer, Mr. Shaw Lefevre 457
South Africa—Sekukuni—Question, Mr. Summers; Answer, Mr. Grant Duff 457
Afghanistan (Political Affairs)—Yakoub Khan and Abdurrahman—Question, Mr. O'Donnell; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington .. 457
Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, 1881—Kilmainham Gaol—The Prison Fare—Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 458
Mutiny Acts—Corporal Punishment—Questions, Sir John Hay, Captain Price, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answers, The Attorney General .. 458
Africa, West—The Gold Coast—Question, Mr. Summers; Answer, Mr. Grant Duff 460
India (Finance, &c.)—The Budget Statement—Question, Mr. E. Stanhope; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 460
South Africa—The Transvaal (Military Operations)—Questions, Sir John Kennaway, Mr. R. H. Paget, Lord John Manners; Answers, Mr. Childers 460
South Africa—The Transvaal (Statistics)—Natives and Europeans—Question, Mr. W. H. James; Answer, Mr. Grant Duff 462
Army—Military Operations in the Transvaal—Despatch of Forces—Question, Colonel North; Answer, Mr. Childers 462
Criminal Law (Ireland)—Case of Joseph B. Walsh—Questions, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. A. M. Sullivan; Answers, The Attorney General for Ireland 462
The Census, 1881—The Householders' Schedules—Question, Sir Hardinge Giffard; Answer, Mr. Dodson 463
Criminal Law—Arrest of the Editor of the "Freiheit"—Question, Lord Randolph Churchill; Answer, The Attorney General .. 464
Controverted Elections—The Parliamentary Elections Act, 1868, and the Parliamentary Elections and Corrupt Practices Acts, 1879 and 1880—The Reported Boroughs—Questions, Mr. Morgan Lloyd, Sir R. Assheton Cross, Mr. Onslow; Answers, The Attorney General 465
State of Ireland—Speech of Mr. Dillon at Thurles—Question, Mr. Warton; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 467
Army—Half-Pay Captains—Question, Sir Walter B. Barttelot; Answer, Mr. Childers 467
Central Asia—Advance of the Russians—Questions, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett, Mr. Montague Guest, Mr. Alderman Lawrence; Answers, Mr. Speaker, The Marquess of Hartington 468
South Africa—The Transvaal (Military Operations)—Blockade of Pretoria—Question, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach; Answer, Mr. Grant Duff 471

[*April* 1.] *Page*

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL—POLICY OF THE GOVERNMENT—Questions, Sir Stafford Northcote, Lord Randolph Churchill, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach; Answers, Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Childers 472

STATE OF IRELAND—EVICTIONS IN THE WEST OF IRELAND—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 473

STATE OF IRELAND — THE LAND LEAGUE MEETING AT MIDLETON—Question, Mr. A. J. Balfour; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 473

POOR RATE (METROPOLIS)—GRAY'S INN—Question, Mr. Gray; Answer, Mr. Dodson 474

AFGHANISTAN — GENERAL SIR FREDERICK ROBERTS' MARCH — VOTE OF THANKS—Questions, Mr. Onslow; Answers, The Marquess of Hartington 474

FRANCE—THE FORTHCOMING MONETARY CONFERENCE IN PARIS—Question, Mr. Puleston; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 475

MOTION.

PARLIAMENTARY OATH (MR. BRADLAUGH)—NEW WRIT FOR THE BOROUGH OF NORTHAMPTON—

Moved for, "New Writ for Northampton Borough,—*in the room of* Charles Bradlaugh, esquire, who, since his election, has vacated his seat in Parliament by sitting and voting in this House without having taken and subscribed the oath prescribed by Law,"—(*Mr. Labouchere*) 475

After debate, Motion *agreed to.*

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—Question, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 494

ORDER OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—Order for Committee read; Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

BUTTER (SPURIOUS COMPOUNDS)—RESOLUTION—Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "it is desirable that steps be taken by the Legislature to ensure that of the spurious compounds resembling butter, which are imported from America, those only which are harmless shall be permitted to be exposed for sale under distinctive names, and that the importation and sale of those which are hurtful or dangerous to health shall be prohibited altogether,"—(*Sir Herbert Maxwell,*)—instead thereof .. 494

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 75, Noes 59; Majority 16.—(Div. List, No. 177.)

Main Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

TECHNICAL EDUCATION—Observations, Mr. Anderson; Reply, Mr. Mundella:—Short debate thereon 525

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Hibbert, Mr. Dodson*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 130] 548

LORDS, MONDAY, APRIL 4.

TURKEY—SIR A. H. LAYARD, LATE H.M. AMBASSADOR AT THE PORTE—Postponement of Notice, Lord Stratheden and Campbell .. 549

COMMONS, MONDAY, APRIL 4.

Page

CONTROVERTED ELECTIONS—WIGAN ELECTION—Judges' Certificate and Report received 550

QUESTIONS.

CONSTABULARY BARRACKS (IRELAND)—Question, Mr. Callan; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 551

AFGHANISTAN—CANDAHAR—WITHDRAWAL OF THE BRITISH TROOPS—Question, Mr. Onslow; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington .. 551

NOTICES AND EJECTMENTS (IRELAND)—Question, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 552

TURKEY AND GREECE—THE FRONTIER QUESTION—Question, Mr. Bourke; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 554

RUSSIA—CENTRAL ASIA—RECALL OF GENERAL SKOBELEFF—Question, Mr. Bourke; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 554

THE SUEZ CANAL COMPANY—THE BRITISH SHARES—Question, Mr. Monk; Answer, Lord Frederick Cavendish 554

CRIMINAL LAW—ARREST OF THE EDITOR OF THE "FREIHEIT"—Question, Mr. Bellingham; Answer, Sir William Harcourt 555

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—MILITIA QUARTERMASTERS—Questions, Major-General Feilden, Mr. Gourley; Answers, Mr. Childers 556

TURKEY AND GREECE—THE FRONTIER QUESTION—Question, Mr. M'Coan; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 557

THE JUDICATURE ACTS—THE AMENDED RULES AND ORDERS—Question, Mr. Whitley; Answer, The Attorney General 558

TRADE AND MANUFACTURES—EXPORTS AND IMPORTS—Question, Mr. Mac Iver; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain 558

INDIA—RAILWAY TO SIBI—Question, Mr. Macfarlane; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 559

STATE OF IRELAND—OUTRAGE ON ANIMALS—Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 559

PRISONS (ENGLAND) ACT—MAIDSTONE PRISON—Question, Mr. Akers-Douglas; Answer, Sir William Harcourt 559

ELECTIONS IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES—Question, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke.. 560

CENTRAL ASIA—ENGLISH INTRIGUES AT MERV—Questions, Mr. Onslow; Answers, Sir Charles W. Dilke 560

CENTRAL ASIA—THE PAPERS—Question, Lord George Hamilton; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 561

ARMY DISCIPLINE—ABOLITION OF FLOGGING—Question, General Sir George Balfour; Answer, Mr. Childers 562

AFGHANISTAN (MILITARY OPERATIONS)—VOTE OF THANKS TO SIR FREDERICK ROBERTS AND THE ARMY—Question, Mr. Onslow; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 562

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL REPUBLIC—REPAYMENT OF ADVANCES—Question, Mr. Long; Answer, Mr. Grant Duff 563

CRIMINAL LAW (IRELAND)—CASE OF JOSEPH B. WALSH—Questions, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Parnell; Answers, The Attorney General for Ireland 563

POST OFFICE—DETENTION AND OPENING OF SUSPICIOUS LETTERS—Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. Fawcett 564

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—DISTINCTIONS TO MILITIA OFFICERS—Question, Mr. A. Moore; Answer, Mr. Childers 565

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL (MILITARY OPERATIONS)—BLOCKADE OF PRETORIA—Observation, Mr. Childers 565

LANDLORD AND TENANT (IRELAND) ACT, 1870, COMMISSION (THE EARL OF BESSBOROUGH'S)—THE EVIDENCE—Questions, Sir Hervey Bruce; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster 565

TRADE AND MANUFACTURE—THE WOOLLEN TRADE—Question, Mr. Mac Iver; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain 566

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—LEITRIM ASSIZES—THE QUEEN *v.* CLANCEY —Question, Mr. Justin M'Carthy; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland 567

MOTION.

ORDERS OF THE DAY—

Ordered, That the Orders of the Day subsequent to the Order for the Consideration, as amended, of the Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual) Bill, be deferred until after the Notice of Motion for leave to introduce the Bankruptcy Bill. — (*Mr. Gladstone.*)

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

WAYS AND MEANS—*considered* in Committee—FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER—

(In the Committee.)

Moved, "(1.) That, towards raising the Supply granted to Her Majesty, the Duties of Customs now charged on Tea shall continue to be levied and charged on and after the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-one, until the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-two, on importation into Great Britain or Ireland (that is say): on

		£	*s.*	*d.*
Tea	the lb.	0	0	6,"—

(*Mr. Gladstone*) 601

After long debate, Resolution *agreed to.*

Other Resolutions *moved*, and, after debate, *agreed to.*

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow;* Committee to sit again upon *Wednesday.*

Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual) Bill [Bill 123]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now taken into Consideration,"—(*Mr. Secretary Childers*) 650

Motion *agreed to:*—Bill, as amended, *considered:*—Amendments *moved*, and *negatived;* Amendments made.

After debate, *Moved*, "That the Bill be now read the third time,"—(*Mr. Secretary Childers:*)—After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to:* —Bill read the third time, and *passed.*

Conveyancing and Law of Property Bill [*Lords*] [Bill 101]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. H. H. Fowler*) 685

Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Gorst:*)— After short debate, Question put, and *negatived.*

Main Question put, and *agreed to:*—Bill read a second time, and *committed* to a Select Committee.

Married Women's Property (Scotland) (*re-committed*) **Bill**—

Bill *considered* in Committee 687

Moved, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Mr. Gorst.*)

Motion *agreed to:*—Committee report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow.*

MOTIONS.

Local Government Provisional Orders (Bath, &c.) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Hibbert, Mr. Dodson*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 131] 688

Local Government (Highways) Provisional Order (York) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Hibbert, Mr. Dodson*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 132] 688

Whiteboy Acts Repeal Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Justin M'Carthy, Mr. Gray, Mr. A. M. Sullivan*) 688

TURNPIKE ACTS CONTINUANCE ACT, 1880-81—
Select Committee *appointed*, "to inquire into the Fifth and Sixth Schedules of 'The Annual Turnpike Acts Continuance Act, 1880,"—(*Mr. Hibbert.*)
And, on April 7, Committee *nominated* :—List of the Committee 689

[House counted out.]

LORDS, TUESDAY, APRIL 5.

LORD CHAMBERLAIN'S DEPARTMENT—EGRESS FROM THEATRES (METROPOLIS)—Question, The Duke of St. Albans; Answer, The Earl of Kenmare 689

Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual) Bill—
Moved, "That the Bill be now read 1^a,"—(*The Earl of Morley*) .. 690
Motion *agreed to* :—Bill read 1^a (No. 61.)

Sea Fisheries (Clam and Bait Beds) Bill (No. 53)—
Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a,"—(*The Lord Sudeley*) .. 690
Motion *agreed to* :—Bill read 2^a accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Thursday* next.

ARMY ORGANIZATION—THE NEW SCHEME—Observations, Lord Abinger :—Long debate thereon 691

Charitable Trusts Acts Amendment Bill [H.L.]—*Presented* (*The Lord Chancellor*); read 1^a (No. 59) 731

Stolen Goods Bill [H.L.]—*Presented* (*The Lord Chancellor*); read 1^a (No. 60) .. 732

COMMONS, TUESDAY, APRIL 5.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

London City Lands (Thames Embankment) Bill [Lords] (by Order)—
Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time" 732
Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months,"—(*Mr. Firth* :)—Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*
Main Question put, and *agreed to* :—Bill read a second time, and *committed* to a Select Committee, to consist of Fifteen Members, Ten to be nominated by the House, and Five by the Committee of Selection.
Instruction to the Committee.

ROYAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND—
Copy *presented*,—of Scheme for the Organisation of the University as adopted by the Senate [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

[*April* 5.] *Page*

QUESTIONS.

Baronial Works (Ireland) — Ballydehob, Co. Cork—Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 750
Malta—Salary of the Governor—Food Taxes—Question, Mr. Mac Iver; Answer, Mr. Grant Duff 751
Coroners (Ireland)—Elections in Wexford County—Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland 751
Treaty of Berlin—Article 61—Armenia — Question, Mr. Baxter; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke.. 752
Army—Regimental Organization — Question, Lord Edward Cavendish; Answer, Mr. Childers 752
State of Ireland—The Constabulary—Question, Mr. Justin M'Carthy; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster.. 753
Navy—Corporal Punishment—Question, Admiral Sir John Hay; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 753
Army—The Brigade of Guards—Question, Sir Patrick O'Brien; Answer, Mr. Childers 754
Licensing (Metropolis)—Question, Sir Patrick O'Brien; Answer, Sir William Harcourt 754
Army Organization—The New Scheme—Majors of Royal Artillery and Engineers—Question, Mr. Carington; Answer, Mr. Childers .. 755
Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, 1881—Patrick Downey—Questions, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster .. 755
Accountant General's Office in Chancery (Ireland)—Question, Mr. Findlater; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland .. 756
Science and Art—The Geological Survey—Question, Admiral Sir John Hay; Answer, Mr. Mundella 757
Army—Quartermasters — Warrant of 1880—Question, Mr. Causton; Answer, Mr. Childers 757
China—Mixed Court of Shanghai—Chinese Criminals—Question, Mr. J. W. Pease; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 758
Navy—Court Martial at Sydney—Case of C. P. Stamp—H.M.S. "Wolverine"—Question, Mr. Labouchere; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 758
Navy—H.M.S. "Inflexible" — Question, Mr. Gourley; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 759
Parliamentary Elections Act, 1868—Disqualification for Corrupt Practices—Question, Mr. Rylands; Answer, The Attorney General .. 760
South Africa—The Transvaal Commission — Conditions of Peace—Question, Mr. Macfarlane; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 761
Turkey—British Trade at Smyrna—Question, Mr. W. H. Smith; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke.. 762
Parliament—Rules and Orders—Questions—Printing Replies—Question, Mr. Leake; Answer, Mr. Gladstone.. 762
Army—The Royal Engineers (Extra Pay)—Question, Mr. Leake; Answer, Mr. Childers 763
British Burmah—Consumption of Opium—Question, Mr. J. W. Pease; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 764
Tunis—Disturbances on the Frontier—Questions, Baron Henry De Worms, Mr. Montague Guest; Answers, Sir Charles W. Dilke .. 764
Army—Non-Commissioned Officers — Question, Mr. O'Connor Power; Answer, Mr. Childers 765
Turkey and Greece—The Frontier Question—Question, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 766
South Africa—The Transvaal—Violation of the Armistice—Questions, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett, Lord Colin Campbell; Answers, Mr. Grant Duff 766

Page

State of Ireland—Speech of Mr. Dillon, M.P. at Thurles—Question, Sir Henry Fletcher; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 768

Navy—The Marines—Question, Sir Henry Fletcher; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 768

Public Health—Putrid American Hams—Question, Mr. Dixon-Hartland; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain 769

Parliament—Business of the House—The Bankruptcy Bill—Question, Mr. Monk; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain 770

Evictions (Ireland)— Questions, Mr. O'Connor Power, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster 770

The Legacy and Probate Duties—Question, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 771

South Africa—The Transvaal Commission—The Instructions—Questions, Sir Stafford Northcote, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach; Answers, Mr. Gladstone 772

Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention Bill—Questions, Viscount Folkestone, Mr. Heneage; Answers, Mr. Dodson 773

Parliament—Order of Business—Question, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 773

Elections in Foreign Countries—Corrupt Practices and the Ballot —Question, Mr. Cavendish Bentinck; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 774

Evictions (Ireland)—Observations, Mr. T. P. O'Connor 774
Moved, "That this House do now adjourn,"—(*Mr. T. P. O'Connor:*)—
After debate, [House counted out.]

LORDS, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6.

Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual) Bill (No. 61)—
Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a,"—(*The Earl of Morley*) .. 797
After short debate, Motion *agreed to:*—Bill read 2^a accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House *To-morrow;* and Standing Order No. XXXV. to be considered in order to its being dispensed with.

COMMONS, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6.

QUESTION.

Land Law (Ireland) Bill—Question, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answer, The Solicitor General for Ireland 801

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Landed Proprietors (Ireland) Bill [Bill 63]—
Order for Second Reading read 801
After short debate, Second Reading *deferred* till *Wednesday* 29th June.

Lunacy Law Assimilation (Ireland) Bill [Bill 75]—
Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Litton*) .. 802
After debate, Question put, and *agreed to:*—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Wednesday* 1st June.

Middlesex Land Registry Bill [Bill 87]—
Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Hopwood*) .. 825
After short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn:*—Bill *withdrawn.*

Copyhold Enfranchisement Bill [Bill 117]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Waugh*) .. 834

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months,"—(*Sir Gabriel Goldney.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question:" —After short debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Wednesday* 1st June.

Petty Sessions Clerks (Ireland) Bill [Bill 41]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Litton*) .. 839

After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Wednesday* 4th May.

Summary Jurisdiction (Ireland) Bill [Bill 33]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Litton*) .. 843

Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Brodrick*:)—After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to*:—Debate *adjourned* till *Wednesday* 11th May.

Church Patronage Bill [Bill 30]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. E. Stanhope*) 845

After short debate, it being a quarter of an hour before Six of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till *To-morrow.*

LAND LAW (IRELAND) BILL—Questions, Sir Stafford Northcote, Mr. Mitchell Henry; Answers, Lord Frederick Cavendish 846

LORDS, THURSDAY, APRIL 7.

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL—MURDER OF CAPTAIN ELLIOTT, DR. BARBER, AND OTHERS—Questions, Observations, Lord Brabourne; Reply, The Earl of Kimberley 848

Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual) Bill (No. 61)—

Moved, "That the House do now resolve itself into Committee,"—(*The Earl of Morley*) 849

After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—House in Committee accordingly.

Bill *reported*, without amendment: Then Standing Order No. XXXV. considered (according to Order), and *dispensed with*:—Bill read 3ª, and *passed.*

LANDLORD AND TENANT (IRELAND)—LORD ORANMORE AND BROWNE—Observations, Lord Oranmore and Browne; Reply, Earl Spencer .. 858

TUNIS—THE ENFIDA CASE—Question, Observations, Earl De La Warr, Lord Stanley of Alderley; Reply, The Earl of Kimberley .. 860

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL—PEACE NEGOTIATIONS—PROTECTION TO LOYAL SUBJECTS—Questions, Observations, Viscount Bury; Reply, The Earl of Kimberley 863

PRIVATE AND PROVISIONAL ORDER CONFIRMATION BILLS—

Ordered, That Standing Orders Nos. 92. and 93. be suspended; and that the time for depositing petitions praying to be heard against Private and Provisional Order Confirmation Bills, which would otherwise expire during the adjournment of the House at Easter, be extended to the first day on which the House shall sit after the recess.

COMMONS, THURSDAY, APRIL 7.

Page

NOTICE OF QUESTION.

THE SUEZ CANAL COMPANY—THE BRITISH SHARES—Notice of Question, Baron Henry De Worms 866

QUESTIONS.

IRELAND—THE IRISH CONSTABULARY—Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 866
PORTUGAL—THE LORENZO MARQUES TREATY—Question, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 867
CROWN LANDS ACT, 1866—THE FORESHORE AT SHOEBURYNESS—Question, Lord Eustace Cecil; Answer, Mr. Childers 867
CYPRUS—TAXATION—Question, Mr. Rylands; Answer, Mr. Grant Duff .. 867
STATE OF IRELAND—RIOT AT DUNGARVAN—Question, Mr. O'Donnell; Answer, Mr. Childers 868
POST OFFICE—TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT, DUBLIN—Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. Fawcett 869
ARMY—PUBLIC WORSHIP—POLITICAL SERMONS—Questions, Mr. O'Donnell, Mr. Tottenham, Mr. Sexton; Answers, Mr. Childers 869
LANDLORD AND TENANT (IRELAND)—CHARGE AGAINST A PROCESS-SERVER—Question, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster .. 871
STATE OF IRELAND—SPEECH OF MR. DILLON, M.P., AT THURLES—Question, Mr. Warton; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 872
MERCANTILE MARINE—LIGHTS OF TRAWLING SMACKS—Question, Mr. Birkbeck; Answer, Mr. Evelyn Ashley 872
CIRCUIT COURTS (SCOTLAND)—Question, Mr. Cameron; Answer, The Lord Advocate 873
SCOTLAND—VAGRANCY IN COUNTIES—Question, Mr. Cameron; Answer, The Lord Advocate 873
SCOTLAND—THE TREASURY MINUTE ON SCOTCH BANKS—Question, Mr. Anderson; Answer, Lord Frederick Cavendish 873
ARMY—TROOPS IN IRELAND—THE 2ND AND 3RD DRAGOON GUARDS—Question, Major O'Beirne; Answer, Mr. Childers 873
WAYS AND MEANS—TERMINABLE ANNUITIES AND THE REDUCTION OF THE NATIONAL DEBT—Question, Lord George Hamilton; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 874
CRIMINAL LAW—THE "FREIHEIT"—Question, Observations, Lord Randolph Churchill; Reply, The Attorney General; Observations, Sir Charles W. Dilke 874
JAMAICA—ITS GOVERNMENT AS A CROWN COLONY—Question, Mr. Serjeant Simon; Answer, Mr. Grant Duff 877
POST OFFICE—POSTAL DELIVERIES (IRELAND)—Question, Major O'Beirne; Answer, Mr. Fawcett 878
INTERNATIONAL BI-METALLIC CONFERENCE—Question, Mr. J. G. Hubbard; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 878
THE CROWN AGENTS FOR THE COLONIES—Question, Mr. Anderson; Answer, Mr. Grant Duff 879
THE QUEEN v. EDWARDS—THE PARISH OF WOOLWICH—EXPENSES INCURRED IN BURYING THE VICTIMS OF THE "PRINCESS ALICE" CALAMITY—Question, Baron Henry De Worms; Answer, The Attorney General 879
LANDLORD AND TENANT (IRELAND) ACT, 1870, COMMISSION (THE EARL OF BESSBOROUGH'S)—THE EVIDENCE—Questions, Sir Hervey Bruce, Lord Claud Hamilton; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster, Mr. Shaw .. 880

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS—GLANDERS—Question, Lord Claud Hamilton; Answer, Mr. Mundella 881

BOARD OF TRADE—RESIGNATION OF MR. R. GIFFEN—Question, Mr. H. S. Northcote; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain 882

CRIMINAL LAW—THE "IRISH WORLD"—Question, Lord Randolph Churchill; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 882

ROYAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND—SCHEME OF THE SENATE—Question, Mr. Bryce; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 883

FRANCE—THE NEW COMMERCIAL TREATY—Question, Mr. Jackson; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 884

PARLIAMENTARY OATH (MR. BRADLAUGH)—Question, Mr. Schreiber; Answer, The Attorney General 884

POOR LAW (METROPOLIS)—WORKHOUSE AT CHAMPION HILL—Question, Mr. Roundell; Answer, Mr. Dodson 885

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL—PROTECTION TO LOYAL INHABITANTS—Question, Colonel Taylor; Answer, Mr. Grant Duff 885

LAND LAW (IRELAND) BILL—Question, Mr. Elliot; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 885

LOCAL TAXATION—LEGISLATION—Question, Sir Baldwyn Leighton; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 886

STATE OF IRELAND—COLLISION IN MAYO—Questions, Mr. O'Donnell; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster 886

AFGHANISTAN (POLITICAL AFFAIRS)—THE AMEER—Question, Mr. O'Donnell; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 887

STATE OF IRELAND—AFFRAY IN THE COUNTY SLIGO—Question, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 887

PRISONS (ENGLAND) ACT—MAIDSTONE GAOL—Question, Mr. Akers-Douglas; Answer, Sir William Harcourt 888

PUBLIC HEALTH—SMALL-POX (METROPOLIS)—Question, Sir Sydney Waterlow; Answer, Mr. Dodson 888

EJECTMENTS (IRELAND)—Questions, Mr. Parnell, Mr. Gibson; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster 889

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—Question, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 890

SOUTHERN AFGHANISTAN—PISHIN AND SIBI—Question, Sir George Campbell; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 890

ORDERS OF THE DAY—

Ordered, That the Orders of the Day be postponed until after the Notices of Motions for leave to introduce the Land Law (Ireland) Bill and the Bankruptcy Bill.—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

MOTION.

Land Law (Ireland) Bill—

Motion for Leave (*Mr. Gladstone*) 890

After debate, Motion *agreed to:*—Bill to further amend the Law relating to the occupation and ownership of Land in Ireland; and for other purposes, *ordered* (*Mr. Gladstone, Mr. William Edward Forster, Mr. Bright, Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 135]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention Bill [*Lords*]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [31st March], "That the Bill be now read a second time:"—Question again proposed:—Debate *resumed* 940

Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention Bill [*Lords*]—continued.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months,"—(*Mr. Pell.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question:"—After debate, *Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—*Mr. Storer*:)—After further short debate, Question put:—The House *divided*; Ayes 51, Noes 118; Majority 67.—(Div. List, No. 181.)

Question put, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question:"—The House *divided*; Ayes 118, Noes 42; Majority 76.—(Div. List, No. 182.)

Main Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time.

Moved, "That the Bill be referred to a Select Committee,"—(*Mr. Dodson*:)—Motion *agreed to*:—Bill *committed* to a Select Committee.

WAYS AND MEANS—REPORT—Resolutions [4th April] *reported* .. 971

After short debate, Resolutions *agreed to*:—*Ordered*, That a Bill be brought in upon the said Resolutions (*Mr. Playfair*, *Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer*, *Lord Frederick Cavendish*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 136.]

Tramways (Ireland) Acts Amendment (*re-committed*) **Bill**—

Bill *considered* in Committee 972

After short time spent therein, Bill *reported*, without Amendment; to be read the third time *To-morrow*.

Church Patronage Bill [Bill 30]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [6th April], "That the Bill be now read a second time:"—Question again proposed:—Debate *resumed* 973

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the opinion of this House, it is inexpedient to pass any measure which gives legal sanction to the sale under any circumstances of the right of appointing ministers to parochial or other benefices,"—(*Mr. Illingworth*,)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, *Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Willis*:)—After further short debate, Question put:—The House *divided*; Ayes 23, Noes 62; Majority 39.—(Div. List, No. 183.)

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—*Moved*, "That this House do now adjourn,"—(*Mr. Evans Williams*:)—After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided*; Ayes 23, Noes 56; Majority 33.—(Div. List, No. 184.)

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—*Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned," (*Mr. Briggs*:)—After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to*:—Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow*, at Two of the clock.

Agricultural Tenants' Compensation Bill [Bill 10]—

Order for Committee read:—*Moved*, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair,"—(*Mr. Chaplin*) 991

Amendment proposed, to leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "the Bill be committed to a Select Committee,"—(*Mr. M'Lagan*,)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, *Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Courtney*:)—Question put:—The House *divided*; Ayes 36, Noes 25; Majority 11.—(Div. List, No. 185.)

Debate *adjourned* till *Monday* 25th April.

[*April* 7.] *Page*

MOTIONS.

Bankruptcy Bill—
Motion for Leave (*Mr. Hibbert*) 992
Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow*, at Two of the clock.

SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE—
Resolved, That whenever the House shall meet at Two of the clock, the Sitting of the House shall be held subject to the Resolutions of the House of the 30th day of April 1869,—(*Mr. Hibbert.*)

LORDS, FRIDAY, APRIL 8.

THE MINISTRY—RESIGNATION OF THE DUKE OF ARGYLL—Personal Explanation, The Duke of Argyll 993

TURKEY—SIR A. H. LAYARD, LATE H.M. AMBASSADOR AT THE PORTE—ADDRESS FOR PAPERS—
Moved, That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for Copies of the despatches which explain the withdrawal of Sir Henry Layard from the Embassy at Constantinople,—(*The Lord Stratheden and Campbell*) 995
After short debate, Motion *agreed to.*

ARMY RE-ORGANIZATION — THE REGIMENTAL UNIFORMS—MOTION FOR A RETURN—
Moved, That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for Return showing the amount of expenditure estimated by the change of uniform involved in the proposed organization of territorial regiments, both as affecting individual officers and the public purse,—(*The Earl of Galloway*) 1007
After short debate, Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

TURKEY—THE LAND LAW — ADMISSION OF FOREIGNERS—ADDRESS FOR A PAPER—
Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, for the Protocol, dated the 18th of June, 1867, entitled 'Regulation for the admission of foreigners to enjoy real property throughout the Ottoman dominions,'"—(*The Earl De La Warr*) .. 1008
Motion *agreed to.*
Protocol relative to the admission of British subjects in Turkey to the right of holding real property, signed at Constantinople 28th July 1868; and Law of 18th June 1867, granting to foreigners the right to hold real property in the Ottoman Empire (presented by command 31st May 1869): To be *re-printed.* (No. 71.)

Elementary Education Provisional Order Confirmation (London) Bill [H.L.]—*Presented* (*The Lord President*); read 1ª, and *referred* to the Examiners (No. 68) .. 1009

Elementary Education Provisional Order Confirmation (Clay Lane) Bill [H.L.]—*Presented* (*The Lord President*); read 1ª, and *referred* to the Examiners (No. 69) .. 1009

Army Alternative Punishment Bill [H.L.]—*Presented* (*The Lord Denman*); read 1ª (No. 72) 1009

COMMONS, FRIDAY, APRIL 8.

PRIVATE BILLS—
Ordered, That Standing Orders 129 and 39 be suspended, and that the time for depositing Petitions against Private Bills, or against any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order, or Provisional Certificate, and for depositing duplicates of any Documents relating to any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order, or Provisional Certificate, be extended to Monday the 25th instant,—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

Skipton and Kettlewell Railway (*Extension to Aysgarth*) *Bill* (*by Order*)—
Order for Consideration read 1010
After short debate, Bill, as amended, *considered;* to be read the third time.

QUESTIONS.

State of Ireland—Distress in Castlebar—Question, Mr. O'Connor Power; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 1010
The Magistracy (Ireland) — Ballyhannis Petty Sessions—Question, Mr. O'Connor Power; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 1011
India—The Cinchona Plant — Question, Captain Price; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 1011
South Africa—The Transvaal—Revocation of Letters Patent, 1879 —Questions, Mr. Gibson; Answers, Mr. Grant Duff 1012
The Royal Irish Constabulary—Buckshot—Questions, Mr. O'Kelly, Mr. A. M. Sullivan; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster 1013
India—Madras Covenanted Civil Service—Question, Mr. Gibson; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 1014
Law and Justice (Ireland)—Penalties of Prosecutions—Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 1014
Consolidated Fund—Miscellaneous Pensions (Ireland)—Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, Lord Frederick Cavendish 1015
Arms Act (Ireland) — Proclamation of the County of Longford— Question, Mr. Justin M'Carthy; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster .. 1015
Evictions (Ireland)—Question, Mr. Justin M'Carthy; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 1016
Ways and Means—The Financial Statement — The Probate and Legacy Duties—Questions, Mr. Gregory, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answers, Mr. Gladstone 1017
Criminal Law—The "Irish World"—Questions, Mr. Tottenham, Mr. A. M. Sullivan, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster .. 1018
South Africa—The Transvaal—Letter of King Cetewayo—Questions, Mr. Gorst; Answers, Mr. Grant Duff 1020
Army Re-organization — Uniforms — The Buffs — Question, Major Vaughan Lee; Answer, Mr. Childers 1020
Tunis—The Krouhmir Tribes—Military Preparations of France— Question, Mr. Montague Guest; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke .. 1021
Sales of Land (Ireland) Return—Question, Mr. Ion Hamilton; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 1021
The Suez Canal Company — The British Shares—Question, Baron Henry De Worms; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1021
Coroners (Ireland) Bill—Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland 1022
South Africa—The Transvaal (Military Operations)—Surrender of Potchefstroom—Question, Sir John Kennaway; Answer, Mr. Grant Duff 1022
House of Commons—Additional Accommodation for Members—The House of Lords—Questions, Sir Edward Reed, Mr. O'Shea; Answers, Mr. Shaw Lefevre 1023
Public Health — Small-Pox — Questions, Mr. Puleston; Answer, Mr. Dodson 1024
The Census, 1881—Questions, Mr. Puleston, Mr. Montague Guest; Answers, Mr. Dodson 1024

[*April* 8.] *Page*

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL—PEACE NEGOTIATIONS—REPAYMENT OF LOAN—Question, Mr. Puleston; Answer, Mr. Grant Duff .. 1025

STATE OF IRELAND — MR. RANDLE PEYTON — Questions, Mr. Justin M'Carthy; Answers, The Attorney General for Ireland.. .. 1026

ARMY DISCIPLINE AND REGULATION (ANNUAL) BILL—SUMMARY PUNISHMENTS—Question, Captain Price; Answer, Mr. Childers .. 1026

TURKEY AND GREECE (STATISTICS)—Question, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 1027

LAND LAW (IRELAND) BILL—Questions, Mr. Gibson, Mr. Tottenham; Answers, The Attorney General for Ireland; Question, Mr. Callan; [No reply] 1027

TURKEY AND GREECE—AN EGYPTIAN CONTINGENT—Question, Mr. Arnold; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 1029

THE MINISTRY—RESIGNATION OF THE DUKE OF ARGYLL—Question, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1029

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—LAND LAW (IRELAND) BILL—Question, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answer, Mr. Gladstone .. 1030

MALTA—ANCIENT MONUMENTS—Question, Mr. Gregory; Answer, Mr. Grant Duff 1032

CRIMINAL LAW—THE "FREIHEIT"—Personal Explanation, Lord Randolph Churchill 1032

IRELAND—THE IRISH CONSTABULARY—THE LAND LEAGUE—Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 1033

ARMY DISCIPLINE AND REGULATION ACT—CASE OF PATRICK KING—Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. Osborne Morgan 1034

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—Question, Mr. Biggar; [No reply] 1035

NOTICE OF RESOLUTIONS.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) BILL—Notice of Resolution, Mr. Brodrick .. 1035

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL—Notice of Resolutions, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Sir Wilfrid Lawson 1035

MOTION.

PARLIAMENT—THE EASTER RECESS—

Moved, "That this House, at its rising, do adjourn until Monday 25th April,"—(*Mr. Gladstone*) 1036

After debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolved, That this House, at its rising, do adjourn until Monday 25th April.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Bankruptcy Bill—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [7th April]: Question again proposed:—Debate *resumed* 1056

After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to:—Ordered* (*Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Solicitor General, Mr. Ashley*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 137.]

Churchwardens (Admission) Bill [Bill 47]—
Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Monk*) .. 1077
It being ten minutes before Seven of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till *Monday* 25th April.

COMMONS, MONDAY, APRIL 25.

QUESTIONS.

POOR LAW (IRELAND) — THE MIDLETON UNION—ELECTION OF GUARDIANS —Question, Mr. Litton; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 1078
LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—PROCESSES OF EJECTMENT—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 1079
CRIME (IRELAND)—THE POLICE AT KNOCKNAGREE, CO. KERRY—Question, The O'Donoghue; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 1079
STATE OF IRELAND—COUNTY LIMERICK—Question, Mr. Lewis; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 1080
THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS ACT, 1868, THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS AND CORRUPT PRACTICES ACT, 1879, AND THE PARLIAMENTARY AND CORRUPT PRACTICES ACT, 1880—SCHEDULED SOLICITORS—Question, Mr. Rylands; Answer, The Attorney General 1080
LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—THE DUBLIN JURY LIST—Question, Mr. M. Brooks; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland 1081
LICENSING ACT—THE RADICAL CLUB, KING'S CROSS—Question, Mr. J. Cowen; Answer, Sir William Harcourt 1082
SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL—THE NATIVE INHABITANTS—Question, Mr. Gorst; Answer, Mr. Grant Duff 1082
METROPOLITAN WATER SUPPLY — Question, Mr. Ritchie; Answer, Sir William Harcourt 1083
THE IRISH LAND ACT, 1870—COMPENSATION FOR DISTURBANCE — THE RETURN—Question, Mr. A. M. Sullivan; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster .. 1083
COMMERCIAL TREATY WITH FRANCE—THE NEGOTIATIONS—Questions, Mr. Mac Iver; Answers, Sir Charles W. Dilke 1083
CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS—OUTBREAK OF FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE AT CARLISLE—Question, Mr. W. Lowther; Answer, Mr. Mundella 1084

NOTICES OF MOTION.

MONUMENT TO THE RIGHT HON. THE LATE EARL OF BEACONSFIELD—Notice of Motion, Lord Richard Grosvenor 1084
ADJOURNMENT—Notice of Motion, Lord Richard Grosvenor 1084

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Land Law (Ireland) Bill [Bill 135.] SECOND READING. [FIRST NIGHT]—
Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Lord Richard Grosvenor*) 1085
After debate, *Moved,* "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Warton:*)—After further short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*
Original Question again proposed:—*Moved,* "That this House do now adjourn,"—(*Mr. Lewis:*)—After short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Land Law (*Ireland*) *Bill*—continued.

Question again proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "no measure of Land Reform for Ireland, however ably advised, can be considered complete or perfectly satisfactory which does not deal with the condition of the farm labourers of Ireland, with a view to ameliorate it,"—(*Mr. Villiers Stuart,*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After long debate, *Moved,* "That the Debate be now adjourned," — (*Lord Elcho*:)—Question put, and *agreed to*:—Debate *adjourned* till *Thursday*

Customs and Inland Revenue Bill [Bill 136]—

Order for Second Reading read 1170
After short debate, Second Reading *deferred* till *Thursday.*

Alkali, &c. Works Regulation Bill [*Lords*] [Bill 119]—

Order for Committee read:—*Moved,* "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair,"—(*Mr. Dodson*) 1170
Amendment proposed, to leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "the Bill be referred to a Select Committee,"—(*Sir Sydney Waterlow,*)—instead thereof.
Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*
Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *agreed to*:—Bill *considered* in Committee.
After short time spent therein, Motion made, and Question, "That the Chairman do now report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Mr. Dodson*),—put, and *agreed to*:—Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Thursday.*

Married Women's Property (Scotland) Bill [Bills 45-128]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now taken into Consideration,"—(*Mr. Anderson*) 1179
After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 69, Noes 19; Majority 50.—(Div. List, No. 186.)
Bill *considered;* to be read the third time *To-morrow.*

INDIA OFFICE AUDITOR [SUPERANNUATION]—

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That it is expedient to make provision for the payment, out of the Revenues of India, of Superannuation Allowances to the Auditor of the Accounts of the Secretary of State for India in Council and his Assistants.
Resolution to be reported *To-morrow.*

MOTIONS.

ADJOURNMENT—

Moved, "That this House, at its rising, do adjourn till To-morrow at Eight o'clock p.m.,"—(*Lord Richard Grosvenor*) 1181
Question amended, and *agreed to.*
Resolved, That this House, at its rising, do adjourn till this day at Nine o'clock p.m.

MONUMENT TO THE LATE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE EARL OF BEACONSFIELD—
Committee, to consider a humble Address to be presented to Her Majesty, praying that Her Majesty will give directions that a Monument be erected, as a public charge, in the Collegiate Church of St. Peter, Westminster, to the memory of the late Right Honourable the Earl of Beaconsfield (Queen's *Recommendation* signified), upon *Monday* 9th May,—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

COMMONS, TUESDAY, APRIL 26.

QUESTIONS.

THE NAVY—SUPPLY OF SEAMEN—Question, Captain Price; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1182
SOUTH AFRICA—THE BASUTOS (NEGOTIATIONS)—Questions, Mr. A. Pease, Sir George Campbell; Answers, Mr. Grant Duff 1183

MOTIONS.

PARLIAMENTARY OATH (MR. BRADLAUGH)—
Mr. Bradlaugh having come to the Table to take and subscribe the Oath—
Moved, "That, having regard to the Resolution of this House of the 22nd June 1880, and to the Reports and Proceedings of the two Select Committees therein referred to, Mr. Bradlaugh be not permitted to go through the form of repeating the words of the Oath prescribed by the Statutes, 29 Vic. c. 19, and 31 and 32 Vic. c. 72,"—(*Sir Stafford Northcote*) 1183
Amendment proposed,
To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in a case where a Member, duly elected, presents himself at the Table in conformity with the call of Mr. Speaker, and in proceeding to comply with the formalities prescribed for the taking of Parliamentary Oaths, without qualification, this House will not, on the ground of information extraneous to the transaction, offer any impediment to the fulfilment of the intention of such Member,"—(*Mr. Davey*,)—instead thereof.
Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."
Question, "That the Member for Northampton be now heard," put, and *agreed to.*
The hon. Member having addressed the House from the Bar, then withdrew.
After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 208, Noes 175; Majority 33.
Division List, Ayes and Noes 1238
Main Question put, and *agreed to.*
Mr. Bradlaugh having again advanced to the Table of the House was directed by Mr. Speaker to withdraw;—and refusing—
Moved, "That Mr. Bradlaugh do now withdraw,"—(*Sir Stafford Northcote:*)—After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*
Mr. Bradlaugh refusing to obey the order of the House was, by the direction of Mr. Speaker, removed by the Serjeant at Arms below the Bar.
After further debate, *Moved*, "That this House do now adjourn,"—(*Mr. Joseph Cowen:*)—Question put, and *agreed to.*

Local Government Provisional Orders (Berwick-upon-Tweed, &c.) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Hibbert, Mr. Dodson*) 1251

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 2) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Hibbert, Mr. Dodson*) 1251

COMMONS, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27.

Page

PARLIAMENTARY OATH (MR. BRADLAUGH)—

Mr. Bradlaugh having presented himself at the Table of the House to take and subscribe the Oath required by Law as Member for Northampton, he was ordered by Mr. Speaker to withdraw, but refusing to obey was conducted by the Sergeant at Arms below the Bar .. 1252

After short debate, *Moved*, "That this House do now adjourn,"—(*Mr. Labouchere*:)—After further long debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT—THE SILVER DUTIES—Statement, Mr. Gladstone 1296

ORDER OF THE DAY.

Church Boards Bill [Bill 14]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Albert Grey*) 1297

After short debate, it being a quarter of an hour before Six of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till *To-morrow.*

MOTIONS.

India Office Auditor (Superannuation) Bill—Resolution [April 25] *reported*, and *agreed to*:—Bill *ordered* (*The Marquess of Hartington, Lord Frederick Cavendish*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 140] 1306

Solway Fisheries (Scotland) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Ernest Noel, Mr. J. Maxwell-Heron, Mr. Anderson*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 141] 1306

Beer Bill—*Considered* in Committee:—Resolution *agreed to*, and *reported*:—Bill *ordered* (*Colonel Barne, Mr. Storer, Mr. Hicks*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 142] .. 1306

HOUSE OF COMMONS (ACCOMMODATION)—

Select Committee *appointed*, "to consider the proposals for the increased accommodation of the House, and to Report to the House what use shall be made of the Rooms proposed to be given up by the House of Lords,"—(*Mr. Shaw Lefevre.*)

Cheshire Salt Districts Compensation Bill—

Ordered, That Mr. HASTINGS be discharged from attendance upon the Committee:—*Ordered*, That Mr. STORY-MASKELYNE be added to the Committee:—*Ordered*, Three be the quorum,—(*Lord Richard Grosvenor.*)

COMMONS, THURSDAY, APRIL 28.

NOTICE OF RESOLUTION.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) BILL—Notice of Resolution, Lord John Manners .. 1307

QUESTIONS.

TRADE AND COMMERCE—IMPORT AND EXPORT OF WOOLLEN GOODS—Question, Mr. Mac Iver; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain 1307

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL—THE NATIVE INHABITANTS—THE PAPERS—Question, Mr. Gorst; Answer, Mr. Grant Duff 1308

CUSTOMS AND INLAND REVENUE BILL—FARM BUILDINGS—Question, Sir Baldwyn Leighton; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1308

[*April* 28.] Page

Central Asia—The Russian Advance—Questions, Mr. J. Cowen; Answers, Sir Charles W. Dilke 1308
South Africa—The Transvaal—The Surrender of Potchefstroom—Questions, Mr. Gibson; Answers, Mr. Grant Duff 1309
Vaccination Acts—Case of Mr. John Abel, of Farringdon—Question, Mr. P. A. Taylor; Answer, Mr. Dodson 1310
Army—The Royal Artillery—Pay of Artificers—Question, Mr. Boord; Answer, Mr. Childers 1310
Criminal Law—Abduction of English Girls—Question, Mr. M'Coan; Answer, Mr. Courtney 1311
Court of Session (Scotland)—The Vacant Judgeship—Question, Mr. Dick-Peddie; Answer, The Lord Advocate 1312
Extradition of Political Offenders—Question, Mr. Labouchere; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 1312
France—The New Commercial Treaty—Question, Mr. Mac Iver; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1312
Customs and Inland Revenue—The Commercial Treaty with France—Question, Mr. Hermon; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1313
France—The New Commercial Treaty—The Sugar and Shipping Bounties—Questions, Mr. Mac Iver, Sir John Lubbock; Answers, Sir Charles W. Dilke 1314
South Africa—The Transvaal (Military Operations)—The 60th Rifles—Question, Major General Feilden; Answer, Mr. Childers .. 1314
Public Health—Small-Pox (Metropolis)—Question, Mr. Pell; Answer, Mr. Dodson 1315
France and Tunis—Outbreak of the Krouhmir Tribes—Military Operations—Questions, Baron Henry De Worms, Mr. Montague Guest, Sir H. Drummond Wolff, Mr. Mac Iver; Answers, Sir Charles W. Dilke 1316
South Africa—The Transvaal (Military Operations)—Volunteer Force—Question, Mr. Gorst; Answer, Mr. Grant Duff .. 1318
Army Recruits—Scotch Recruits—Question, Sir Alexander Gordon; Answer, Mr. Childers 1318
Local Taxation—The Annual Statement—Question, Mr. Pell; Answer, Mr. Dodson 1319
Navy—Armament of H.M. Ships—Question, Mr. W. H. Smith; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1319
County Representative Boards (Scotland)—Question, Mr. J. W. Barclay; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1320
Parliament—Business of the House—Land Law (Ireland) Bill—Question, The O'Donoghue; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1321

ORDER OF THE DAY.

Land Law (Ireland) Bill [Bill 135]—Second Reading—Adjourned Debate [Second Night]—
Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [25th April], "That the Bill be now read a second time:"—Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—Debate *resumed* 1322
After long debate, *Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. W. H. Smith*:)—Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*:—Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn*.
Original Question again proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time:"—*Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. W. H. Smith*:)—Question put, and *agreed to*:—Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow*.

Pier and Harbour Orders Confirmation Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. Evelyn Ashley*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 143] 1410

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

COMMONS, FRIDAY, APRIL 29.

Page

NOTICES.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) BILL—Notices, The O'Donoghue, Lord Elcho, Lord Randolph Churchill, Sir Hervey Bruce, Sir John Hay 1411

QUESTIONS.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—MR. JAMES DALY, A PRISONER UNDER THE ACT—Question, Mr. Justin M'Carthy; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 1412

THE JURY SYSTEM (ENGLAND)—LEGISLATION—Question, Mr. Broadhurst; Answer, The Attorney General 1412

PEACE PRESERVATION (IRELAND) ACT—ARREST OF MR. RICHARD HODNETT —Question, Mr. Parnell; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 1413

HIGHWAY ACTS—SURVEYORS OF HIGHWAYS—THE ACCOUNTS—Question, Mr. E. Stanhope; Answer, Mr. Dodson 1413

ENDOWED SCHOOLS ACTS—HULME'S CHARITY—THE COMMISSIONERS' SCHEME—Question, Mr. Summers; Answer, Mr. Mundella 1414

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL (MILITARY OPERATIONS)—THE ACTION AT MAJUBA HILL—THE 15TH HUSSARS—Question, Mr. Gilbert Leigh; Answer, Mr. Childers 1414

ARMY—STAFF APPOINTMENTS—CAPTAINS OF CAVALRY AND INFANTRY—Question, Mr. Moss; Answer, Mr. Childers 1415

THE PUBLIC OFFICES—WRITERS AND COPYISTS—Question, Mr. Ritchie; Answer, Lord Frederick Cavendish 1415

INDIA—THE MADRAS IRRIGATION COMPANY—Question, Mr. Ritchie; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 1416

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL—THE NEGOTIATIONS—Question, Mr. Stanley Leighton; Answer, Mr. Grant Duff 1416

INDIA (FINANCE, &c.)—OPIUM TAXATION—Question, Mr. J. W. Pease; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 1417

PUBLIC HEALTH—SMALL-POX (METROPOLIS)—Question, Colonel Makins; Answer, Mr. Dodson 1418

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS—FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE—Question, Mr. Long; Answer, Mr. Mundella 1419

THE CONVERSION OF TERMINABLE ANNUITIES—Question, Sir John Hay; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1420

STATE OF IRELAND—LAND LEAGUE MEETINGS—SPEECH OF MR. DILLON—Questions, Mr. Long, Mr. Sexton; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster .. 1421

RUSSIA—CENTRAL ASIA—RECALL OF GENERAL SKOBELEFF—Question, Mr. E. Stanhope; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 1422

STATE OF IRELAND—ALLEGED OUTRAGE AT MUCKROSS—Notice of Question, Mr. Thornhill 1422

PARLIAMENTARY OATHS ACT—LEGISLATION—Observations, Mr. Gladstone; Questions, Sir Stafford Northcote, Mr. Newdegate; Answers, Mr. Gladstone 1422

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—Order for Committee read; Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

POWER OF REPRESENTATIVES (ABROAD)—RESOLUTION—

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "the power claimed and exercised by the representatives of this Country in

POWER OF REPRESENTATIVES ABROAD—RESOLUTION—continued.

various parts of the world to contract engagements, annex territories, and make war in the name of the Nation without authority from the Central Government is opposed to the principles of the British Constitution, is at variance with recognised rules of International Law, and is fraught with danger to the honour and true interests of the Country,"—(*Mr. Richard*,)—instead thereof 1424

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"— After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 72, Noes 64; Majority 8.—(Div. List, No. 188.)

Main Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

INDIA AND CHINA—THE OPIUM TRADE—Observations, Mr. J. W. Pease:—Long debate thereon 1451

Motion, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," by leave, *withdrawn:*—Committee *deferred* till *Monday* next.

Customs and Inland Revenue Bill [Bill 136]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer*) 1515

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "the alteration gives no relief to the labourer, who justly complains, that, when he brews only two bushels for harvest, he is subject to a higher duty, as licence, than he paid under the malt tax, although the Law was professedly altered for his relief,"—(*Mr. Storer*,)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question put, and *agreed to:*—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Monday* next.

Bankruptcy and Cessio (Scotland) Bill [Bill 81]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Dr. Cameron*) .. 1519

After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to:*—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Monday* next.

Married Women's Property (Scotland) Bill [Bill 128]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read the third time,"—(*Mr. Anderson*) .. 1521

Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Warton:*)—After short debate, Question put, and *negatived.*

Original Question again proposed:—After short debate, Main Question put, and *agreed to:*—Bill read the third time, and *passed.*

PARLIAMENTARY OATHS—Question, Observations, Mr. Onslow, Mr. R. N. Fowler, Mr. J. G. Talbot, Earl Percy; Reply, The Attorney General 1527

MOTION.

ALKALI, &c. WORKS REGULATION [STAMP DUTY, SALARIES, &c.]—

Committee to consider of authorising the imposition of a Stamp Duty on Certificates of registration of Alkali and other Works; also the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of the Salaries of Inspectors, and of Expenses which may become payable under the provisions of any Act of the present Session for regulating Alkali and certain other Works in which noxious or offensive gases are evolved (Queen's *Recommendation* signified), upon *Monday* next.

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

COMMONS, MONDAY, MAY 2.

Page

QUESTIONS.

PARLIAMENTARY OATHS ACT—MR. BRADLAUGH—Question, Mr. Mac Iver; Answer, Mr. Speaker 1530
MONUMENT TO THE RIGHT HON. THE LATE EARL OF BEACONSFIELD—Notice of Motion, Mr. Labouchere 1531
SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL—THE NOTICE OF MOTION—Question, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1531
SOUTH AFRICA — THE TRANSVAAL (NEGOTIATIONS)—FURTHER PAPERS—Question, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach; Answer, Mr. Grant Duff .. 1533
SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL (MILITARY OPERATIONS)—SURRENDER OF POTCHEFSTROOM—Question, Mr. Gibson; Answer, Mr. Grant Duff .. 1533
SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL (NEGOTIATIONS)—"SUZERAINTY"—Question, Sir Henry Peek; Answer, The Attorney General 1534
SOUTH AFRICA — NATIVE CUSTOMS IN NATAL—Question, Mr. Summers; Answer, Mr. Grant Duff 1534
ARMY—AUXILIARY FORCES — THE VOLUNTEER REVIEW AT WINDSOR—Question, Mr. Buxton; Answer, Mr. Childers 1535
FISHERIES (IRELAND)—THE MACKEREL FISHERY—Question, Mr. O'Shea; Answer, Lord Frederick Cavendish 1535
PRISONS (ENGLAND) ACT, 1877—NEWCASTLE AND MORPETH PRISONS—Question, Sir Matthew White Ridley; Answer, Mr. Courtney .. 1536
THE CENSUS (SCOTLAND)—THE GAELIC LANGUAGE—Question, Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh; Answer, The Lord Advocate 1536
THE FISHERIES—LIGHTS OF FISHING VESSELS—Question, Mr. Heneage; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1536
CUSTOMS AND INLAND REVENUE BILL—DIFFERENTIAL DUTY ON SPIRITS—Question, Captain Aylmer; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1537
PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—TREATMENT OF PRISONERS UNDER THE ACT—Question, Mr. O'Connor Power; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 1538
THE CIVIL SERVICE—THE PLAYFAIR SCHEME—Question, Mr. A. Grant; Answer, Lord Frederick Cavendish 1538
TRADE AND COMMERCE—THE NEW FRENCH GENERAL TARIFF—Questions, Mr. Kynaston Cross, Mr. Gourley; Answers, Sir Charles W. Dilke .. 1539
INLAND REVENUE — TAX ON HORSES AND CARRIAGES — Questions, Mr. Birley, Mr. Armitage; Answers, Mr. Gladstone 1540
LAND LAW (IRELAND) BILL—THE COMMISSION—Question, Lord Randolph Churchill; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1540
STATE OF IRELAND—OUTRAGES AT MUCKROSS AND CLIFDEN—Questions, Mr. Thornhill, Mr. Lewis, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster .. 1541
ARMY—THE AUXILIARY FORCES—ADJUTANTS OF VOLUNTEERS—Question, Mr. Anderson; Answer, Mr. Childers 1542
STATE OF IRELAND—THE WHITEBOY ACT—CASE OF DANIEL O'SULLIVAN, AT MILLSTREET, CO. CORK—Question, Mr. Daly; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 1543
THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—ALLEGED EXCESS OF DUTY AT NEWCASTLE—Questions, Mr. Parnell; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster .. 1544
SOUTH AFRICA—THE BASUTOS (NEGOTIATIONS)—Questions, Sir George Campbell, Sir Wilfrid Lawson; Answers, Mr. Grant Duff .. 1545
CONTROVERTED ELECTIONS—THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS ACT, 1868, THE PARLIAMENTARY AND CORRUPT PRACTICES ACT, 1879, AND THE PARLIAMENTARY AND CORRUPT PRACTICES ACT, 1880—THE BOSTON ELECTION—Questions, Mr. Mellor, Mr. Warton, Mr. E. Stanhope; Answers, Mr. Speaker, The Attorney General 1546
ARMY RECRUITING—IRISH RECRUITS—Questions, Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. Childers 1549

France and Tunis—British Subjects in Tunis—Question, Mr. Birley; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 1549

Land Law (Ireland) Bill—Recovery of Rent by Writ—Questions, The O'Donoghue, Mr. Parnell; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster, The Attorney General for Ireland 1550

The Crown Agents for the Colonies—Question, Mr. Anderson; Answer, Mr. Grant Duff 1551

Belfast Improvement Act, 1878—Finley v. Belfast Town Council—Question, Mr. Callan; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland .. 1552

Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, 1881—Mr. Dillon—Questions, Colonel Walrond, Mr. Sexton, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Parnell; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster 1553

Turkey and Greece—The Frontier Question—Question, Mr. Arthur Arnold; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 1555

Parliamentary Oaths Bill—Questions, Mr. Newdegate, Colonel Makins; Answers, The Attorney General, Mr. Gladstone 1556

MOTION.

Orders of the Day—Parliamentary Oaths Bill—Question, Mr. Newdegate; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1556

Moved, "That the Orders of the Day, subsequent to the Order of the Day for resuming the Adjourned Debate on the Second Reading of the Land Law (Ireland) Bill, be postponed until after the Notice of Motion for the introduction of the Parliamentary Oaths Bill,"—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

After short debate, *Moved,* "That this House do now adjourn,"—(*Mr. Lewis:*)—Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 43, Noes 318; Majority 275.—(Div List, No. 189.)

Original Question again proposed:—After short debate, *Moved,* "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Mac Iver:*)—After further short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

ORDER OF THE DAY.

Land Law (Ireland) Bill [Bill 135]—Second Reading—Adjourned Debate [Third Night]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [25th April], "That the Bill be now read a second time" 1570

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "this House, while willing to consider any just measure, founded upon sound principles, that will benefit tenants of land in Ireland, is of opinion that the leading provisions of the Land Law (Ireland) Bill are in the main economically unsound, unjust, and impolitic,"—(*Lord Elcho,*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After long debate, *Moved,* "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Lord John Manners:*)—Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 263, Noes 34; Majority 229.—(Div. List, No. 190:)—Debate *adjourned* till *Thursday.*

MOTION.

Parliamentary Oaths (Motion for Bill) 1618

After debate, *Moved,* "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair,"—(*Mr. Attorney General*) 1621

Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Lord Randolph Churchill:*)—Motion *agreed to:*—Debate *adjourned* till *Thursday.*

ORDER OF THE DAY.

Alkali, &c. Works Regulation Bill [*Lords*] [Bill 119]—

Bill *considered* in Committee 1629

After some time spent therein, Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Thursday.*

MOTIONS.

Extraordinary Tithe Rent-Charges—Motion for a Select Committee—

Moved, "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire as to the expediency of abolishing extraordinary Tithe Rent-charges, and providing a scheme for their redemption upon equitable terms; and also to inquire into and report upon the expediency of providing greater facilities for the redemption of ordinary Tithes upon equitable terms,"—(*Mr. Inderwick*) 1650

Amendment proposed, to leave out from the word "terms," in line 3, to the end of the Question,—(*Mr. Courtney.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, *Moved,* "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Earl Percy*:)—Question put, and *negatived.*

Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question," put, and *negatived.*

Main Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to.*

Resolved, That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire as to the expediency of abolishing extraordinary Tithe Rent-charges, and providing a scheme for their redemption upon equitable terms.

Local Government Provisional Order (Birmingham) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Hibbert, Mr. Dodson*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 144] 1651

Local Government (Gas) Provisional Order Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Hibbert, Mr. Dodson*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 145] 1651

COMMONS, TUESDAY, MAY 3.

QUESTIONS.

The Magistracy (Ireland)—County Government—Questions, Mr. W. J. Corbet; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster 1652

Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, 1881—The Prisoners under the Act—Supply of Newspapers—Questions, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster 1653

Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, 1881—Mr. Jasper Tully, a Prisoner under the Act—Question, Mr. O'Kelly; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 1654

Army—Royal Hibernian Military School, Dublin—Questions, Mr. W. J. Corbet, Mr. Gibson; Answers, Mr. Childers 1654

Geological Survey of Ireland—The Re-Survey—Questions, Mr. W. J. Corbet, Mr. Dawson; Answers, Mr. Mundella 1655

Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act—Compensation for Compulsory Slaughter—Importation of Cattle—Question, Mr. Arthur Arnold; Answer, Mr. Mundella 1656

Coal Mines Regulation Act—The Pen-y-Graig Explosion—Question, Mr. Macdonald; Answer, Sir William Harcourt 1657

Coal Mines—The Seaham Explosion—Report and Evidence—Question, Mr. Macdonald; Answer, Sir William Harcourt 1658

State of Ireland—Conflict near Clogher—Verdict of "Wilful Murder"—Questions, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Callan; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster; Question, Mr. Healy; [No reply] 1658

Ejectments (Ireland)—Number of Families—Questions, Mr. Sexton; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster 1660

South Africa—The Transvaal (Casualties)—Question, Mr. S. Leighton; Answer, Mr. Childers 1661

Contagious Diseases (Animals)—Outbreak of Foot-and-Mouth Disease at Newcastle—Question, Mr. Lowther; Answer, Mr. Mundella .. 1661

France and Tunis—Occupation of Bizerta—Question, Mr. Montague Guest; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 1661

Distress (Ireland)—County of Galway—Question, Major Nolan; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 1662

State of Ireland—Sheriffs' Sale at Howth—Question, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 1662

Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, 1881—Arrest of Mr. Dillon—Questions, Mr. Sexton, Mr. R. Power; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster; Question, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; [No reply] .. 1663

Monument to the Right Honourable the late Earl of Beaconsfield—Question, Sir Wilfrid Lawson; Answer, Mr. Speaker .. 1665

Vote of Thanks for the Military Operations in Afghanistan—Question, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 1665

MOTIONS.

Agricultural Holdings (Distress for Rent)—Resolution—

Moved, "That, in the opinion of this House, it is desirable to abolish the power of levying Distress for the Rent of Agricultural Holdings in England, Wales, and Ireland,"—(*Mr. Blennerhassett*) 1665

Previous Question moved, "That the Original Question be now put,"—(*Mr. H. T. Davenport*:)—After long debate, *Previous Question*, "That the Original Question be now put," put, and *agreed to.*

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

Parliament—Public Business (Half-past Twelve Rule)—Resolution—

Standing Order relative thereto [18th February, 1879] read .. 1706

Moved, "That this Rule shall not apply to the Motion for leave to bring in a Bill, nor to any Bill which has passed through Committee of the whole House,"—(*Mr. Monk.*)

Amendment proposed, to insert before the first word "Bill," the word "Government,"—(*Mr. Robert Fowler.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'Government' be there inserted:"—After short debate, *Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Sir R. Assheton Cross*:)—After further short debate, Question put, and *agreed to*:—Debate *adjourned* till *Thursday.*

Customs (Outport Officers)—Resolution—

Moved, "That the disadvantageous position in which Customs Out-door Officers at the Outports are placed, in respect of salary, as compared with Customs Officers of the same rank, and performing the same duties, at London and Liverpool, is unjust to those officers, and prejudicial to the public service,"—(*Mr. Norwood*) .. 1727

After debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Coroners (Ireland) Bill [Bill 73]—

Select Committee *nominated*:—List of the Committee 1742

Moved, "That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records,"—(*Mr. Healy*:)—Question put:—The House *divided*; Ayes 15, Noes 75; Majority 60.—(Div. List, No. 192.)

Coroners (*Ireland*) *Bill*—continued.

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee, that they have power to consider the operation of the Law relating to Coroners in Ireland, and, if they shall so think fit, to amend the Bill accordingly.

Water Provisional Orders Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Ashley, Mr. Chamberlain*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 146] 1743

Gas Provisional Orders Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Ashley, Mr. Chamberlain*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 147] 1743

COMMONS, WEDNESDAY, MAY 4.

JOHN DILLON, ESQUIRE—Letter from the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland informing the Speaker of the arrest of Mr. John Dillon, a Member of this House, under the Act for the better Protection of Person and Property in Ireland:—Short debate thereon 1744

QUESTIONS.

NAVY—DESTRUCTION OF H.M.S. "DOTEREL"—Questions, Mr. Gorst, Mr. Carbutt; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan 1746

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Wales) Bill [Bill 3]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Roberts*) .. 1748

After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 163, Noes 17; Majority 146.—(Div. List, No. 193.)

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Friday*.

Banking Laws Amendment Bill [Bill 46]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Anderson*) .. 1779

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months,"—(*Mr. Robert Fowler.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question:"—After debate, Amendment and Motion, by leave, *withdrawn:*—Bill *withdrawn.*

Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention Bill [*Lords*]—

Moved, "That the Select Committee on Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention Bill do consist of Nineteen Members,"—(*Mr. Dodson*) 1799

After short debate, *Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. A. H. Brown:*)—Question put, and *agreed to:*—Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

Thames River (No. 2) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. Evelyn Ashley*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 148] 1800

LORDS, THURSDAY, MAY 5.

THE LATE EARL OF BEACONSFIELD, K.G.—Observations, Earl Granville, The Duke of Richmond and Gordon 1801

AFGHAN WAR—VOTE OF THANKS FOR THE MILITARY OPERATIONS IN AFGHANISTAN—Resolutions (*Earl Granville*) 1803

After short debate, Resolutions *agreed to, nemine dissentiente.*

Ordered, That the Lord Chancellor do communicate the said Resolutions to the Viceroy and Governor-General of India, and that his Excellency be requested to communicate the same to the several Officers referred to therein.

COMMONS, THURSDAY, MAY 5.

Page

QUESTIONS.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES ACTS—CASE OF ELIZABETH BURLEY—THE ACTION OF THE POLICE—Question, Mr. Hopwood; Answer, Sir William Harcourt 1815
MINES ACTS—REPORTS OF INSPECTORS OF MINES, 1880—Question, Mr. Macdonald; Answer, Sir William Harcourt 1816
SOUTH AFRICA — THE TRANSVAAL — THE BOERS—Question, Mr. Rylands; Answer, Mr. Grant Duff 1816
THE LAND ACT (IRELAND)—THE PURCHASE CLAUSES — Question, Mr. Donaldson-Hudson; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 1816
CYPRUS—THE LAW COURTS—THE GREEK LANGUAGE—Question, Mr. A. M'Arthur; Answer, Mr. Grant Duff 1817
ARMY RE-ORGANIZATION — THE UNIFORMS—MILITIA OFFICERS—Question, Mr. Ritchie; Answer, Mr. Childers 1818
RAILWAYS (INDIA)—TREATY OF LISBON—PORTUGUESE TERRITORY—Question, Sir George Campbell; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington .. 1818
CRIMINAL LAW — JUVENILE OFFENDERS ACT — Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, Sir William Harcourt 1819
SALE OF FOOD AND DRUGS ACT—OLEO-MARGARINE—Question, Mr. Severne; Answer, Mr. Dodson 1820
STATE OF IRELAND—ALLEGED CRIMES AND OUTRAGES—Question, Viscount Folkestone; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 1820
ARMY—THE ZULU WAR—GENERAL NEWDIGATE'S MEDAL ROLL—Question, Mr. Boord; Answer, Mr. Childers 1821
SOUTH AFRICA — THE SUZERAINTY OF THE TRANSVAAL—Question, Mr. Gorst; Answer, The Attorney General 1822
THE WILD FOWL ACT, 1880—Question, Mr. Jacob Bright; Answer, Sir William Harcourt 1822
SMALL-POX (METROPOLIS)—Questions, Baron Henry De Worms, Mr. Dawson; Answers, Mr. Dodson 1822
ARMY ORGANIZATION—THE NEW REGULATIONS—COMPULSORY RETIREMENT —Question, Sir Alexander Gordon; Answer, Mr. Childers .. 1823
PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE PARLIAMENTARY OATHS BILL —Questions, Mr. Newdegate, Lord Randolph Churchill; Answers, Mr. Gladstone 1824
THE MEDICAL ACTS—THE VICTORIA UNIVERSITY—Question, Mr. Summers; Answer, Mr. Mundella 1824
PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT — PRISONERS UNDER THE ACT—NEWSPAPER EDITORS—Questions, Mr. T. D. Sullivan, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. A. M. Sullivan, Mr. Parnell, Mr. J. Cowen, Mr. O'Donnell, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster .. 1824
CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACT—OUTBREAK OF FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE AT NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE—Question, Mr. Elliot; Answer, Mr. Mundella 1826
CRIMINAL LAW—THE QUEEN v. BRADLAUGH AND ANOTHER — "FRUITS OF PHILOSOPHY" — Question, Mr. O'Donnell; Answer, The Attorney General 1826
PARLIAMENT — PUBLIC BUSINESS (HALF-PAST TWELVE RULE)—Question, Mr. Monk; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1828
MERCHANT SHIPPING ACTS—OVERLOADING THE "DUBLIN CASTLE"—Question, Mr. Edward Clarke; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain 1828
STATE OF IRELAND—ALLEGED EXCESS OF DUTY BY BAILIFFS IN COUNTY MONAGHAN—Question, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 1829
COMPANIES ACT, 1867—TRINITY COLLEGE, LONDON—Question, Mr. Edward Clarke; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain 1830

[*May* 5.] *Page*

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—MR. DILLON, M.P.—Questions, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Arthur Arnold; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster 1830
SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL—"SUZERAINTY"—Question, Earl Percy; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1831
PEACE PRESERVATION (IRELAND) ACT—PROCLAMATION OF COUNTY MONAGHAN—Question, Mr. Givan; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster .. 1832
RELIEF OF DISTRESS (IRELAND) ACT—EMPLOYMENT WORKS—Question, Major Nolan; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 1832
YOUNG IRELAND DEBATING SOCIETY (DUBLIN)—ALLEGED INTERFERENCE OF THE POLICE—Question, Mr. T. D. Sullivan; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 1832
NAVY—DESTRUCTION OF H.M.S. "DOTEREL"—Question, Sir John Hay; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1833
LAND LAW (IRELAND) BILL—GRANTS OF PUBLIC MONIES—Question, Sir John Hay; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1834
POOR LAW (IRELAND) BILL—ARREARS OF RENT, &C.—Questions, Mr. O'Kelly, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Parnell, Mr. A. M. Sullivan; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster, Mr. Gladstone 1834
STATE OF IRELAND—DUBLIN—Question, Mr. Dawson; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 1838
LAND LAW (IRELAND) BILL—YEARLY TENANTS—Questions, The O'Donoghue, Dr. Commins; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster 1838
PARLIAMENT—PUBLIC BUSINESS (HALF-PAST TWELVE RULE)—Notice, Mr. Monk; Question, Sir John Mowbray; Answer, Mr. Speaker .. 1839
PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—PROCLAMATION OF CO. DUBLIN—THE ARREST OF MR. DILLON—Question, Mr. Parnell; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1839
ARREST OF SOCIALISTS IN AUSTRIA—Question, Mr. J. Cowen; Answer, Sir William Harcourt 1840

NOTICES.

MONUMENT TO THE RIGHT HON. THE LATE EARL OF BEACONSFIELD, K.G.—Notice of Motion, Mr. Gladstone 1841
LAND LAW (IRELAND) BILL—Notice of Amendment, Mr. Parnell .. 1841

MOTIONS.

AFGHAN WAR—VOTE OF THANKS FOR THE MILITARY OPERATIONS IN AFGHANISTAN—RESOLUTIONS—

Moved, "That the Thanks of this House be given to General Sir Frederick Paul Haines, G.C.B., G.C.S.I., C.I.E., Commander in Chief in India, for the ability and judgment with which he directed the recent operations from September 1879 to September 1880 in Afghanistan,"—(*The Marquess of Hartington*) 1842

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "this House, disapproving of the Afghan War as needless and unjust, considers it inexpedient to return Thanks to Officers or Soldiers for slaying a number of people with whom we had no righteous quarrel, and devastating their Country,"—(*Mr. Healy*,)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 304, Noes 20; Majority 284.—(Div. List, No. 194.)

Main Question put, and *agreed to:* — Other Resolutions *moved*, and *agreed to.*

PARLIAMENT—NEW WRIT FOR KNARESBOROUGH—

Moved, "That Mr. Speaker do issue his Warrant to the Clerk of the Crown to make out a New Writ for the electing of a Member to serve in this present Parliament for the Borough of Knaresborough, in the room of Sir Henry Meysey Meysey-Thompson, whose Election has been declared to be void,"—(*Lord Richard Grosvenor*) .. 1870

After short debate, Motion *agreed to*.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Land Law (Ireland) Bill [Bill 135]—SECOND READING. ADJOURNED DEBATE. [FOURTH NIGHT]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [25th April], "That the Bill be now read a second time:"—Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—Debate *resumed* 1872

After long debate, *Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Errington*:)—After further short debate, Question put, and *agreed to*:—Debate *adjourned* till *Monday* next.

Customs and Inland Revenue Bill [Bill 136]—

Order for Committee read:—*Moved*, "That the Committee on this Bill be deferred,"—(*Lord Frederick Cavendish*) 1920

After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to*:—Committee *deferred* till *Monday* next.

India Office Auditor (Superannuation) Bill [Bill 140]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*The Marquess of Hartington*) 1921

After short debate, *Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Biggar*:)—After further short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Monday* next.

MOTIONS.

Local Government Provisional Orders (Brentford Union, &c.) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Hibbert*, *Mr. Dodson*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 149] .. 1925

CUSTOMS (OUTPORT OFFICERS)—

Select Committee *appointed*, "to inquire into the conditions of service and the rates of pay of the Customs Out-door Officers at the Outports, with power to send for persons, papers, and records, and to report to this House,"—(*Mr. Norwood.*)

Post Office (Land) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Fawcett*, *Lord Frederick Cavendish*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 150] 1926

LORDS, FRIDAY, MAY 6.

HIS IMPERIAL MAJESTY THE EMPEROR OF ALL THE RUSSIAS—H.R.I.H. THE DUCHESS OF EDINBURGH'S ANSWER TO MESSAGE OF CONDOLENCE —Observations, The Duke of Richmond and Gordon 1926

FRANCE AND TUNIS—OCCUPATION OF KEF, &c.—Question, Observations, Earl De La Warr; Reply, Earl Granville 1926

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL—THE SURRENDER OF POTCHEFSTROOM—Observations, Lord Waveney; Reply, The Earl of Kimberley .. 1928

Municipal Franchise (Scotland) Bill (No. 55)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a,"—(*The Earl of Camperdown*) .. 1928
Motion *agreed to*:—Bill read 2^a accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Monday* next.

NAVAL EDUCATION—Question, Observations, Lord Monteagle:—Debate thereon 1929

COMMONS, FRIDAY, MAY 6.

QUESTIONS.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—MR. BLAKE—Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 1954
MINES—MINING IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES—REPORT OF RESIDENTS ABROAD—Question, Mr. Macdonald; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke .. 1955
RELIEF OF DISTRESS (IRELAND) ACT—RELIEF WORKS AT ARKLOW—Question, Mr. W. J. Corbet; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 1956
PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS ACT, 1868—THE SANDWICH ELECTION COMMISSION—Question, Mr. Lewis; Answer, The Attorney General .. 1956
PARLIAMENTARY REPRESENTATION — THE VACANT SEATS—Question, Mr. Lewis; Answer, The Attorney General 1956
BANKRUPTCY BILL—ESTATES IN LIQUIDATION—Question, Sir Eardley Wilmot; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain 1957
ARMY (CHANGES IN ORGANIZATION)—REGIMENTAL ORGANIZATION—Question, Sir Eardley Wilmot; Answer, Mr. Childers 1957
CROSSED CHEQUES ACT, 1876—CORPORATION BONDS—Question, Mr. Jackson; Answer, The Attorney General 1957
PORTUGAL—THE LORENZO-MARQUES TREATY—Question, Mr. W. Cartwright; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 1958
BANKRUPTCY AND INSOLVENCY (IRELAND) ACT, 1857—PAYMENT OF CLAIMS OF SERVANTS—Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland 1958
PUBLIC HEALTH—SMALL-POX (METROPOLIS)—HOSPITAL TENTS—Question, Colonel Makins; Answer, Mr. Dodson 1959
COLONIAL GOVERNORS—Question, Mr. Warton; Answer, Mr. Grant Duff .. 1959
THE EXCISE—TRADING BY EXCISE OFFICERS—Question, Mr. Elliot; Answer, Lord Frederick Cavendish 1960
MONUMENT TO THE RIGHT HON. THE LATE EARL OF BEACONSFIELD, K.G.—THE INSCRIPTION—Questions, Mr. Macdonald, Mr. Rylands; Answers, The Marquess of Hartington 1960
PEACE PRESERVATION (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—ARMS LICENCES—Questions, Mr. Healy, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster .. 1961
THE NEW HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE—ACCOMMODATION FOR THE BAR—Question, Mr. Grantham; Answer, Mr. Shaw Lefevre 1962
CONTROVERTED ELECTIONS—THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS ACT, 1868, THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS AND CORRUPT PRACTICES ACT, 1879, AND THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS AND CORRUPT PRACTICES ACT, 1880—THE BOSTON ELECTION—Questions, Mr. Mellor, Mr. Warton; Answers, The Attorney General 1963
PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—KILMAINHAM PRISON—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster .. 1964
NAVY—DESTRUCTION OF H.M.S. "DOTEREL"—Question, Mr. W. H. Smith; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1965
AFGHANISTAN—REPORTED RUSSIAN MISSION TO CABUL—Questions, Mr. A. J. Balfour, Mr. Bourke; Answers, The Marquess of Hartington; Observations, Sir Charles W. Dilke 1966
PUBLIC BUSINESS—MORNING SITTING FOR TUESDAY—Notice, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1967

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Supply—Order for Committee read; Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

Agricultural Labourers' Habitations (Ireland)—Resolution—

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the opinion of this House, it is expedient and necessary that measures should be taken in the present Session of Parliament to improve the condition of agricultural labourers' habitations in Ireland,"—(*Mr. Callan,*)—instead thereof .. 1967

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Question put, and *negatived.*

Question proposed,

"That the words 'in the opinion of this House, it is expedient and necessary that measures should be taken in the present Session of Parliament to improve the condition of agricultural labourers' habitations in Ireland,' be there added."

Amendment proposed to the said proposed Amendment, to leave out the words "in the present Session of Parliament,"—(*Mr. William Edward Forster.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the proposed Amendment:"—After long debate, Question put, and *negatived.*

Main Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to.*

Supply—*Resolved*, That this House will immediately resolve itself into the Committee of Supply:—Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

Affairs of Greece—Resolution—Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "Her Majesty's Government, by their encouragement to the Greeks to mobilise their army, by their injustice to Turkey, and by their refusal to publicly advise Greece to moderate her excessive demands, have alienated the Mussulman feeling of the East, have imposed overwhelming burdens upon the Greek Nation, and have tended to disturb the peace of Europe,"—(*Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett,*)—instead thereof 2015

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

Supply—*considered* in Committee:—Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Monday* next.

Parliamentary Oaths (Motion for Bill)—Adjourned Debate—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [2nd May], "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair" for Committee on the Parliamentary Oaths (Motion for Bill:)—Question again proposed .. 2046

Moved, "That the Debate be further adjourned till Tuesday next, at Two of the clock,"—(*Lord Frederick Cavendish.*)

Amendment proposed, to leave out the words "at Two of the clock,"—(*Mr. Arthur Balfour.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'at Two of the clock' stand part of the Question:"—After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 128, Noes 122; Majority 6.—(Div. List, No. 195.)

Main Question proposed:—*Moved,* "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Ritchie:*)—After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 115 Noes 127; Majority 12.—(Div. List, No. 196.)

Parliamentary Oaths (Motion for Bill)—continued.

Main Question again proposed:— *Moved,* "That this House do now adjourn,"—(*Mr. Chaplin:*)—After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 100, Noes 121; Majority 21.—(Div. List, No. 197.)

Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Sir H. Drummond Wolff:*)—Question put, and *agreed to:*—Debate *adjourned* till *Monday* next.

Land Drainage Provisional Orders Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Courtney, Secretary Sir William Harcourt*) 2072

Merchant Shipping Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. Ashley*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 151] 2072

LORDS.

SAT FIRST.

Thursday, May 5, 1881.

The Earl of Saint Germans, after the death of his brother.

COMMONS.

NEW WRITS ISSUED.

Friday, April 1, 1881.

For *Saint Ives, v.* Sir Charles Reed, knight, deceased.

For *Northampton Borough, v.* Charles Bradlaugh, esquire, who, since his election, has vacated his seat in Parliament by sitting and voting in this House without having taken and subscribed the oath prescribed by Law.

Wednesday, April 6.

For *Sunderland, v.* Sir Henry Marshman Havelock-Allan, baronet, V.C.C.B., Chiltern Hundreds.

Friday, April 8.

For *Chester County* (Western Division), *v.* Sir Philip De Malpas Grey Egerton, baronet, deceased.

Thursday, May 5

For the *Borough of Knaresborough, v.* Sir Henry Meysey Meysey-Thompson, void Election

NEW MEMBERS SWORN.

Monday, April 25.

Saint Ives—Charles Campbell Ross, esquire.
Chester County (Western Division)—Henry James Tollemache, esquire.

Thursday, April 28.

Sunderland—Samuel Storey, esquire.

HANSARD'S
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

IN THE

SECOND SESSION OF THE *TWENTY-SECOND PARLIAMENT* OF THE
UNITED KINGDOM OF *GREAT BRITAIN* AND *IRELAND*,
APPOINTED TO MEET 29 APRIL, 1880, IN THE FORTY-THIRD
YEAR OF THE REIGN OF

HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA.

FOURTH VOLUME OF SESSION 1881.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Saturday, 26*th March*, 1881.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILL—*First Reading*—Consolidated Fund (No. 2) *.

CONSOLIDATED FUND (NO. 2) BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; to be read 2ª on *Monday* next; and Standing Order No. XXXV. to be considered in order to its being dispensed with.—(*The Earl Granville.*)

House adjourned at a quarter past Eleven o'clock, to Monday next, Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 28*th March*, 1881.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILL—*Second Reading*—*Committee negatived*—*Third Reading*—Consolidated Fund (No. 2),* and *passed.*

LANDLORD AND TENANT (IRELAND) ACT, 1870, COMMISSION (THE EARL OF BESSBOROUGH'S)—THE EVIDENCE.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

LORD MONTEAGLE asked the Lord President of the Council, If he could say when the remainder of the evidence taken by the "Landlord and Tenant (Ireland) Act, 1870," Commission would be circulated? The noble Lord said, that a portion of the Evidence taken before the Commission had already been circulated; but, in his opinion, the most important portion—the rebutting Evidence—had not yet been published. He considered that portion of the Evidence most valuable, as it would enable their Lordships to judge more impartially on the whole case. The Commission was appointed to inquire into certain grievances which had arisen under a particular state of the law, and that Commission went round the country and took Evidence in all towns. That course was a great advantage, because it gave an opportunity to every person who had a grievance to come before the Commission and have the matter fully inquired into. But he wished to remark there was also a great disadvantage accompanying this method of procedure, for when certain Commissioners went into particular districts there was a natural tendency on the part of people to air their grievances in a manner which frequently involved charges against individuals. Of course, an opportunity was afforded to those individuals to rebut the charges made against them by any statements which they might wish to make; but the consideration he wished particularly to call their Lordships' attention to was that it was impossible for their Lordships and the public to arrive at a fair conclusion as to the true state of affairs in regard to the questions inquired into by the Commissioners until they had both sides before them. He trusted that the noble Earl (Earl Spencer) would be enabled to hold out a hope that the remainder of the Evidence taken before the Commission would soon be published.

The Earl of DONOUGHMORE expressed a hope that an index to the Report and Evidence would be furnished with the remainder of the Evidence.

Earl SPENCER: With regard to what my noble Friend opposite has just said, I cannot answer the Question now as to whether there will be an index presented with the volume of Evidence which is shortly to be issued from Dublin; but I will take care to inquire into the question. It would, no doubt, be convenient to those wishing to study the Evidence that an index should be added to the volume. With regard to the Question of my noble Friend behind me (Lord Monteagle), the matter is now in the hands of the printer in Dublin, who has been urged to forward it as rapidly as possible. I understand that the remaining volume will be despatched from Dublin on the 31st instant, and he thinks it possible it may be ready before that time.

Lord DUNSANY thought it would not be inconvenient if he said a few words on the constitution of the Commission itself. He had no doubt that when the Royal Commission was appointed Her Majesty's Government had no intention of making it an unfair or a one-sided Commission; but he would say that if it had been the intention of Her Majesty's Ministers to procure a Court which might seem to support the views of the Land League, they could not have more efficiently and acutely selected the Commission. The Nobleman who was Chairman of the Commission was, it was true, the owner of a large estate in Ireland, which had always been remarkable for its good management; but the noble Chairman was very largely interested in land in Ireland. He seemed to approve of views which closely approached confiscation. The next Commissioner was the Leader of the Home Rule Party—or, rather, the late Leader—and another Home Ruler was also selected on the Commission; and then there was an Irish lawyer, who, he believed, owed his first advancement for the part which he had taken in anti-landlord agitation. A sop in the pan was given in the fifth and last Commissioner, who was a Conservative, making the constitution of the Commission four to one against the interests of the landlords. The Report of the Commission also displayed strong political animus; and he was really astonished to read in the Report the moderation of the witnesses commended, although many of the witnesses advocated confiscation.

CONSOLIDATED FUND (NO. 2) BILL.

Read 2ª (according to order); Committee *negatived:* Then Standing Order No. XXXV. *considered* (according to order), and *dispensed with:* Bill read 3ª, and *passed.*

House adjourned at half past Five o'clock, till Two-morrow, half past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 28*th March*, 1881.

MINUTES.] — Public Bills—*Ordered—First Reading*—Agricultural Holdings Act (1875) Amendment * [127].

Second Reading — Inclosure Provisional Orders (Scotton and Ferry Common) * [115]; Inclosure Provisional Orders (Wibsey Slack and Low Moor Commons) * [114]; Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual) * [123].

Committee—Report—Leases [108].

QUESTIONS.

THE PARKS (METROPOLIS)—ST. JAMES'S PARK.

Mr. W. H. JAMES asked the First Commissioner of Works, If he can state the reasons for the inclosure of a piece of ground in St. James's Park, between Spring Gardens and Carlton House Terrace; and, whether, if there is any objection to the removal of the railings, there is any ground why access within them should not be given to the public?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: Sir, the plot of land to which the hon. Member refers has always been inclosed by iron rails, because, I believe, it lies near the entrance to the Park, and if the grass were trampled down it would be a disfigurement to the Park. It would not be desirable to remove the fences; but I have given directions that a gate shall be opened in the summer time, when people may care to sit under the trees there.

POOR LAW (ENGLAND)—THE OLDHAM GUARDIANS—CATHOLIC CHILDREN.

Mr. BELLINGHAM asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether his attention has been drawn to a statement in the papers that the Oldham guardians have refused to allow Catholic children to attend any other place of worship than the Church of England; whether such a statement be true; and, if so, whether such a course of proceeding is justifiable; and, whether he can take any steps in the matter; and, whether it is a fact that a large proportion of this body were Radicals and Liberals?

Mr. DODSON: Sir, there has been no correspondence on the subject, and I can give no information in regard to it. I will, however, request the Inspector of the district to take an early opportunity of visiting the Union and ascertaining the facts of the case. I did not hear the last part of the Question.

NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—MODEL SCHOOLS.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has any objection to explain why, in their recent reports, the Commissioners of National Education have not stated the average yearly attendance at each department of the Model Schools; whether more detailed information on this point will be given in the report for 1880; and, whether he can state how many Model School departments had an average attendance of thirty, or under, during the years 1878, 1879, and 1880, and how many of these departments had the benefit of assistant teachers?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: Sir, the reason why the Commissioners of National Education have not given the statistics referred to is on account of the expense of publishing such minute details. They have, however, decided to give them triennially, and the Report for 1880 will contain them. The hon. Member will find in that Report that in the year 1878 there were eight school departments, with an average attendance of 30 or under, four of which had assistant teachers; that in 1879 there were eight departments, three of which had assistant teachers, and that in 1880 there were seven departments, three of which had assistant teachers. These assistant teachers will be transferred to other schools as vacancies occur, and we hope they will disappear altogether from the smaller schools.

THE CIVIL SERVICE—THE "PLAYFAIR SCHEME."

Mr. JOHN HOLLOND asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, To what officer of the Crown the scheme known as "The Playfair Scheme" of re-organisation has been applied, and whether it is intended to apply it to all offices; whether the Treasury is prepared to grant special allowances, under section 7 of the Superannuation Act (22 Vic. c. 26), to all persons willing to retire from office in order that the scheme in question may be applied; and, whether, in offices in which clerks of obsolete establishments remain unabsorbed, steps have been taken to secure to lower division clerks the advantages of duty pay held out to them in the 16th Clause of the Order in Council of the 12th of February 1876?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH: Sir, I am afraid I cannot adequately reply to the hon. Member without asking the House to allow me to exceed, in some degree, the usual limits of an answer. I should explain, first of all, that the Playfair Scheme had its origin in the Report of a Departmental Committee of Inquiry, appointed in 1874, which the present Chairman of Committees presided over; but that the Report of this, as of all similar Committees, amounted to no more than a recommendation which the Government of the day might or might not, in the exercise of its discretion, adopt. A reference to the Order in Council of February 12, 1876, will show my hon. Friend the extent to which the Playfair Scheme has been adopted by the Government. Effect was given to so much only of the Report as provided for the introduction of a lower division into the Civil Service; and if hon. Members will refer to the Civil Service Establishment Estimates, they will find that clerks in the Lower Division have been largely adopted throughout the Service; and I may add that the Treasury is constantly being called upon to further the gradual re-organization of Offices on that basis. With respect to the Upper Division, the Government regard the Playfair Scheme as one way among several in which such a division may be formed; but they have not adopted it as the sole way of forming such a division. With regard to the second part of the Question, the Treasury is certainly not prepared to commit itself in unqualified terms to grant special allowances to all persons willing to retire from office in order that the scheme in question may be applied. Each case of the kind must be judged on its own merits, and the test applied to them must be the promise which they severally afford of increased economy and efficiency in the particular Office under consideration. Until this point is settled in each case, no question about special allowances to individuals can arise. With regard to the last part of the hon. Member's Question, I presume he refers to Offices in which clerks of some existing scale, which allows salaries above those of the Lower Division, have been permitted to remain on their actual scale of pay until they retire. In such cases, wherever it is possible, the clerks on the old and higher scale of pay are required to perform the duties which might otherwise be allotted to Lower Division clerks with duty pay. It is evident that in such cases the same duties would be paid for twice over, if this last part of the hon. Member's Question were answered in the affirmative; and I must observe that, apart from the actual performance of duties which exceed those covered by the ordinary scale of the Lower Division, no clerk of that Division has any claim whatever to duty pay. The Report of the Committee is in no point more decided than in the distinction which it draws between those periodical payments which are personal to the clerk and those extra payments, called duty pay, which are attached to certain duties, and accrue only to the Lower Division clerk who is called upon to perform and who actually performs them.

THE BERLIN CONFERENCE — THE FRENCH AT TUNIS.

Mr. RYLANDS asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether his attention has been directed to statements which have recently appeared in the press to the effect that at the time of the Berlin Conference it was distinctly stipulated by M. Waddington, and agreed to by Lord Beaconsfield and Lord Salisbury, that the price which England would pay for the occupation of Cyprus would be the concession to France of full and free leave, so far as England was concerned, to establish herself permanently at Tunis whenever it seemed good to her to do so; and that documents irretrievably committing the late Government on the subject of Tunis exist in the archives of the French Foreign Office; and, whether he can give the House any information in regard to these statements?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, I am, of course, unable to say what documents may exist in the archives of the French Foreign Office. Some conversations took place at the time of the Congress of Berlin between Lord Salisbury and M. Waddington, in which the position of France towards Tunis was mentioned; but Lord Salisbury demurred to the construction which was put upon his words, and I do not think that it would be wise to re-open the subject.

Mr. MONTAGUE GUEST asked, If the hon. Baronet would state whether there was any letter from the Foreign Minister of France to the late Government, detailing an account of the conversation which took place between him and Lord Salisbury; and, if so, whether the hon. Baronet would lay it on the Table?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: There are a considerable number of despatches on the subject; but I am very doubtful whether it would be desirable to lay them on the Table of the House.

ARMY DISCIPLINE AND REGULATION (ANNUAL) BILL—SUMMARY PUNISHMENTS—THE 4th CLAUSE.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS, who had given Notice to ask the Secretary of State for War, Whether, before the Second Reading of the Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual) Bill, he will lay upon the Table of the House a Copy of the Rules to be made by him with respect to summary punishment under the 4th Clause, wished to know whether the Rules, as printed this morning, were the final Rules?

Mr. CHILDERS observed, that no Notice had been given of the latter Question. The Secretary of State had power to make Rules from time to time; but for the present the Rules, as published, were final.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—PRISONERS IN KILMAINHAM GAOL.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the writ for rent served on Mr. Patrick Fury, in Kilmainham Prison, on the 16th instant, was served in the ordinary visiting cell of the prison; and, if so, how the person who served the writ contrived to pass it through the pair of iron gratings, separated from each other by a space of several feet, which stand between the visitor and the prisoner; if the writ was not served in the visiting cell, then where, and in what manner, it was served; whether facilities denied to ordinary visitors were afforded to the person who came to serve the writ; and, whether it is to be understood that landlords, whose tenants, unconvicted of any offence, are confined in Kilmainham Prison, will be enabled by the Government to push forward processes of eviction, while the tenants are prevented, by the fact of their imprisonment, from acting in defence of their own interests?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: Sir, facilities were given for the service of the writ in question, and it was served in the ordinary way. The Government do not think that a man should be safe from the service of a notice for the non-payment of rent because he has been taken up on a warrant under the recent Act; nor do they think that any additional facilities should be given for obtaining the payment of rent. At the same time, they wish, as far as possible, to prevent his suffering in any civil case in which he has taken action against any other person.

SOUTH AFRICA—BASUTOLAND (NEGOTIATIONS).

Mr. W. H. JAMES asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If he can state to the House whether any information has been received as to any modification of the terms of peace to be offered to the Basutos by the Cape Government?

Sir WILFRID LAWSON asked, Whether any information had been received as to the reported six hours' fighting, in which General Carrington was said to have been wounded?

Mr. GRANT DUFF: Sir, my hon. Friend will, perhaps, allow me to answer his Question, and to tell him that we have received no information upon that subject; but Sir Hercules Robinson has told us that he has again urged Lerothodi to place himself unreservedly in his hands. As to the reported fighting, I believe the telegram to be correct.

AFGHANISTAN—CANDAHAR (POLITICAL AFFAIRS).

Sir HENRY TYLER asked the Secretary of State for India, If he will be good enough to state the amount of military force with which he expects the Ameer of Cabul, Abdul Rahman, will occupy Candahar and Southern Afghanistan on the withdrawal of the British troops?

Mr. ONSLOW asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether it is true, as stated in the "Times" of that morning, that General Hume, commanding at Candahar, refused to leave it on sanitary and humane grounds, and whether any special arrangements have been made to secure the health of the troops marching at this season of the year, now that the Government have ordered their immediate withdrawal from Candahar?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Sir, the information which has been received, and which was communicated to the House last week, was to the effect that 4,000 Infantry and 1,000 Cavalry had left Cabul for Candahar. I am not aware whether this force is to be followed by any larger one, or what are the numbers of the forces to be collected locally at Candahar. As to time, it is believed that the Cavalry would reach Candahar in about 12 days from the date of their departure from Cabul; I do not recollect what the date was. It was expected that the Infantry would reach Cabul four days after the Cavalry. I have received no information whatever which corroborates the statement referred to in the Question of the hon. Member for Guildford (Mr. Onslow).

NAVY—QUARTERMASTERS OF ROYAL MARINES.

Mr. GORST asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether it is a fact that Quartermasters of the Royal Marines are not eligible for Greenwich Hospital Pensions, either as men or officers; and, if so, whether their case will be considered by the Committee recently appointed to inquire into Naval and Greenwich Hospital Pensions?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, the quartermasters of Royal Marines are not eligible for Greenwich Hospital pensions as officers or as men. Receiving as they do 10*s.* a-day retirement, they are not fitted to be recipients of the 5*d.* and 9*d.* a-day age pension, and no officer's pension has been allotted to their class, the fact being, I suppose, that their well-deserved promotion has placed them in a better position as compared with that in which they entered the Service than is the case with any other class of officers in the Navy. Their case does not come within the scope of the Pensions Committee.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—LEGAL PROCEEDINGS OF LANDLORDS.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant o Ireland, Whether many Irish landlords have, in their legal proceedings against their tenants, resorted to the Superior Courts instead of to the Courts of Quarter Sessions; and, if he will be willing to produce periodical Returns of the number of Writs issued out of the Inferior Courts in such cases, where, at much less cost to the defendants, proceedings might have been taken in the local Courts?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: Sir, if the hon. Member will refer to the Returns No. 40 and No. 93, presented on the 28th of January and 21st of February last, he will find the answer to the Question. These Returns show that not many Irish landlords have resorted to the Superior Courts for proceedings against their tenants. It appears from the first of the Returns to which I have referred that the number of judgments entered up in the High Court of Justice for non-payment of rent during the eight months preceding the 31st of August was 56, as against 674 decrees in the Inferior Courts, in the Michaelmas Session alone, and that there were 19 judgments in the Superior Courts between the 1st of January and the 1st of September, as against 506 in the Lower Courts.

ARMY RE-ORGANIZATION—DISTINGUISHED SERVICE PENSIONS.

Captain O'SHEA asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, under the reorganisation scheme, general officers who are in receipt of distinguished service pensions will lose them on compulsory retirement, and will retain no advantage over officers who have not received those rewards?

Mr. CHILDERS: Sir, in reply to my hon. Friend I have to remind him that, under the present system, a general officer, on appointment to the colonelcy of a regiment, is obliged to give up his good-service reward; and I see no reason why he should not do so when, under the new system, he is retired on a pension. I could not consent to make so great an addition to the charge for general officers as my hon. Friend's suggestion would involve. I may remind him that all present general officers will be allowed the option of the present or the future system in respect of half-pay and retired pay.

LANDLORD AND TENANT (IRELAND) ACT, 1870, COMMISSION (THE EARL OF BESSBOROUGH'S) — THE EVIDENCE.

Sir HERVEY BRUCE asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Having regard to the serious charges made against many persons in the first volume of the Evidence given before Lord Bessborough's Commission, when the second volume, which it is understood will contain contradictions and explanations, will be printed?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: Sir, I am as anxious as anyone can be to get the second volume of Evidence out as soon as possible, and I have done all I could with that object; but the matter rests with the printer in Dublin. He promises that the volume will be completed and ready to be despatched from Dublin next Thursday. Of course, it will be circulated, immediately on the receipt of it, at the Stationery Office here.

MR. PLUNKET asked the right hon. Gentleman when the index would be issued?

MR. W. E. FORSTER said, he hoped the index would be out soon; but he could not say exactly when. A digest of the evidence of each witness was published in the second volume.

MERCANTILE MARINE — TRAWLERS' LIGHTS' COMMITTEE.

MR. HENEAGE asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, in the event of the Motion of the honourable Member for Norfolk, with regard to trawler's lights, being again postponed in consequence of the urgency of Government Business, the Government will undertake that no steps shall be taken towards carrying out the recommendations of the Departmental Committee on trawler's lights, which is at direct variance with the Report of the Select Committee appointed last Session, and the evidence given before it, until the House has had an opportunity of fully discussing the question?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY, in reply, said, that the Board of Trade would delay as long as possible acting on the Report of the Committee, in order to allow the Motion to be previously discussed in the House; but they could not do so indefinitely, as the regulations had to be published a certain time before they could be acted upon.

DOMINION OF CANADA—IRISH EMIGRATION.

MR. ANDERSON asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, If any reply has been sent by Her Majesty's Government to a message forwarded by the Governor General from the Privy Council of Canada, sympathising with Irish distress, and desiring to co-operate for its relief; if it be the fact that the measure offered by Canada is, that the Imperial Government should subsidise an emigration scheme that is to cost £80 per family, while Canada is to get the benefit of the new labour, but to bear no part of the pecuniary cost, and do nothing beyond what she now does for all other immigrants; if it be the fact that part of the British Government subsidy would, under the scheme, be applied in paying the Canadian Government a patent fee of £2 for each grant of land, while that land was ceded to Canada by Britain free; and, if the foregoing allegations are well founded, whether Her Majesty's Government will, in any negotiations that may follow, propose a more equal arrangement?

MR. GRANT DUFF: Sir, in reply to my hon. Friend's first Question, I have to say that the Governor General of the Dominion has been informed that the matter has been referred to the Irish Government. In reply to his second and third Questions, I have to say that, as I read the despatch, the offer of the Dominion Government is a very much more liberal one than he supposes. In reply to his fourth Question, I have to say that I make no doubt that, if further negotiations take place, Her Majesty's Government will be as desirous as I am sure that the Dominion Government will be that the arrangements made should be fair to all parties.

ARMY RE-ORGANIZATION (AUXILIARY FORCES)—PROMOTION IN THE MILITIA.

MR. DALRYMPLE asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether promotion in the Militia regiments, which will now be the 3rd and 4th battalions of the Territorial Regiment, is to be in the battalion in which the vacancy occurs, or whether officers may be liable to be promoted out of their own battalion into the other Militia battalion of the Territorial Regiment?

MR. CHILDERS: Sir, in reply to the hon. Member, I have to say that I had not intended to disturb the rule of promotion in Militia battalions; but I am much obliged to him for his suggestion, which we will consider.

CONFERENCE AT BERLIN—GREEK INHABITANTS OF CEDED TURKISH PROVINCES.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether in making or sanctioning any proposals for annexing of portions of Turkish territory to Greece, Her Majesty's Government have taken any steps to ascertain whether such annexation will be acceptable to the population of the districts proposed to be thus ceded; if so, what is the nature of such steps, and whether the Correspondence detailing them can be laid upon the Table; and, whether the text of the Petitions addressed to the Conference of Berlin by the inhabitants of several districts in Albania and Thessaly can be presented to Parliament?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, Her Majesty's Government have taken steps to ascertain the feeling of the population in the territory proposed to be ceded. Her Majesty's Government have every reason to believe that the Christian population, which in the territory which was the subject of the proposals of Berlin amounted to six-sevenths of the whole, and which in Thessaly alone formed a much larger proportion, is unanimously in favour of annexation; and Her Majesty's Government hope that any Mussulmans who may be transferred to Greek rule will enjoy better security for life and property than at present, and will receive those ample guarantees in regard to their religion and their civil and political rights which were stipulated for by Lord Odo Russell at the fifth meeting of the Conference at Berlin. The Petitions addressed to the Conference were not sent to the respective Governments; but their titles and purport are printed with the Protocols in the Parliamentary Papers, Greece, No. 3, 1880.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked the hon. Baronet whether further Papers would be published before Easter?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, I think it highly improbable that Papers upon the subject will be laid on the Table before Easter. It is the desire of all the Ambassadors now at Constantinople that the strictest secrecy shall be observed with regard to their proceedings.

CUSTOMS RE-ORGANIZATION—CUSTOMS CLERKS (LIVERPOOL).

Lord CLAUD HAMILTON asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the Treasury have yet arrived at any decision in reference to the memorial from the Liverpool Customs Clerks, dated last May, asking the equality, hitherto allowed, with clerks performing analogous duties in London; and, if so, in what manner it is intended to improve the recent classification which has entirely failed to give satisfaction to the clerks of the second class, who complain that, whereas the clerks in London and other outports were materially benefited by the re-organisation, not a single case of promotion was effected by it at Liverpool?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH: Sir, I must say, in the first place, that although the re-organization did not give any immediate promotion to the clerks at Liverpool, I cannot admit that they received no benefit by it. I should be prepared to give the details on which this opinion is founded; but it would be difficult to make scales of salary intelligible within the limits of an answer. With regard to the Memorial, I find that the reply of the Treasury was, by some inadvertence, not communicated to the memorialists by the Board of Customs. Upon the application of the memorialists for the transmission of their Memorial to the Treasury, they were informed that it was proposed in future, instead of confining promotion to the limits of their own establishment, to make the second-class clerks at Liverpool eligible for advancement to higher posts at the outports generally, and the second-class clerks at other outports eligible for first-class clerkships at Liverpool. The chances of promotion were thus, to a great extent, equalized throughout the service; and the Treasury expressed their satisfaction with the arrangements, by which they considered that the complaints of the memorialists were adequately met. I understand that the effect of the arrangement already has been that two Liverpool clerks have obtained promotion, which they would not otherwise have had. Under the new scheme, 55 may rise from £80 to £250; the difference of number is due to the writers who may become clerks. Under the old system the progress from £230 to £540 was broken twice at £340 and £440. Under the new scale there is only one break at £400 between £265 and £600, and this break is in four instances at £450, including duty pay, instead of £400. The change involves an average increase of more than £2,600 per annum.

POST OFFICE—INDICATORS TO PILLAR LETTER-BOXES.

MR. BRYCE asked the Postmaster General, Whether he can now give to the House the further information which he promised regarding the affixing to pillar letter-boxes of indicators, showing when the last clearance was made?

MR. FAWCETT, in reply, said, he was happy to inform his hon. Friend that he would find a Vote in the Estimates in reference to the supplying of the indicators in question. He intended to have them affixed, with the least possible delay, not only to all pillar-boxes, but to all wall letter-boxes in the United Kingdom.

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL (NEGOTIATIONS).

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE (for Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, When the Royal Commissioners in the Transvaal will commence their work; and, whether the Instructions to the Commission and any Despatches on the general subject will be laid before Parliament in addition to the telegrams already presented?

MR. GRANT DUFF: The right hon. Gentleman will, perhaps, allow me to answer his Questions. As to the first, I have to say that my noble Friend is in communication with Sir Hercules Robinson with regard to the place at which and the time when the Commission should meet. I may add that Her Majesty's Government is anxious that it should commence its labours as soon as possible. As to the second, I have to say that the Correspondence has been almost entirely telegraphic, and has been already laid before Parliament. As to the third, I am not yet able to make any reply.

MR. GORST asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he will lay upon the Table of the House the Instructions issued to the Commander of the British Troops remaining in the Transvaal till the final settlement, as to the manner in which those Troops are to perform the duty of preventing the party that has been loyal to the British Government from using the situation to the prejudice of the Boers?

MR. GRANT DUFF: Sir, this Question has been passed on to me by my right hon. Friend; and, in reply to it, I have to say that during the interval, until the country is handed over to the Boers, it will be our duty to maintain order as far as possible, and the troops would, if required, act in support of the civil authorities, without any special instruction. But the Commissioners will direct their attention to this as well as other points; and Sir Evelyn Wood will proceed, as soon as his other duties permit, to Pretoria to make the necessary arrangements.

MR. GORST asked, Whether the Instructions to the Commission would be laid on the Table before Easter?

MR. GRANT DUFF: I can give no certain reply to that Question; but I should hope they may be.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK: With reference to a statement in this morning's paper, that all English residents have been ordered out of the Transvaal, and that refugees returning to their homes in that country are threatened with confiscation, said, he trusted there was no foundation for the rumour, and hoped Her Majesty's Government would be able to contradict it.

MR. GRANT DUFF: In reply to my hon. Friend, I have to say that no such information has reached us, and I give no credence to the rumour.

STREET TRAFFIC (METROPOLIS)—THE VESTRIES.

MR. CARINGTON asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he will take into consideration the advisability of counselling the vestries of the west end of London to depart from or to modify their usual practice of repairing the main thoroughfares of London during the busiest times of the year?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Sir, the hon. Member is probably aware that I have no authority over the Vestries, and I never found that very much good was done by giving advice to those who were not obliged to act on it. The Vestries are supposed to consult the interests of the district they administer. They are elected by the persons who live in those districts, and the proper remedy would be for the electors to take care to elect those persons who will consult their interest.

TURKEY AND GREECE—THE FRONTIER QUESTION.

MR. BOURKE gave Notice that tomorrow, if convenient to the Prime Minister, he would ask the right hon. Gentleman, Whether a statement with respect to the Greek Frontier would be made before the Easter Recess?

MR. COOPE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether a map might not be hung in the Library showing the successive frontiers offered by Turkey and discussed by the representatives?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he would communicate with the Intelligence Department of the War Office as to whether such a map could be placed in the Reading Room for the use of hon. Members.

HIGHWAYS—MAINTENANCE OF MAIN ROADS.

In reply to Mr. HENEAGE,

MR. E. W. HARCOURT said, that if he was not able before 10 o'clock that night to bring on his Motion in reference to the maintenance of main roads, the Government had promised him the first day after Easter for that purpose.

MR. GLADSTONE: The Government cannot possibly give the first day after Easter. The hon. Member will remember that that day is already heavily mortgaged.

MR. E. W. HARCOURT said, he understood he had been promised the first day.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: As I remember it, the Government promised that they would endeavour to give the hon. Member the earliest day they could after Easter.

MOTION.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Ordered, That the Orders of the Day, subsequent to the Order for the Second Reading of the Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual) Bill, be postponed until after the Notices of Motions relating to the Maintenance of Main Roads and Fishing Vessels' Lights.—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

ORDER OF THE DAY.

ARMY DISCIPLINE AND REGULATION (ANNUAL) BILL.—[BILL 123.]

(*Mr. Secretary Childers, the Judge Advocate General, Mr. Trevelyan.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. OSBORNE MORGAN, in rising to move that the Bill be now read a second time, said, he understood that it was the general wish of the House that the debate should conclude at an hour which would enable the hon. Member for Oxfordshire (Mr. E. W. Harcourt) to bring forward the Motion for which he had twice secured a first place, but which place he had each time lost through what he (Mr. Osborne Morgan) might call the fortune of war. It would, however, scarcely be respectful or fair to the House if a Bill of this importance, involving, as it did, a considerable change in the discipline of the Army, should be thrown upon the Table of the House without a single word of explanation. What he proposed to do was to make the statement which he would have made if he had had the opportunity on the bringing in of the Bill, and he would confine himself to that which was the only novel or controversial point in it—he alluded to the abolition of corporal punishment, and the substitution for it of other summary punishments. He knew that was a question upon which military men felt strongly and expressed themselves warmly; and for that reason, as well as for every other, he would take care not to say a single word which could offend, he would not say the prejudice—that would not be the proper word—but the honest conviction of any hon. or gallant Member on either side of the House. He need not appeal on that point to the right hon. and gallant Member opposite (Colonel Stanley), because he was always fair, and no Minister ever encountered a more courteous critic or a more generous opponent. But he would ask, was it possible, or if it was possible, was it desirable to retain this shred—this mere fragment of punishment—which was condemned by popular opinion, which had been discarded by every other European Power, and which military critics admitted, however efficacious it might have been at former times, was, as at present restricted, not now worth keeping? That question would, no doubt, have to be determined by professional experts; but it could not be looked at altogether from a military standpoint. It must also be looked at from a popular point of view, for the numbers of our Army were kept up entirely by voluntary enlistment. As the Inspector General of Recruiting said—

> "It must always be borne in mind that the Army is a voluntary Army, and that the secret of its strength in a recruiting point of view consists in its popularity throughout the country."

If, therefore, there were any cause which kept the best men out of the Army, it would not be denied, he thought, that a *primâ facie* case had been made out for the removal of that cause. Public opinion had undergone a very great change with respect to this question. There was a time when men were flogged for slight breaches of discipline. In the year 1868 his hon. Friend the Member for Rochester (Mr. Otway) carried an Amendment to the Bill with reference to the abolition of corporal punishment in time of peace. He was not in the House at the time his hon. Friend did so; but he well remembered the prophecies which were indulged in as to the future of the Army if the Amendment were carried. It was said that the Army would become a mere armed mob—that if corporal punishment were abolished other punishments would have to be doubled or tripled. Those were the prophecies; but what, however, were the facts? He had examined the Returns of general, district, and regimental courts martial at home and abroad from 1865 to 1879, with especial reference to the number of punishments inflicted. In the year 1866 the total number of punishments—510 men being flogged—was 22,832; but in 1868—the last year in which corporal punishment was inflicted—the number of punishments rose to 25,804. He ought, however, to say that this was the year of the Abyssinian War, and in war time it might, perhaps, be expected that the number of offences would increase. In the year 1869, when no man was flogged, the number of punishments fell to 18,128; and in the following year, in which there was only one flogging, it had come down as low as 12,664. Between that time and the year 1879 the number of punishments fluctuated; but it never rose higher than 15,877, which was the year of the Afghan War. The proportions of punishments per 1,000 men in the Army were—In 1866, 125; in 1867, 124; in 1868, 144; in 1869, 107; in 1870, 77; and in 1878, 88. The decrease in the gross number of punishments by court martial was doubtless due, in some degree, to the fact that, in cases of drunkenness, fines had been inflicted by commanding officers; but it was also due, and he thought in a large extent, to the abolition of the lash, which had decreased the ratio of crime in the Army, by inducing a better class of men to enlist. He was sorry he could not bring his statistical statements down to a later date, owing to the fact that the Returns had not been completed. That brought him to the Army Discipline Bill, 1879, during the passage of which his noble Friend the present Secretary of State for India (the Marquess of Hartington) introduced a Motion the object of which was to condemn the permanent retention of corporal punishment in the Army. That Notice was rejected by a large majority. But did that majority represent the feelings of the country? Anyone who pleased might easily test that for himself. Let him go down to any borough in the Kingdom, and put at the head of his address—"I am in favour of retaining flogging in the Army." He wondered what that man's chances of being returned would be. But he would not rely on his own opinion. At the commencement of this Session the hon. Member for Manchester (Mr. Slagg), who seconded the Address in reply to the Gracious Speech from the Throne, and who had a better right to speak on the subject than any man in the House, for he had been returned by the largest number of votes recorded for any candidate at the late Election, said that in the large constituencies, which were the largest recruiting grounds for the Army, no Message from the Throne could be more acceptable than that which promised an abolition of corporal punishment in the Army. It was the opinion of the men best qualified to judge that the punishment of the lash had had the effect of deterring the best class of men from which the rank and file of the Army could be drawn from entering the Army. It did not, of course, deter the village ruffian class from joining the Army; but it had certainly kept out of it many men of a higher class who would have been glad to look on the Army as a profession. Of late years, and particularly since flogging had been reduced to a minimum, this better class of men were beginning to join the Army in such considerable numbers as to lead to the conclusion that the soldiers of the future would be a very much superior class of men to the soldiers of the past, or even of the present time. He gathered this from the Annual Report of the Inspector General of Recruiting for 1881. The Returns of the Army on the educational acquirements of the men serving also showed a decided improvement. On the 1st of January, 1861, there were 76 per 1,000 of superior education, and on the 1st of January, 1872, the ratio had increased to 137 per 1,000, from which year the increase became much more rapid, until the proportion on January 1, 1880, reached 576 per 1,000. But there was one more important fact which was constantly overlooked in dealing with this question. In 1879 flogging in the Army was abolished altogether, even in time of war, except for offences punishable with death, which were those of treachery, cowardice, mutiny, or violent insubordination, and in a few other cases, such as that of a sentry sleeping at his post. As to cases of cowardice, you could not make men brave by flogging them; and it was mere maudlin sentimentality to say that a man guilty of treachery should not be shot, because if such a man should not be shot, he did not know any crime for which the punishment of shooting should be inflicted. In the German Army there was no punishment for mutiny except that of death. Yet, during the whole of the Franco-German War, only three men were shot for the offence in the German Army. By the course taken by the late Secretary of State for War, by far the largest proportion of the offences for which in former days the lash was the punishment were no longer so punishable. He alluded principally to offences which were the result of drinking, a habit to which English soldiers were, perhaps, more prone than the soldiers of any other European country. It was said, with at least some share of justice, that the lash was the readiest, and perhaps the most appropriate, punishment that could be inflicted for drunkenness, and the crimes which resulted from that inherent vice of the British Army; but the late Secretary of State for War, by the changes which he had made in the Bill of 1879, had deprived himself of this plea for its maintenance, and he supported the proposal of the noble Lord. Flogging, as limited by that Bill, could not be defended. The only excuse for it—namely, that it could be resorted to when imprisonment was impossible and death too severe—was gone. As his hon. and gallant Friend (Sir Henry Havelock-Allan) had stated in 1879, some other form of punishment would have to be devised to replace it, and that speedily. He had taken the trouble to have a Return prepared of the number of cases of corporal punishment which had been rife in the field, and reported to him, since the 12th of May, 1880, when he entered Office. Since that time we had had two serious wars—one in the Transvaal, during which only one case of corporal punishment had at present been reported to him, and that had been remitted, and the other in Afghanistan, during which there were only 15 cases of corporal punishment. Practically, therefore, corporal punishment had been killed by the Act of 1879. A letter on the subject, which had appeared in *The Standard* recently, proved too much; for if it proved anything, it went to show that the Act of 1879 should be repealed altogether—a course which Parliament, he felt sure, would not be prepared to adopt. Practically, therefore, there were only three courses open to Her Majesty's Government in this matter. They might have left things as they were—a course which it was impossible to take at the present time. Secondly, they might have abolished flogging in the Army altogether, as they had done in the Navy, without providing any substitute for it; but, in doing so, they would have done that which had been done in no other Army in the world. It must be remembered that while on the march a soldier could not be put in irons as a sailor could be at any time on board ship. The third course was that which was proposed by the Bill—namely, to abolish corporal punishment altogether, and to substitute for it some other form of summary punishment, not that, as he hoped, these summary punishments would, with the improving condition of the Army, be often resorted to. No doubt, the punishment list of the British Army was a very black record. But there were not wanting signs of a better state of things. A Return lately moved for by the hon. Baronet the Member for King's County (Sir Patrick O'Brien) of the number of offences committed in each regiment showed a most extraordinary result; in some regiments crime being almost unknown, while in others nearly every third man was a criminal. There was a redeeming feature in the Return, for it did seem to show, some way or other, how he would not pretend to say, that you could make the British soldier pretty nearly what you liked; and that if, on the one hand, he could be powerfully influenced for evil, on the other hand he could be powerfully influenced for good. How was that object to be carried out? They would not do it by the lash; they would not do it by these summary punishments, however necessary they might be; but they would do it by raising the character and *morale* of the soldier, by removing the temptations to drunkenness, which was his greatest curse. They would do it by the means which his right hon. Friend proposed to adopt, and he hoped successfully. They would do it by raising the character and *status* of the non-commissioned officer. They would do it by giving the soldier something to live for and hope for, and by cultivating in his breast that sentiment of self-respect which, in the opinion of one of England's greatest soldiers, Sir Frederick Roberts, so far from being an enemy of discipline, was its surest and firmest ally.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Osborne Morgan.*)

COLONEL STANLEY, after expressing his pleasure at finding that the right hon. and learned Gentleman entertained an earnest desire to promote the welfare of the soldier, said, the events of 1879 were not far from them, and so many of the Members took place in the discussions on the subject in that year, that he did not think it either incumbent or advisable for him to speak more than very briefly on the references which the right hon. and learned Gentleman had made to what passed in 1879. This, of course, had been apparent all along—that the debate which they were commencing pointed really only to one foregone conclusion; and, therefore, he might confine himself to some very few points on the several questions which had been raised by the right hon. and learned Gentleman. The right hon. and learned Gentleman talked of corporal punishment as it was formerly understood—namely, punishment by the "Cat," as being done away with by this Bill; but, undoubtedly, it was to be replaced by a corporal punishment which might be one of extreme severity, and which, as far as the soldier was concerned, if carried out publicly, might convey to his mind a very considerable sense of degradation. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had read to the House certain figures with the view of instituting a comparison between the Army at one period and another; but such a comparison was fallacious, inasmuch as the conditions of the Service were not identical at both periods. The right hon. and learned Gentleman said that corporal punishment had a deterrent effect on recruiting; but that was a point on which there was a variety of opinion, for while there were many who would agree with him, there were others who took an opposite view on grounds equally satisfactory to themselves. The right hon. and learned Gentleman also pointed out with satisfaction that the class of men who had lately been coming into the Army was of a better class than formerly. That was an argument that cut both ways, because, if a better class of men had come and were now coming into the Army, it was quite clear that the existence of corporal punishment had not deterred that class from entering the Army. It would be remembered that when this subject was before the House in 1879, he (Colonel Stanley) was pressed very hard to abolish corporal punishment by the lash. The Army was then in the field, and such information as he was able to obtain did not satisfy him that it was right at that time to abolish the punishment. The Government, however, thought that if they could possibly meet the general feeling of the House they ought to leave nothing undone calculated to lead to that result; and as the Returns of courts martial showed that in the large majority of cases of corporal punishment the number of lashes given was 25 or under, they thought they could adopt the system embodied in the Act of 1879 without injury to the Service. The right hon. and learned Gentleman pointed out that the concessions then made, and the general feeling of the House as it was then expressed, had so minimized the amount of corporal punishment that its retention was rendered practically of no importance. He (Colonel Stanley) might be thought obstinate or prejudiced; but he adhered to the opinion that the course which the late Government took in 1879 with regard to corporal punishment was the right course to take at the time. He was pretty conversant with the arrangements which the right hon. and learned Gentleman proposed; and though he (Colonel Stanley) might have been wrong, he came to the conclusion, at the time he was the responsible Executive Minister, that they could not be carried out satisfactorily to the maintenance of discipline in the Army. He thought that when they reached the stage of Committee, it would be incumbent on the right hon. and learned Gentleman, and on those who acted with him, to make it perfectly clear that discipline could be kept up effectually under this measure. If their positions were reversed, what interruptions would have proceeded from Benches on that (the Opposition) side of the House if he (Colonel Stanley) had ventured to say that for many crimes which came under the notice of the Judge Advocate General the appropriate punishment would be death. The right hon. and learned Gentleman was not fettered by professional prejudice; and he, no doubt, looked at the matter from a popular point of view. Whether in a constituency or in the Army, he did not think there would be much hesitation as to the answer that would be given if the alternative were proposed between death and corporal punishment, as they proposed it in 1879. He did not think, in the General Election of 1880, a question on the subject was asked him half-a-dozen times; and, so far as the persons with whom he came into contact were concerned, there seemed to be no very strong general feeling about it. As regarded this stage of the Bill, it was not his own intention, nor, he believed, the intention of those with whom he habitually acted, to offer any opposition. Of course he felt strongly on the subject; but if the Government were satisfied they could maintain discipline in the manner proposed, so much the better. The responsibility must rest with them; and he only hoped that the present proposal was well considered, and not made merely with the view of redeeming a pledge given in a moment of excitement. He hoped, also, that they were not now making an alteration which would in any way weaken discipline or diminish the power which a commander in the field should have in his hands. It was not only for the internal discipline of the Army, but also for the protection of the civil inhabitants of a country in which an Army was engaged in the field, that they should have the power of inflicting summary punishment; and he hoped that the application of this punishment might be so regulated as to give the commander in the field the most absolute power over the discipline of the men, should it be necessary. In view of the general tone of the discussions on the subject, and the very natural jealousy of the House and the Legislature to part with any of their authority over the Army, it seemed to him that the Secretary of State for War was claiming a very considerable power when he asked that the substitutes for flogging should be certain summary punishments regulated by rules to be made from time to time by the Secretary of State. That was a very great and vital departure from the old system. When the annual Discipline Bill was brought before the House for the future, there would be no power on their part to interfere except by way of address to the Crown. He could not sit down without saying he was glad to hear that the Judge Advocate was able to bear testimony to the general good working of the Army Discipline Bill of 1879. It was always satisfactory to hear that the gloomy predictions indulged in in former times had not been realized. He had no doubt upon the point himself; but he was glad to have his conviction confirmed by the right hon. and learned Gentleman. The whole responsibility for the course now proposed must rest with the Government; and he hoped, if they should find that the proposed arrangements did not work satisfactorily, they would not be precluded, by any feeling of false pride, if he might use the phrase, from making such changes and revisions in the rules as might be thought necessary; and it would add to the power of Ministers in this respect if they made the House of Commons one of the principal parties in the matter.

MR. RYLANDS said, he felt thankful to Her Majesty's Government for having dealt with this matter boldly and completely, and in a manner which, he believed, would be satisfactory to the country at large. The very best way for getting the Army recruited by a class of men not likely always to be in the hands of discipline was by doing away with a degrading punishment. The fact that it was possible for those who became soldiers to be exposed, under certain conditions, to such a punishment, caused men who respected themselves to shrink from entering the Army. While prepared to criticize the punishments substituted for flogging, he presumed the Government would say that those punishments were to be put upon their trial, and that, therefore, there should be a certain amount of elasticity in regard to them, so that the hands of the Administration might not be too closely bound, and that after a time they would consider whether any change should be made. He sympathized with the late Secretary of State for War in his remark as to handing over to the Government a very important power outside the control of Parliament. He would ask for some assurance that, after the experience of a year or two, the Government would put in the Bill itself a Schedule containing the punishments. Perhaps the right hon. and learned Gentleman would not be unwilling to consider, during the present year, whether he could not undertake that any changes made in the punishments should be laid upon the Table of the House.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he was inclined to exclaim, "How are the mighty fallen!" when he saw the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) so meek and submissive. If his right hon. and gallant Friend the late Secretary of State had ventured to propose one tithe of what had been proposed by the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite, words could not have expressed the abhorrence of the hon. Member. But now the hon. Member was like a sucking dove, he was so meek and mild, and ready to support the Government in any way. The hon. Member had forgotten his old characteristics, and had subsided into a humble follower and partizan of the existing Administration. The Judge Advocate General said, most truly, that it would not have done to lay so important a measure on the Table without a single word. He had hoped that the right hon. and learned Gentleman would have told the House something of the working of the Act of 1879, considering that recent wars must needs have enabled the authorities to form some opinion on the subject. Speaking of the war in the Transvaal, the right hon. and learned Gentleman had praised the behaviour of the troops, saying that there was no accusation against them, and that only one man had been flogged. But the right hon. and learned Gentleman must have been aware that very grave charges had been made against the troops both in Zululand and in the Transvaal on the well-known authority of Dr. Russell; charges which ought to have been at once refuted or withdrawn. It was understood that an inquiry had been ordered; but the result of the investigation remained unknown. If those charges were true, they proved the absence of proper discipline and the insufficiency even of the present military punishments; and if they were not true, they constituted a calumny on the British Army which no Minister for War should rest for one moment without authoritatively refuting. In any case, it was due to the Army that the real facts of the matter should be made known. No doubt there had been a denial by Sir Garnet Wolseley; but the statements to which he referred had not been authoritatively refuted; and he had heard it again stated that they were true. The House had been told by the right hon. and learned Gentleman that up to a certain point there was an enormous amount of crime, and that afterwards it gradually diminished. Thus in 1866 510 men were flogged, and, altogether, 22,832 were punished; while in 1868 the number of floggings had fallen to 412, though the total of punishments had risen to 25,804. The fact was that since this latter year a better class of men had been entering the Army, and the extreme punishments naturally became less frequent; but even now there was a yearly average of 15,000 punishments. He complained that the question had never yet been fairly dealt with, either by the House or by the public. The right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite had been unintentionally unfair to the late Parliament in stating that the majority in favour of retaining corporal punishment did not represent the views of the constituencies. It ought to have been said that flogging had been advocated by the present Secretary of State for War when he was at the Admiralty, and by the noble Marquess when Secretary of State for War, that the Leaders of both sides of the House had believed in its necessity, and that the military authorities were of the same opinion. No question had been more unscrupulously used against the late Government and the Conservative candidates at the time of the General Election; and even hon. Gentlemen who had given no vote on the subject had been denounced and caricatured as advocates of flogging. The truth was that no one wished to retain corporal punishment for its own sake, though the circumstances in which our Armies campaigned in various quarters of the world made it difficult to find a satisfactory substitute. For instance, it was hard to see in what other way such crimes as drunkenness in the face of the enemy could be punished—a crime which might lead to the most disastrous consequences. If the Austrian manacles were to be tried, he hoped that the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) would insist on having them exhibited in the Library, like the sealed patterns of the regulation "cats," so as to be seen by everyone. Hon. Members were not, as a rule, familiar with the punishments used in foreign Armies; but, whatever was done in the present case, it was certain that the new punishments would not be applied brutally. Again, all the rules made should be clear and explicit, and be inserted in the Bill; and when sanctioned by the House they should remain till another year, and not be altered at the will of any Minister. With regard to another point, the able Report of the Inspector General of Recruiting had just been received. He did not know why it had not been received before. It carefully distinguished between the two classes of deserters—namely, those who deserted absolutely, and those who, having deserted from one regiment, re-enlisted fraudulently into another regiment. At the same time, more complete statistics were wanted as to the number of deserters ultimately recovered. It appeared that in 1880 the net loss from desertion was 3,284 men, the total number of deserters being 4,811, of whom 1,527 rejoined; while in the year before the net loss was 1,800, and the total of deserters 3,050, of whom 1,250 rejoined. There were one or two other points which he desired to mention. In the first place, he should like to know why £10 was fixed upon as the sum to be paid by a recruit who at the expiration of three months did not wish to remain in the Service. Then there were very few cells at the depôt centres; and the consequence was that when a Militiaman had to be punished he was sent to the prison, instead of being placed in a cell. This was, in his opinion, detrimental, as far as the Militia was concerned. He had no doubt that the Secretary of State for War would do everything he could to maintain discipline. He was not asking for the retention of flogging; but he had ventured to make these remarks in order to show that hon. Gentlemen on that side of the House were just as anxious as hon. Gentlemen opposite that flogging, if it was possible, should be abolished. Still, discipline must be maintained; and on the Secretary of State for War he threw the whole of the responsibility.

SIR HENRY HAVELOCK-ALLAN said, that in the debates on the Army Discipline Bill of 1879 he expressed opinions in favour of retaining corporal punishment, on account of its being the most convenient and efficacious mode of dealing with cases of drunkenness or insubordination in presence of the enemy, or of marauding in the enemy's country. To that opinion he still adhered, and he would go even further, and say that the experience of the last campaign showed that a serious punishment was necessary, and that, failing the "cat," a graver one would probably have to be inflicted—namely, the punishment of death. He thought, however, when the late Secretary of State for War in his Schedule abolished corporal punishment as a means of meeting that particular class of offences to which he had referred, that at once and for ever the ground for the retention of corporal punishment in other cases was cut from under his feet. In this country public opinion would never allow them to take a backward step. Until the last General Election he had no idea how widely prevalent was the detestation among civilians of this kind of punishment. That detestation, no doubt, originated in the brutal manner in which corporal punishment used to be inflicted 25 or 30 years ago. The recollection of what then occurred had remained in the minds of the classes who had not themselves passed into the Military Service; but he believed that if the soldiers were polled, the universal opinion among them would be that no one need fear corporal punishment except by his own deliberate and wilful misconduct. The tenacity of popular delusions was most extraordinary; but as they existed they must be taken into account by legislators. As to the proposed alternative punishment, he was bound to say he did not feel sanguine that it would prove efficacious to put down drunkenness and insubordination in face of the enemy. He did not believe that by substituting it for flogging we should diminish either the cruelty or the degradation of the punishment. However, as soon as the House accepted the proposal of the late Secretary of State for War, that corporal punishment was to be done away with for the class of offences he had referred to, the decision was irrevocable. He thought the figures quoted by the right hon. and learned Gentleman afforded grounds for expecting a favourable solution of this matter eventually, unconnected with the degree and nature of the punishment which might be awarded. He believed that Government had settled the question in the only way open to them, and he had great confidence that the abolition of flogging would lead to the influx into the Army of a better class of men, who would be above committing the kind of crime for which corporal punishment was now inflicted.

Sir JOHN HAY did not see how, when they were all liable to be flogged for certain offences, the soldier should be exempted from similar treatment when he was guilty of the like offences. Fifteen or sixteen years ago an hon. Member was garotted on his way home, and next day they all came down to the House—a Liberal Government being in Office—and passed an Act of Parliament through both Houses to give the lash to any person guilty of garotting. Why should a soldier garotting his comrade escape from a punishment to which every one of them was liable? He could see no reason for it. It had been alleged that hon. Members were afraid to defend corporal punishment on the hustings, or before their constituents. He had defended it before his constituents, and on these particular grounds—that it would be very hard on any respectable person if he had not the same appliances for protection against disorderly and violent conduct in a soldier that they could get applied against anyone in civil life, and that it was a foolish pandering to ignorant prejudice, and that the result would be, in the first place, absence of discipline, and then the infliction of various tortures. Dragging men for 14 days with irons on their persons would be found impracticable, and the Secretary of State would then go in for the thumbscrew or the "Boot," or some of the modes of torture adopted in foreign countries; and he anticipated that that would be followed by a re-action in the country in favour of the lash. He would have an opportunity of speaking at greater length on the Navy Bill; but he thought it right to call attention to the circumstances of which he had spoken, before they passed an Act which he believed would be to the disadvantage of the Army.

Mr. BRADLAUGH said, he wished to say a few words on this matter from a different point of view than other Members who had spoken. He had been a private in the Army during the time that flogging was permitted for offences now described as trivial, and he heard the same argument used, that it would cause a relaxation of discipline if flogging were abolished. If hon. Members opposite knew the feeling of the soldiers at that time it would have much modified some of the speeches delivered to-day; and the hon. and gallant Member for Sunderland (Sir Henry Havelock-Allan) would be surprised to hear the number of letters he had received from private soldiers asking him to speak on this subject to-day. There was a feeling of utter detestation against the punishment, not simply on the part of the men who were likely to suffer from it, but on the part of everyone else. Private soldiers in England occupied a position which no other private soldier in the whole of Europe occupied; and he did not know any other country in the whole world where it was a disgrace to wear the uniform of the country. He remembered, upon one occasion, he went into an hotel in a great city and ordered a cup of coffee, and was told that he could not be served because he wore the uniform of his country. All punishments which made soldiers seem less reputable than their fellow-citizens ought to be abolished. He asked the Government to allow nothing whatever to influence them in favour of this most degrading punishment. The men who once felt the lash were not loyal to any command, and they felt a bitterness and an abhorrence of everyone connected with the ordering of the punishment. If they flogged a man engaged on active service he was either a good man or a bad man—a man of some spirit or none at all. If he were a man of any spirit there were weapons in his hands, and he might use them for purposes of revenge. The right hon. and gallant Member for Wigton Burghs (Sir John Hay) talked of men who preferred the lash. The Army would be far better without such men. He had seen the lash applied—the man tied up and stripped in the sight of his comrades; he had seen the body blacken and the skin break; he had heard the dull thud of the lash as it fell on the blood-soddened flesh, and he was glad of having the opportunity of making his voice heard against it to-day, and trusted that nothing would induce the Government to retain, under any conditions, such a brutal punishment.

Captain HERON-MAXWELL said, he was in the Service when corporal punishment was in full swing; and he never in his life witnessed such degrading, revolting scenes as when the soldier was lashed to the triangle on which he was placed, and had to submit to this degrading punishment. As a punishment for drunkenness, for which it was inflicted, he could say that it was perfectly useless. They would never flog a drunken soldier into sobriety. He hoped the Government would insist on carrying their Bill through. What they had to consider was, how they were to raise the tone of the British Army; and he held that they would never raise the moral tone or social position of the British soldier as long as corporal punishment remained. Only the other day he had the opportunity of discussing the subject with his constituents, including several who had sons enlisted in the Army; and they considered that those sons of theirs were lost to society, because they had enlisted in a Service in which punishment of this sort was involved. Instead of marching the soldier for hours in a barrack square, which did him no good, he submitted that he should be ordered to attend a military school, where education of some kind should be enforced, for it was only in that way that they could hope to make the soldier a more intelligent, reasonable, and valuable man.

Sir ALEXANDER GORDON said, the real question was the punishment they proposed to substitute for the flogging; and he feared they would not have much opportunity of discussing that in Committee. He wished to know whether, when it was stated on the part of the Government that the new Rules had received the approval of the highest military authorities, it was meant that they were sanctioned by the Commander-in-Chief and the Adjutant General, who were responsible for the discipline of the Army? He hoped the Secretary of State for War, when he came to speak on the subject, would tell them whether this was the case or not, because the statement would have great weight with the House. Of course, if those high authorities were in favour of these Rules the House would approve of it. He had seen sundry punishments put in practice both in the English and the French Army. He had seen a soldier lashed to the tail of a cart and drawn along the road because he would not march, and he had seen a French soldier lashed to a horse or a mule on the line of march—just as Mazeppa was lashed to the wild horse in the plain; and he should never forget the writhings and agony of the man to free himself from the position in which he was placed.

General Sir GEORGE BALFOUR pointed out that in the campaigns in Afghanistan, and particularly in Zululand, there had been many reports in the public Press of various disorders among the soldiers, for which corporal punishment was formerly authorized to be inflicted. Under this Bill, however, this kind of repression could no longer be applied, and it became important to find out the mode of maintaining discipline in the field. Now, he must remark that these disorders, he considered, arose from the fact that they sent men out into the field before they had been brought into a proper state of discipline. Seeing that Parliament had granted funds on a lavish scale for the efficiency of our Army, he complained publicly against that system of sending inexperienced men into the field—men who had been insufficiently drilled, who had not been trained to discipline, and who, by their ages and physical condition, were utterly incompetent to do the heavy field work. The first consideration was that no man should be allowed to join the Army as a soldier until such time as he had been proved to be fit for the ranks. That was a point to which the House of Commons had never given sufficient attention. No doubt, assurances had often been given in Parliament that no soldier under 20, and none under two years' service, should be deemed fit soldiers for war; but from the Reports and Returns and from newspaper articles it was clear that those assurances had not been kept. Nothing could be more conducive to the improvement and discipline of the Army than that the Commander-in-Chief should make annual Reports to the Secretary of State for War, on the state and condition of the soldiers in all respects, and that these Reports should be laid before Parliament, so that the Legislature might know whether our soldiers were qualified for duty in the ranks, as well as to take the field. In order, also, to prevent men from committing crime, he thought there should be a larger police force in the Army. Such a force would be invaluable in preventing young soldiers from getting drunk. It was folly which was more to be feared than any military crimes, of which there were usually few in active operations.

MR. DALRYMPLE observed, that there was the greatest unanimity in the House in favour of the Mutiny Bill passing; but he had not heard a single word said by anyone in favour of the new Rules. The hon. and gallant Member for Sunderland (Sir Henry Havelock-Allan) spoke with regard to the abolition of flogging for such crimes as drunkenness in the field; but it remained to be seen how such a crime as that was to be met by the new Rules. He confessed that, for a great and powerful Government, such as this Government professed to be, and one specially dedicated to humanity, he would desire, above all things, that the punishments inflicted upon our soldiers should not be of a degrading kind; but to find a Government of that kind proposing the Rules laid before the House a few days ago was a matter of great surprise to him. He would say nothing about putting an offender in irons; but he wondered what was to be said about attaching an offender to a cart or a horse while the men were on march. What kind of horse was this man to be attached to? If a horse of no value, it ought not to be retained in the Service; if a horse of any value, it would kick the man—and thus the proviso that no permanent mark should be left on the offender could not possibly be secured. There was, further, a provision that whilst the offender was in irons, or otherwise attached so as not to injure him, he might be moved from place to place in a cart or other vehicle. But there was the drunken soldier on a hot day in the cart, or a number of them, on the line of march. Could anything be more degrading, or anything more difficult to carry out? He should think that the self-respect of the offenders was likely to be offended by the punishments proposed. The hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) had spoken about the degradation of flogging, and also about the degradation of not being able to obtain a cup of coffee; but the connection between the two was not pointed out. If they were going to substitute a punishment which would not inflict injury on the self-respect of the soldier, it would not be found in these precious Rules laid on the Table. His own opinion was that no good soldier need ever in the least fear a flogging, and that the soldier not likely to be flogged was not likely to have his self-respect injured. If at all likely to be injured by flogging, it would be injured by these Rules. He would like to know whether the Rules had the sanction of the highest military authorities. If these Rules had not obtained their sanction, they were not likely to be looked upon by the House in a very favourable manner. But they knew the present Government did not lay great stress upon the opinions of such individuals, where not convenient. He was astonished that the terms of the Rules should not receive more attention from the House, as he did not see at what other time they could be discussed. In conclusion, he would suggest that specimens of the new manacles to be used should be hung up in the Members' cloak-room, after the same fashion as specimens of the "cat" were two years ago.

Mr. OTWAY, alluding to the early efforts of the advocates of the abolition of flogging in the Army, observed that it was a matter for regret that the disciples of progress opposed the change for some time in a very determined manner. That the leaders of the Liberal Party had at last been induced to take a course which ought to have been taken years ago was due to the persistent efforts of a small number of Members. The mistake made by hon. Members opposite was that they thought British soldiers were not constituted like the soldiers of other countries. He held that the English soldier was not a foul and degraded brute, who could only be disciplined by the lash. He had always felt, when asking the House to adopt a Resolution in favour of the abolition of flogging, that it was better to limit the change to the period of peace, as there was a great difficulty in finding a suitable punishment in the field. But he felt, also, that the question was one of such a character that whenever it came to be discussed it would have to be settled by abolition. It was quite possible that in a campaign it might be necessary to have the punishment of death; but he was certain that after that punishment had been inflicted the crime of which it was the penalty would cease, because soldiers were not fond of exposing their lives in that way any more than civilians. He thought that on the subject of flogging the statement of the hon. Member for Northampton would outweigh the opinions of hon. Members on the other side. By the abolition of flogging the Army would be relieved of a great degradation. He shared the opinion expressed by Jerome, King of Westphalia, that flogging "degrades the man and destroys the soldier." Although he could not express any enthusiasm about the new Rules, or even an appreciation of them, he heartily congratulated his right hon. Friend on having done so thoroughly that which he believed would prove to be a most beneficial reform.

Mr. HOPWOOD was proud of the triumph won by the Liberal Party in abolishing the odious punishment of flogging. It was the triumph of common sense over a brutal mode of dispensing justice and maintaining discipline; the triumph of the civilian population over those who governed the Army, and it was a triumph of the civilian Members of that House over those who claimed exclusive authority on discipline. Experience taught us that mere flogging would do little good. It was well known that one commander without punishment maintained discipline better than another could maintain it with the utmost severity. He congratulated the Government for having, so early in the Session, redeemed the pledges which they had given in the last, and satisfied the earnest desires of the whole civilian population from which the Army came; and he was quite sure there was no man belonging to the British Army that would not walk a prouder man from the day that the Bill received the Royal Assent.

Mr. CHILDERS thought the House would be anxious to pass from the present subject to the Motion of his hon. Friend the Member for Oxfordshire (Mr. Harcourt). He had, at first, thought of putting the substituted punishment in the Bill; but on consideration he thought the best course to pursue, until they had had some experience, would be to give the Secretary of State power to make, from time to time, the rules for the substituted punishment, although it was a responsibility which he by no means desired to undertake; but it would be very unfortunate if, by putting the Rules in the Schedule to the Bill, they should stereotype measures which it might be found convenient to alter. His hon. and gallant Friend the Member for East Aberdeenshire (Sir Alexander Gordon) had asked him whether the proposed Rules had been approved by the highest military authorities? His reply was that those authorities had been consulted; but that he had taken the same view of his duty which had been laid down in 1879 in reference to a similar question by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon, who was then Leader of that House, and who said that, although the Government had consulted the military authorities, they declined to shelter themselves behind them, and took upon themselves the full responsibility of what they had done. With respect to the question of the hon. and gallant Member for West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) about the controversy between Dr. Russell and Sir Garnet Wolseley, he could not without Notice say more than that he thought Dr. Russell had written well, but Sir Garnet Wolseley had written better. The criticism of the hon. Member for Buteshire (Mr. Dalrymple) on the suggested rules was very amusing. He said—"Imagine a drunken soldier in a cart on a hot day." He (Mr. Childers) had seen this terrible sight, and he must confess that it did not appal him. But he had every reason to anticipate that if the Bill passed in its present shape he would be able to substitute an efficient punishment for what the country had determined to abolish as a punishment for military offences.

Major NOLAN hoped they might have an opportunity of discussing the new Rules in Committee. He thought the punishment of tying to a waggon ought only to be applied to the case of a man refusing to march. He did not, however, propose to enter upon the question of punishments; but desired to offer a few observations upon the violent revolution attempted in Clause 5. It was actually proposed to abolish the oaths of members of courts martial and those of the witnesses. A private soldier was therefore liable, under this Bill, to be convicted upon unsworn evidence. That was a great revolution in courts martial. If ever this country were placed under martial law what a dreadful latitude was given by this Bill to those courts which might have to try the civil inhabitants. He would endeavour to show the way in which summary courts martial had grown and become adopted in the Bill. For the last 60 or 70 years there had been a detachment general court martial; but that was carefully limited to a specific class of offences. It was limited to offences against the inhabitants of the country; and if a sentence of death were passed it could not be put into execution without being confirmed by the Commander-in-Chief of a force in the field. Practically the whole responsibility rested on the Commander-in-Chief. The summary court martial applied to every military offence; but instead of having the Commander-in-Chief to confirm the sentence, the duty might be performed by any major in command of a detachment; he might command a baggage guard, or rear guard, or perhaps only a picket. The lives of our soldiers, therefore, would be at the mercy of a single colonel or major. His experience was that lawyers, when dealing with military matters, sacrificed all their ideas of law and equity. He believed that the introduction of this clause would very seriously demoralize all courts martial, and have an extremely bad effect.

General BURNABY said, that serious complaints had been made to him by licensed victuallers of the inadequate compensation made to them for the accommodation they afforded to soldiers on the line of march; and he must say he thought, when he considered that 13½*d.* was all they received for the stipulated refreshment they had to provide, exclusive of the lodging and attendance of 2½*d.* in return for attendance and plenty of elbow-room for the troopers, their complaints were not unreasonable. He thought those allowances were very insufficient, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would see his way to augmenting them.

Sir HENRY FLETCHER said, his opinion was that the new mode of punishment would have little effect in the field. There was a certain class of men who would rather be punished than occupy an unpleasant and dangerous post on guard or picket in an enemy's country.

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Thursday.*

MOTION.

HIGHWAYS—MAINTENANCE OF MAIN ROADS.—RESOLUTION.

Mr. E. W. HARCOURT, in rising to move a Resolution to the effect that part of the maintenance of main roads ought to be defrayed from other sources than county rates, said: Sir, we maintain that, in the present depressed state of the agricultural interests it would be manifestly unfair to lay upon the land any inordinate burdens. We maintain that it would be unfair to tax exclusively a particular class of property for benefits which are received by the whole country; and we say that if we find the income of the country amounts to £900,000,000, and if only about £250,000,000 is assessed for local rates, and if £650,000,000 pays nothing whatever under this head, then a gross injustice is being perpetrated. Why, may we ask, should such partiality be exercised in matters which concern all householders alike, whether their incomes are derived from personal or from real property? Some justice has been done in these respects in the matter of the county police; but there is another thing which presses very heavily and with great inequality upon the county ratepayers, and that is the highway rate. In the days of turnpikes, each man paid for the roads according to the use he made of them—a fairer arrangement could not be conceived—now, however, the unfortunate individual through whose lands the highways may pass are made to pay, not only for the accommodation which they themselves receive, but for the benefit received by the general public. Benefit received is a very fair test—I may say the only fair test—for the imposition of taxation for local purposes. I do not suppose that turnpikes will ever be restored. The inconvenience of putting your hand into your pocket to satisfy the toll-keeper was the cause of doing away with a just impost. The alternative which has been resorted to of making a portion of the public pay for the accommodation of the whole is founded upon no equitable basis. Why, we may well ask, shall a brewer who has been in the habit of paying £500 or £1,000 per annum in tolls for the use of the roads over which he has conveyed the beer with which he has supplied his customers suddenly find himself delivered from this expense, without any benefit to the public in a reduction in the price of beer; and why should this bounty be taken from the scantily filled pockets of the rural classes alone? It may be argued, neither would it be fair that the unbenefited public should be taxed for the sake of greasing the brewer's wheels; granted, but it would be unfairer still that a small portion of the public should bear the whole of the burden, and that small portion, too, which is also so heavily taxed in the matter of poor rates and school rates. I suppose that the public at large, who have no interest in inquiring into these things, are utterly ignorant of the extent to which this injustice is carried; it must be ignorance alone which keeps down the righteous indignation of right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite, whose liberal hearts would be sorely hurt if they were fully aware of the injustice and oppression to which their brother men are subjected in country districts. The tale would be too pitiful if I were to unfold it all at once. I wish to spare the feelings of a Liberal and a sensitive Government; and, therefore, for the present at least, I will make no allusion to the poor rate and the school rate grievance. I will simply narrate a few facts relating to the maintenance of main roads. It is not my desire to plague the House with statistics, and I will take the position of one highway district as fairly demonstrative of the whole. The Bullingdon highway district, near Oxford, consists of an aggregation of 49 parishes, and we find that the expenditure has increased in this district from £2,668 8*s.* in 1872 to £4,945 19*s.* 10*d.* in 1880. Turnpike roads began to fall upon the common fund of the Bullingdon Highway Board, under the piecemeal legislation of the Turnpike Continuance Acts, in 1872; and the expenses of repairing turnpike roads were, with the salaries of the officers, &c., the only charges which from that date fell upon the common fund, until the 41 & 42 *Vict.* c. 77, caused all the expenses of the Highway Boards to fall upon the common fund. This gave but little relief to the Bullingdon Board, as the general effect of the Act was to relieve the small urban places at the expense of large rural parishes. Clause 13 of the Act above quoted provides that disturnpiked roads shall become main roads, and that half the expense of their maintenance shall be contributed out of the county rates, on the certificate of the surveyor that the roads have been properly maintained. What I should like to propose would be that part of the expenses mentioned in the above clause shall be contributed out of money provided by Parliament. I would propose that the whole of the expenses of the maintenance of main roads should, in the first place, be borne by the county authority, and that the county authority, in its turn, should be recouped by the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury as far as one-half of those expenses were concerned. The payment by the Treasury should be dependent upon the certificate of a surveyor, to the effect that the main roads in respect to which a contribution was to be made had been maintained to his satisfaction. It strikes me that all this is very simple and very just. I do not know, of course, how my proposition may commend itself or the contrary to Her Majesty's Government—but this I know—that if they are in earnest in wishing to assist the agricultural classes, they will give that assistance in a way which will be of real use to those whom they profess themselves desirous to serve. I have a letter here from a tenant farmer in Oxfordshire—not a tenant of my own—which perhaps the House will permit me to read—

> "DEAR SIR,—I find that in the old turnpike days, and having a turnpike close to my house, I used to contract with the gatekeeper for £4 a-year; now, sometimes, according to the new Act, we get a shilling rate, out of which I have to pay about a fourth, which comes to over £20 instead of £4. I have heard from good authority that it saves one of our local brewers over £500 a-year. Now, if you could bring in a Bill, either to put up the gates again or remedy this evil in some way or other, so that those who used the roads should keep them in repair, it would be of more benefit to the farmers than the Ground Game Act or doing away with the malt tax. Then, again, there are the school and sanitary rates, which are extra within the last few years; but I think the highway rate the most unfair of all."

I see that my Resolution is to be met on the other side by moving the Previous Question. What does the Previous Question mean? Why, it means procrastination, it means delay, it means appointing Committees, it means falling back upon the general question. What it does not mean is giving immediate relief to the agricultural interests. It is just the same as if a man were dying of hunger, and a physician were to come, and instead of giving him the nourishment he required, he were to say he would go home and form a committee of his sisters, and his cousins, and his aunts, and they would consider the general question. When that silly man came back he would find his patient dead. I know I shall be met with the statement that, if any assistance is given to rural districts in these matters, justice would require that an equal assistance should be given to urban districts—and I shall be told that urban places have made no complaints under this head. Here I am afraid I shall be obliged to ask the House to follow me into a few statistics, in order that I may make good my case. The population of rural districts numbers about 10,000,000, and is located upon about 34,000,000 of acres of land. The population of the urban districts numbers about 13,000,000, and is located upon about 3,250,000 acres of land. The number of horses and vehicles kept by the urban population throughout the country is, as compared to those kept by the rural population, as about seven to one—as may be gathered from the horse and carriage licence Returns. The rural population maintain 106,000 miles of highways — exclusive of turnpike roads — at a cost, according to the Returns made to Parliament for the years 1872-3, of £1,487,820; besides which the turnpike roads cost in maintenance during the same years £787,620. It is in the matter of this last item of expenditure that we seek relief. And now let us turn to the position of the urban population. According to the same Returns, and in the same years, we find that the cost of highways in urban districts—that is, in cities, towns, local boards, &c., independent of the Metropolis, amounted to £1,061,098, which is £426,722 less than is paid by the rural population, without any reference to the main roads, which, as we have seen, cost £787,620; and these two sums taken together show an excess of payments of £1,204,342 by the rural over the urban populations. I have said before that it is only in respect of main roads—that is to say, disturnpiked roads—that we seek relief. Let us consider a little what turnpike roads were originally constructed for. They were made for the purpose of connecting centres of population comprised in urban districts. They are required by the country at large for commercial, postal, and military purposes. We have deduced that of the entire population of the country a very small proportion pays anything to local rates; we have deduced that the urban population pays considerably less for their highway accommodation than is paid by the rural population; we have deduced that since the abolition of turnpikes the municipal boroughs pay nothing whatever towards the maintenance of main roads, although they use them on equal terms with the rural population, and with an excess of seven times the horse and carriage power; we have deduced that the main roads were constructed for the benefit of the nation; and it is a fact that any individual may prosecute any local highway authority if the roads are not maintained to his satisfaction, and to suit his convenience. I think, then, Sir, I have logically arrived at the conclusion that to relieve the public from contributing to the maintenance of main roads, and to throw the whole burden upon the country ratepayer, is manifestly unjust. I do not know what Government and what Party are going to redress these grievances. They ought not to be Party questions. I am well assured, however, of this—that these grievances are so real and so crying in their nature that some Government and some Party will be forced into redressing them before long. I beg to move the Resolution which stands in my name.

Mr. R. H. PAGET, in seconding the Motion, thanked his hon. Friend for the great ability and the remarkable moderation with which he had introduced that subject. He hoped that the Government would not refuse to accede to the moderate and reasonable demand just made by his hon. Friend, who, he thought, had established his case. They were not now asked to enter into an elaborate discussion of so important an investigation as that of a re-adjustment of local taxation. There was no better test of the civilization of a country than the state of completeness and perfection of its roads. In early times, when manufactures were slight and trade but scarce, a few ordinary bridle roads were sufficient to carry on the commercial transactions of the nation. Now, however, we had a costly system of well-kept roads intersecting the country in every direction. The roads of the United Kingdom, including highways and turnpike roads, were not maintained for less than about £7,000,000 sterling per annum. The fact was that the roads were used by all, they were wanted by all, and they ought to be paid for by all. The turnpike system did provide that those who used the roads paid for them in proportion to their use of them. The turnpike system was dead, and he did not propose that it should be revived in any way. In anticipation of the ultimate discontinuance of the system, each Turnpike Act was passed for a limited time. The Acts were renewed singly for limited periods, and they had gradually expired one by one. If it had not been for the existence of the railway system, the turnpikes could not have been extinguished without a material contribution from the State towards the expense of the roads. The injustice of leaving them a charge on the local rates would have been so glaring that a remedy must have been found forthwith. The fact that the railways had taken a great amount of the traffic that would otherwise have gone on the roads had had the effect of minimizing the grievance; but it was none the less a grievance; and any grievance, however small, was felt with severity in the present depressed condition of agriculture. The particular grievance they desired to discuss was that of the main roads. Since 1870 15,000 miles of road had been disturnpiked; and, assuming the cost of maintenance to be £30 a-mile, the annual charge thrown upon the rates would be close upon £500,000 sterling. The only reason why there had been no combination to resist this result was that the Acts had expired one by one. But now it was possible to realize as a whole the burden which had been thrown on the county rates. Assuming the case to be made out, the question was how relief was to be given, and to be given immediately, and as a temporary expedient. It was not suggested that there should be a Government subvention in perpetuity; but if there were to be one, it would be a temporary expedient to enable the case to be dealt with this Session without legislation. As to other suggestions, there might be a new horse tax or a new wheel tax. He was not prepared to advocate either, but he would not discard them. There were difficulties in the way of imposing new taxes and reviving old ones. One difficulty was that such taxes would have to be accompanied by the great evil of exemptions. He had suggested the transfer to the local authorities of the dog tax, which was largely collected through the agency of the country police, and in Ireland was paid over to the local authorities in aid of local taxation. There was the possibility of the future transfer of the house tax to the local authorities, and some such scheme might be the ultimate solution of the difficulty. In any scheme care must be taken that the relief was greatest where the grievance was most keenly felt. At present there was an absence of Returns to enable them to work out in detail any definite plan for the transfer of taxation. A Return of 1872 was valueless because it omitted the dog tax, which produced over £300,000; and this and a later Return were also valueless because they adopted areas which did not coincide with those adopted for local taxation. Those who complained could not come forward with a complete remedy because the necessary information was not accessible to them. If they could not come forward with any definite scheme of their own, there was nothing left to them but to place such a proposal as that made by his hon. Friend before the House as a temporary expedient. It was for the Government to consider and settle a method of dealing with the question. There were two Amendments on the Paper, and a third, of which Notice had been given; and, without suspecting the hon. Members who had given those Notices, he believed their Amendments shadowed forth the nature of the official reply. He should be pleased to think that the official reply would be the promise of a remedy; but he feared it would be an admission of the fact that the Bill of 1878 required to be remedied. He did not deny that fact; but that would merely mean indefinite delay. Again, it might be said that there was a Committee of the House of Lords sitting. No doubt there was. But that Committee sat last year, and might, for aught he knew, sit next year. They might look forward to a very valuable Report from that Committee; but that, again, meant delay, and what was demanded was immediate action. Then, again, the official reply might be that the proposed transfer of taxation would require the establishment of a County Board. But the demand of his hon. Friend might well be complied with while the scheme as to a County Board was being matured. The question of the incidence of taxation would be referred to. But figures of a rateable value were misleading, because the burden of taxation was in proportion to the ability to pay. These figures gave no notion of the ability to pay, and throughout the whole of the length of England the ability of the farmers to pay was less now than it had ever been during the present generation. He had often heard it asked—"Why did the farmer make such a fuss when 1*d.* in the pound was added to his rates?" He would tell the House why the farmer was entitled to complain of such an addition. Let them take the case of a farmer whose rent was £300 a-year. His income was assumed to be half his rent, and the Income Tax was levied on that amount. The addition of 1*d.* in the pound in the Income Tax would mean the payment by him of 150*d.*, while the addition of 1*d.* to the rates would mean the payment of an additional 300*d.* His case was aggravated by comparison with that of his neighbour. A man with an income of £150 a-year, living in a house close by, would pay the same amount of Income Tax as the farmer; but as he would probably live in a house rated at £20, a 1*d.* rate would only take 20*d.* from him; so that each 1*d.* rate would hit one man 15 times as hard as it hit the other. He had always taken a deep interest in this question, and not the less that his entire constituency were interested in it, and considered their case so strong that they could not wait. The Amendments, on the other hand, simply said wait. The farmers said they had waited too long already. The demand put forward was a reasonable one, and it was urged on behalf of that eminently loyal class, the British farmer. They asked for justice and no more; and he confidently appealed to the sense of justice of the Government not to refuse the present very reasonable demand.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That in the opinion of this House, it is expedient so to amend 'The Highway Act, 1878,' that part of the maintenance of main roads may be defrayed from other sources than county rates."—(*Mr. Harcourt.*)

MR. J. W. PEASE said, that he had listened with great attention to the two speeches made by his hon. Friends in favour of this Motion; and no one who represented a county constituency but must sympathize with his hon. Friends in the object which they had in view. It had been stated by his hon. Friend the Member for Mid Somerset (Mr. R.

H. Paget) that the annual cost of the roads in England and Scotland was something like £7,000,000; but Ireland and Scotland were entirely out of the question in dealing with the highways of England and Wales, while it should be borne in mind that his hon. Friend had also included in his calculation the very large extent of the roads maintained in the Metropolis and other local authorities. The actual cost of the highways in England and Wales was £1,800,000 per annum; but, according to a Return published in 1878, he found that the maintenance of the disturnpiked turnpike roads from 1870 to that year was something under £200,000. There was also a Return which showed that the turnpikes which would probably be disturnpiked during the following five years might be put roughly at £80,000 more, so that the House was now asked practically to deal with a sum of £280,000; and it was of one-half that amount, or £140,000, that his hon. Friend the Member for Oxfordshire (Mr. Harcourt) proposed to relieve the highway authorities by placing it on the Consolidated Fund. Now, there could be no doubt that there was a great feeling of soreness among the farmers, because of the fact that the highway rate and other rates had come upon them one after another. He found that in one Union in his locality there had been an increase of taxation of 9¼*d.* in the pound in the aggregate; and, under these circumstances, it was no wonder that they looked round to see in what manner relief was to be obtained. He was one of those who were of opinion that unless we had much better harvests than we had had for the last two or three years, the farmer would have little less than ruin staring him in the face. His sympathies, therefore, went very much with every attempt which was made to relieve him from any portion of his burden. The position of the landlords, he might add, was only one degree better. They had largely reduced their rents; they had, too, spent large sums of money in drainage and other improvements, in order to keep the farmers in good heart. Again, there were settlements, and other encumbrances, which they had to meet out of depleted pockets. Taking, then, £140,000 as the figure, the farmers would repay about half that sum in Income Tax, and that would reduce the amount to £70,000, or, at most, £75,000. Still, he could not make up his mind to think that his hon. Friend the Member for Oxfordshire was right in asking the House to deal with the question before it by putting his hand into the Imperial pocket to make up the deficiency. Was his hon. Friend prepared, he would ask in the first place, for a large system of Government inspection, for that must be the result of his Motion if carried? For his own part, he should by no means like to see a new race of Government Inspectors sent into the country to interfere with the highway rates. But there was another difficulty in the way of his hon. Friend, and that was that the Highway Act, as to the main roads, applied only to England and Wales, and he could scarcely ask Ireland and Scotland to contribute. Now, he should like to read a few lines from the evidence given before the Committee of the House of Lords by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Hampshire (Mr. Sclater-Booth).

Sir BALDWYN LEIGHTON asked whether the hon. Gentleman was in Order in quoting from a Report which had not been laid before the House?

Mr. SPEAKER: I understand the hon. Member to be about to quote from a Parliamentary Paper.

Mr. J. W. PEASE said, the Paper was one which had been delivered last year, or early this Session; and the right hon. Gentleman to whom he referred, in answer to a question which had been put to him, stated that, in his opinion, the cases in which the inhabitants of the country parishes received no benefit from the turnpike roads were comparatively rare, and that the cases in which the owners of property derived no benefit from them were still rarer; while to throw the charge for their maintenance on the central authority would, in his opinion, necessitate a system of interference which was open to objection. As for the Motion of the hon. Member for Oxfordshire, he thought the principle was wrong; but he must, at the same time, express a hope that his right hon. Friends on the Bench below him would deal with the question as soon as the opportunity presented itself. There could be no doubt that the Act of 1878 ought to be amended, and he hoped right hon. Gentlemen would deal with it as soon as they had the opportunity. That Act was one of those unfortunate measures which was rushed through the House when nearly all the Members had gone homewards. The 16th of August was the date on which it received the Royal Assent; but had it been subjected to patient scrutiny, which hon. Gentlemen on the Opposition side and many hon. Gentlemen on the Ministerial side would have applied to it, he believed that it would never have become law in its present undigested form. The Act had caused great inconveniences and anomalies. Under the Act certain thoroughfares were to be made main roads. As far as the district in which he resided was concerned, the question of main roads operated most unfairly. Although it was a moorland district one-third of the moiety fell on the county rate of the cost of main roads, and received nothing whatever in return for that contribution. He had no doubt that what occurred in his district occurred in the districts of many hon. Members. There were other anomalies occasioned by the establishment of district rating under the Act of 1878—for instance, one township with a mile and a-half of road, which used to cost them £100 to £150 per annum, now had to pay £900 a-year; whilst another moorland township, with about 54 miles of road, which used to cost about £7 10*s*. per mile, now escaped by a payment of little more than half that amount. In addition, under the Act of 1878, unless action was taken to dismain turnpike roads before February of the following year, they remained main roads for ever, although it might have been a mere accident that steps were not taken in the short space of time allowed to the Justices to deal with them. He could not support the Motion, because he thought it would produce an infraction of a principle which he thought most of them assented to. The Select Committee of 1870 reported to the House that in any reform of the existing local taxation it was expedient to adjust the system of rating in such a manner that the owners and the occupiers might be brought to feel an immediate interest in the increase or decrease of local expenditure and in the administration of local affairs, and that it was expedient to make the owners as well as the occupiers directly liable for a certain proportion of the rates. He believed these highway rates required an entire revision. The present mode of taxation was exceedingly irritating to the farmer. It was all very well for philosophers to say that the owner of land was the man on whom ultimately the burden of rates fell. For a generation the incidence of taxation fell upon the man who was the immediate occupier of the soil. Though he sympathized very much with the object of the Motion, he begged to move as an Amendment that all the words after "expedient" be omitted, in order to insert—

"To amend 'The Highway Act, 1878,' and especially those portions of the said Act which relate to main roads."

Amendment proposed,

To leave out all the words after the word "expedient," in order to add the words "to amend 'The Highway Act, 1878,' and especially those portions of the said Act which relate to main roads,"—(*Mr. J. W. Pease,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. WALROND, in supporting the Motion of the hon. Member for Oxfordshire (Mr. Harcourt) urged that the present system of highway rating was most inequitable. Only one-fifth of the property of the nation was real property, and he held that other kinds of property should bear a share of the burden, which had become much heavier than it was before the passing of the Act. There was, undoubtedly, a great amount of discontent existing in the country on this subject; it had caused more heart-burning during the last 10 years than any other question, and they could not conceal from themselves that the evil must be removed. He could mention, from his knowledge of Devon, a great many conspicuous instances of the way in which the burden of maintaining the highways had increased, and from information received from other counties—such as Nottinghamshire and Norfolk—he had no doubt that the same thing was happening all over England. When, to quote a phrase used by one of his correspondents, the whole country was "seething with discontent," it was evidently high time to remove the grievance of which the agriculturists complained. Admitting the desirability of doing so, it became a question whether it could best be done by the means proposed by his hon. Friend. The idea that special taxes should be imposed with that object might be dismissed at once. All things considered, he held with his hon. Friend that the old turnpike roads, having been originally made for Imperial purposes, ought to be maintained by Imperial funds. Indeed, he went further than his hon. Friend, and would throw on those funds not a moiety of the charge, but the whole. It had been suggested, but not in the House, that the turnpikes should be replaced; but that, in his opinion, would be an absurdity and an inconvenience, to say nothing of the fact that the cost of keeping up the turnpikes themselves was a serious percentage of the sum collected. His hon. Friend asked only that a moiety of the expense should be borne by the Imperial funds; but he feared he knew the answer that would be given by the Government. They would probably say that, pending the inquiries by the House of Lords and a Royal Commission, the matter ought to be allowed to rest. That was very much to be regretted, as the Government had it in their power, by granting the demands of Chambers of Agriculture all over England, to do a much-needed act of justice.

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE expressed his astonishment both at the ingenuity with which the Motion had been drawn and at the speech of the hon. Member who had seconded it. The Resolution had evidently been drawn up so as to catch all sorts of votes; and when he looked at it he thought the hon. Member must have crossed the House and obtained the assistance of his right hon. and learned Relative the Home Secretary. "The hand was the hand of Esau, but the voice was the voice of Jacob." However, the meaning of the Motion was clear. It meant a long pull and a strong pull and a pull altogether at the public purse, and an immediate increase of the grant in aid of local taxation, such as was now given in aid of the police rate. He thought that that recommendation had been disposed of by the speech of his hon. Friend the Member for South Durham (Mr. J. W. Pease). It was an objection to the Motion that it touched a single part of the question which the Act of 1878 was intended to solve. That Act had produced great dissatisfaction in many ways and was very imperfect, partly, perhaps, on account of the haste with which it had been passed; but the subject would have to be dealt with as a whole. A decision of the late Attorney General had given great dissatisfaction, by which, if it were sought to dismain any part of a road, the whole of it must be dismained. That decision had been questioned by lawyers of as great eminence as the late Attorney General himself; but the result had been that many miles of road had been made main roads which ought never to have been made so. Then difficulty had arisen from the clause by which half the costs had to be paid back to the local authorities by the county authorities. He did not think that those who had passed the Bill had at all realized the complexity of the system and of accounts. The county was in account with every urban and rural highway authority, and with every separate highway parish. There was a tendency to confuse Quarter Session boroughs and urban sanitary authorities. It was only the former which were kept distinct from the county authority. In boroughs other than Quarter Session boroughs county rates were paid, and half the cost of main roads was repaid by the county authorities. Thus great complexity of accounts was caused. Sometimes claims for a quarter of a mile of main road were sent in; such claims had to be examined, and it was sometimes a year before such claims could be settled. He had had personal experience of the difficulty of dealing with such claims in his own county, where he had much trouble in getting two small urban sanitary authorities to send in their claims. Then there was a difficulty in framing what might be called the County Budget, as the year was divided for different purposes in different manners. The county financial year ran from the 1st of January to the 31st of December; the highway financial year began with the 25th of March; and it had been held that the recent Act for making the accounts of local authorities run to even dates did not apply to county authorities. Then there was the question of overlapping areas, as the highway district and the district under the Board of Guardians were not coincident.

That difficulty had, to some extent, been dealt with in the Bill passed by the late Government; and he was glad to acknowledge that the Bill had, in that respect, been of real service. But the cardinal fault of the Act of 1878 was that it gave the county authority no control over the money it paid to the local highway authorities, and hence an extravagant expenditure had arisen. If he could not support the Motion, it was not because he did not concur in the end at which it aimed; but he took a different view of the means best adapted to secure that end. It must not either be forgotten that the abolition of the turnpike system threw bridges as well as roads upon the county rates. In his own county, in 1876, the cost of maintaining bridges was only £780; but now it was £2,148. It was true that part of that expenditure ought to be placed to capital account, as many bridges were in a state of disrepair; but there was, without doubt, and there still would be, a great increase in the annual cost of bridges. He thought there was far too great a tendency to ask for Government help. There was always a cry for assistance out of Imperial taxation. That was a great evil. If persisted in, the result would be that the sound principles of local self-government would be undermined. Government help meant Government interference, and that interference operated as a stimulus to bad administration. It encouraged the tendency, already rife, to spend 5*s.* in order to get back 2*s.* 6*d.*; and the local authorities were too apt to overlook the fact that, in the end, 7*s.* 6*d.* had really to be paid in one form or another. Instead of asking that the Consolidated Fund should bear the burden of bad administration, it would be far better to preserve local independence, to avoid Government interference, and to bring about good and economical administration. He knew of instances in which that would effect a saving of double the amount ever likely to be obtained from Government by any form of grant in aid. He had worked the matter out for one locality, and he believed that what was true there was more or less true of the whole of England. The Government might, perhaps, render useful assistance by appointing a surveyor for each great Poor Law division and placing his services at the disposal of the county and local authorities. But he deprecated Government interference in the matter of roads. He would much prefer that the Government should bear a larger share of the cost of education, for that was not an hereditary charge on the land, as roads and bridges had always been considered to be. But otherwise he would look rather to the reform of units of administration within county boundaries and the strengthening of the representative element as a means of increasing public interest in local managements and bringing about an economic and efficient system of local government in the counties.

SIR BALDWYN LEIGHTON: I will not follow the noble Lord the Member for Calne (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) into the intricacies of county government and administrative details through which he has carried us. The noble Lord seems to have wandered rather far from the subject before us. I will venture to recall the House into the simpler and purer atmosphere of fact and principle. But first let us welcome the appearance of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister on that Bench, who comes like a *Deus ex machina* among us, and who acknowledges by his presence that the subject is a *dignus vindice nodus*, which it undoubtedly is in its larger issues. Sir, the extent of the turnpike roads in England and Wales is about 20,000 miles, of which 15,000, or just three-quarters, have been disturnpiked; and their cost in counties and boroughs—for we must not separate the boroughs—is about £750,000 a-year; or, in round numbers, when the present and prospective roads are disturnpiked, the cost will amount to something like £1,000,000. We simply ask, now that tolls are done away with, and carriages and horses pay nothing, that this charge shall not be unjustly thrown upon the already over-taxed ratepayers in town and country, and more especially on the agricultural ratepayer—namely, the tenant farmer. It is often assumed, and we have already heard it to-night, that the maintenance of roads is an ancient and hereditary charge on land. Sir, it is nothing of the kind; it was a charge equally imposed on real and personal property, as a local income tax. We all know that the Statute 43 *Eliz.* imposed rates on personalty, "according to ability of the inhabitants of the parish," and out of that rate the road rate was afterwards directed partly to be paid. But there is a far stronger statute — namely, 3 *Will. & Mary*, c. 7, which first imposed the rate. It is there directed that the rate for all roads, not main roads only, shall be paid by a rate not exceeding 6*d.* in the pound on lands, "or 6*d.* for every £20 of personal estate"—that is to say, both personalty and land were taxed on an exactly equal basis. Now, neither of those statutes have ever been repealed. By a Continuance Act, passed every Session since 1840, stock-in-trade is exempted from rating; but the Legislature has never dared to repeal either of those Acts. Well, now, 100 years ago or so, turnpike trusts were created, and the maintenance of main roads was taken off the shoulders of the ratepayers, or, rather, the charge was practically dormant. When the gates have been taken off, the ratepayers wake up to find the roads gradually thrown upon one species of property—that is to say, the incidence altered for the sake of convenience, and a most grievous and unjust charge thrown upon them, not only contrary to justice, but contrary to law; and that at a time when agriculture is suffering more than any other interest in the Kingdom. Give us Free Trade by all means; but give us also fair play. Do not handicap us in this intolerable manner. Do not take and tax us to the amount of half our income for national purposes, when other interests are only contributing 1-20th. Yes, Sir, one-half our income, as I shall presently show. For what is the amount of these rates? and what, first, is the amount of this charge for main roads in excess of what the tenant farmer, for instance, paid before in tolls? Sir, we can compute it to the fraction of a penny. It is found —and any hon. Member may calculate it for himself—that on the average a tenant farmer formerly paid in tolls what would be equivalent to a rate of 1½*d.* or 2*d.* in the pound, and that not only paid his way, but covered the cost of collection and debt. Therefore, in doing away with turnpikes and the cost of collection and debt, the rural ratepayer ought to take his share in the economy, and his rate reduced to 1*d.* on the average. But what is the result? The tenant farmers are in most places paying a rate of 6*d.* in the pound; and in some places a great deal more, in consequence of the gates being taken off—that is to say, they are paying in many places a rate of 5*d.* in the pound in excess of what they ought to pay, or an income tax of 10*d.* in the pound for the general public; for a farmer is assessed by the Commissioners of Inland Revenue on half his rent as his income, and therefore every 1*d.* he pays in rates is an income tax of 2*d.* in the pound. Now, as it is impossible to separate this question of the charge for main roads from the whole question of local taxation, let me read a letter received from a clergyman in a Midland county on the subject of the intolerable burden of these rates—

> "I am rector and tithe owner in a parish skirted by a highway from London, very little used by the parish, as the land lies in other directions; but it is charged on the ratepayers, My tithe average for 1880 amounted to £325. nearly the whole of my income; and I am assessed on tithe and house £303. The rates were —and I beg you to note the amount—for poor, highway, and school board, £80 16*s.*, or over 5*s.* in the pound. The reverse picture is this—1. A parishioner, driving two carriages, four horses, and two carts, and enjoying an income of £4,000 a-year, pays £25 yearly. 2. A Government clerk, with an income of £600, pays £11 3*s.* 3. A tradesman, turning over £7,000 a-year, driving pony carriage, two carts, and two horses, pays £6 10*s.*, and so on. I have, in addition, Income Tax, insurances, dilapidations, ecclesiastical fees, and all the poor to relieve. So much for oneself. . . . . . As for the farmers, the land cannot bear the burdens. My tithe is unpaid, as they prefer to trust to the tender mercies of the parson rather than to those of the rate collector. One man failed, another cut his throat, another threw up his farm. The country all round here is woeful, going out of cultivation, ruined!"

[*Laughter.*] Hon. Members opposite may laugh; but to us on this side, who live among these men and see their sufferings, it is no laughing matter. It seems to me, Sir, like a tragedy of unjust taxation and ruin. Just consider, in this parish the rates are over 5*s.* in the pound to a farmer—that is, an Income Tax of 10*s.* in the pound, and that in these days of confiscation and ruin. Well, Sir, so much for the law of the case and the incidence of these taxes, and now for the remedies. There are three modes, I think, or general lines of relief that are applicable for the main roads. First, as to the old system of tolls, which was undoubtedly the fairest, I will only observe, without suggesting the possibility of their revival, that the Government is maintaining the system in South Wales under a Department of the Local Government Board. So that, while throwing these charges on the unfortunate ratepayers, in other places they are maintaining the toll system in their own district. Secondly, it has been suggested that the objects which formerly paid toll should now contribute by a carriage or wheel tax. That has much to recommend it on grounds of equity, and there is the precedent of the Isle of Man, where the roads are maintained by a wheel tax; but properly to distribute or graduate the tax would be found very difficult and invidious. If everyone paid in proportion to use, as they formerly paid in tolls, you would have to ask the doctor to pay £20 or £30, the miller and tradesman to pay £40 or £50, and the brewer, perhaps, to pay £100. I have heard of cases where brewers and others have been saved £500 to £1,000 in tolls by taking down the gates. There is the carriage tax that might be still collected by Government, and made over, by way of contribution, to the repairing authorities; but that would amount almost to a charge on the Consolidated Fund, and you might as well put ¼*d.* on the Income Tax. Then, thirdly, there is the principle of extending the area or incidence of the tax generally, and there I would call attention again to the provisions of the Statute of *Will. & Mary*, which I quoted before. One suggestion is to extend the rate to the boroughs within the county whose vehicles use the roads. There would probably be opposition to that, and I am not in favour of it, because there would be constant friction of authorities as to the main roads repairable; but it must not be forgotten that there are many miles of disturnpiked road in boroughs, and I am entirely in favour of subverting them in the same way as the county roads. Then there is an alternative which finds favour in some quarters, of dividing this and other rates between landlord and tenant. Well, that would be a very inadequate relief; but I am in favour of the landlord paying a fair share of rates, on the ground that it will improve the administration, and I think also get more attention paid to these subjects in this House. But you will find it difficult, if not impossible, to share the rates administered by an old authority. If you constitute a new authority and a new rate, there is no difficulty; and you have the cattle plague rate as a precedent. I am entirely in favour, for instance, of the school board rate being shared, and if we create a new River Conservancy Board that rate should be shared. But you must, of course, give equal representation to owners, and with regard to any old rates and old authorities—such as roads and poor—you have to deal with leasehold property as well as representation, which makes any change exceedingly difficult. Then there is a third alternative, which will, perhaps, be found the most simple—namely, to apportion or appropriate an Imperial tax by way of subvention—such as the house tax. That exactly represents a local Income Tax, and was proposed once by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) to be given up for poor relief. It should not be handed over to the local authority, but dispensed by the Government under inspection. If this tax were applied, half to the in-door poor, and half to the cost of main roads, it would, in my opinion, be an equitable settlement of those two questions, and lead to economy and sound administration. But it will be said by the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Gladstone), or anyone else filling the Office of Chancellor of the Exchequer—"If you take this £1,600,000, you are practically taking it out of the national purse; I must make it up somehow." [Mr. GLADSTONE: Hear, hear!] I entirely sympathize with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and I will say at once that I am opposed to general charges on the Consolidated Fund; but special grants appropriated to special taxes which can be increased or lowered are very different things; and that is the direction in which we should go in this great question, for it is a great question. There is a sum of nearly £2,000,000 now charged upon the Treasury for police and lunatics. Now, what produces crime and lunacy? Why, intemperance. If all the crime and lunacy that comes from intemperance were got rid of, we should not ask for any contribution from the Treasury for those purposes at all; and, therefore, this grant for police and lunatics should be thrown on the excise —½*d.* a gallon on beer, and a similar charge on spirits, would meet the case, and set free the present charge to balance the house tax. I must apologize, Sir, for enlarging on the subject; but it is quite impossible to deal with the fringe of the question on rational grounds without going futher into the bearings of local taxation. What I suggest now, in supporting the Motion of the hon. Member for Oxfordshire (Mr. Harcourt), is that an immediate temporary grant from the Exchequer be made for one or two years until the whole question can be fairly dealt with—that is, a sort of rate-in-aid; and one additional reason for that is that, owing to the state in which the roads were given up, the present ratepayers are having to re-make them. I should include all disturnpiked roads in boroughs; in some places, a very heavy charge for a mile in a borough costs more than double a mile in the country. And as regards Scotland and Ireland, which have been mentioned, they ought certainly to be also included; wherever the house tax is payable there the relief should be given. I thank the House for the patience with which it has listened to the somewhat extended statement I have been compelled to make to bring out what appears to me the full bearings of this large subject.

Mr. DODSON said, he had listened with sympathy and interest to the various speeches which had been made that night on the subject, because, as a resident in the country, he knew where and how the shoe pinched, particularly with regard to the highway rate. In these times every increase of an old rate, or every additional new rate, was most severely felt by the agriculturists, who had suffered so recently from bad seasons. Highway rates, in particular, had increased of recent years, and they had appeared to grow more than they really had, because highway districts had been created, involving a certain shifting of burdens between parishes. The result was that the parishes which suffered by the new arrangement naturally remembered it and cried out, while the parishes that gained quite as naturally forgot it and remained silent. There was no doubt, also, that often when a highway district was first created it involved an increase of total expenditure, because a highway district took over the roads of some parishes in very bad condition, and the new Board had to put them in repair, and it was well known how very expensive it was to put in good order roads which had been allowed to get thoroughly out of repair. Another cause of the addition to highway rates was the extinction of turnpike trusts and the charge upon highway rates of roads formerly maintained by toll. Within the last 10 years highway rates had increased by £400,000. They had grown up from £1,300,000 to £1,700,000. Some hon. Gentlemen had shed a tear of regret over the abandonment of turnpikes. ["No, no!"] He was glad to hear that disclaimer, for he looked upon the turnpike system as the most extravagant mode of maintaining roads which the ingenuity of man or of fiend could devise. Though highway rates had increased by £400,000, the actual cost of the roads had diminished by £130,000, because tolls had been reduced by £530,000. His hon. Friend the Member for Oxfordshire (Mr. Harcourt) claimed Imperial support for the roads on the ground of the facilities they afforded for military and commercial transport. [Mr. Harcourt: I said originally.] He was glad to hear the correction, because, since railways had been created, road traffic had become year by year more and more local and subsidiary; and, therefore, the justification for looking upon roads as a matter of Imperial charge had been year by year diminishing. He looked with great fear upon any proposition which would enable any person to put a hand into the Exchequer and take out of it one moiety of whatever he should think fit to spend upon a matter admitting of indefinite expenditure. What had taken place in connection with the grant in aid of police served him as a caution. Sir Robert Peel, many years ago, gave to the county and borough police in England and Wales a grant in aid equal to one-fourth of their pay and clothing. The grant was increased in 1873-4 to one-half of the pay and clothing. The grant in 1873-4, the last year of Sir Robert Peel's grant, was £294,000. What, however, was the amount which the Exchequer had to pay in 1879-80? It was £857,000, so that it seemed to have nearly trebled. [An hon. Member: By increase of pay.] He very much questioned whether the rate of pay was much higher than in 1873; the cost of clothing was probably less. He had taken the published Returns of the Local Government Board, and hon. Members could make the comparison for themselves. In the year 1873-4 the charge upon county rates and borough funds for county and borough police was, after deducting the grant received, £1,239,000, whereas in 1879-80 the net charge for county and borough police was £1,018,000, showing a saving to the local rates through the increased grant of £221,000. But that relief of £221,000 was purchased by a loss to the Exchequer of £563,000, so that for every 1*s.* of relief to the rates 2*s.* 6*d.* was paid by the Exchequer. Further, in 1873-4 for the county police the charge per man was £92; in 1879-80, when one-half of the pay and clothing was found by the Exchequer, the charge had risen to £101, showing an increase of £9. But when he said that half the pay and clothing was defrayed by the Imperial Exchequer, it only really represented two-fifths of the entire cost of the police. Now, his hon. Friend proposed that half the total cost of the main roads should be borne by the Exchequer; and the proportion of contribution would, therefore, be larger than in the case of the police. Moreover, under the Act of 1878, it was left to the discretion of the local authorities what should be declared main roads. The result, if half the cost were paid by the Exchequer, would be that the list of main roads would be largely increased. It had been suggested that assistance should be given to main roads by the surrender or the creation of a tax to be handed over to the local authorities. Two Governments had considered that scheme. The right hon. Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) had proposed to surrender the house tax; but that proposition had not met with much favour. The late Government had also considered the surrender of a tax. The late Chancellor of the Exchequer had increased the grants to the police, and also to lunatics. But he had made that proposal avowedly as a stop-gap, as he said that the Government had really not had time to consider the question. There were great difficulties about the surrender or creation of a tax, although it would have a distinct advantage over grants in aid from the Imperial Exchequer. The difficulty was in finding an appropriate tax. The advantage would be the absence of central interference, and of any stimulus to expenditure such as attended grants in aid. But it would be difficult to find a suitable tax which could be collected by the locality; and, if it were imperially collected, it was difficult to ascertain the best mode of distribution. If distributed to localities according to their rateable value it would give most assistance to the richest places, which were least in need of it. If distributed in proportion to expenditure it would have the effect of stimulating expenditure; and if, in dealing with highways, the tax were given according to mileage, they would still be giving it unequally, because mileage was no measure of traffic and wear and tear, or of the abundance and cheapness of the materials at command for repairing the roads. Lastly, mileage was only a measure of the length of roads, and not of their breadth, which was a very material item in estimating cost. It appeared to him that the present system of grants from the Exchequer required consideration, in the interests both of the localities and of the Treasury, as to the mode in which they were given, and in some instances as to the purposes for which they were given. In making such grants the Government ought to consider—first, whether the charge to be borne by the Treasury would have the effect of producing a corresponding amount of relief to the local taxation; secondly, whether a stimulus would be given towards increased expenditure; thirdly, the extent of the liability undertaken by the Government should be definite. Now, in the case of roads, even more than in that of the police, the Government would be undertaking an indefinite liability. The fact was that the law relating to roads was in a state of transition. They had been for years considering whether the roads should be transferred from parishes to districts; and it was yet unsettled whether they should be transferred to districts formed for that special purpose, or to sanitary districts, or to the counties, or in part to districts and in part to the counties. There was much difficulty attending the constitution of those districts. A Committee of the House of Lords was sitting on the subject, from which they hoped to derive much assistance; but, meanwhile, they had no representative body in the counties to which they could satisfactorily refer the management of roads. He had hoped that the Government would have been able to deal with the system of county government during the present Session, and it was only the pressure of absolute business which had induced the Government to abandon their intention for the present Session. With reference to the Act of 1878, it was passed under circumstances of considerable difficulty, late in the Session of that year ; and he believed that his right hon. Friend opposite (Mr. Sclater-Booth) had not the time or means at his disposal then to pass a more complete measure on the subject. But he quite agreed with the hon. Member for South Durham (Mr. J. W. Pease) that that Act stood in need of amendment, more especially in regard to main roads. He had already given one reason for saying so. He would now give another. He did not think that the system which had been established of dividing the cost of main roads between county and parish, or county and district, was a good system, because it involved a double system of surveying and inspecting, which was attended with expense. He went further, and said that the entire law which regulated the maintenance of the highways stood in need of revision. He had already said that their system of county government stood in need of reform, and the existing grants in aid stood in need of careful examination as to their mode and their object. Under these circumstances, he could not accept the Motion of the hon. Member for Oxfordshire (Mr. Harcourt). This was not from any want of sympathy or appreciation of the importance of the subject. If he accepted the Motion, it would be received by those in whom the wish was father to the thought as an assurance that the Government were going to deal with the subject of main roads in the manner proposed by the Resolution. On behalf of the Government, he had to say that they wished to keep themselves free to deal comprehensively with a matter which they consided required to be so dealt with. He could accept the Amendment of the hon. Member for Durham, and, therefore, if his hon. Friend went to a division he should vote for the Amendment. He was prepared to go further than that Resolution but he should accept it as an expression on the part of the Government of their *bonâ fide* intentions to deal with the subject at the earliest available moment.

Mr. SCLATER-BOOTH said, he had no fault to find with the allusions made by the right hon. Gentleman to the Act of 1878. It was very easy, of course, to get rid of an objectionable Resolution by smothering it with the suggestion that it was only part of a larger question. The point was, however, whether an admitted grievance, which had been loudly complained of in years past, and which the Act of 1878 had intensified, though it had not created it, should or should not be removed. If they were to wait, not until the Highways Act was amended, but until the whole question of county government was dealt with, until the relations existing between the Imperial and local Exchequers were settled, Gentlemen who recollected what had gone on in that House during the last four or five years would believe that the question would lie unsolved for many years to come. He had read in one of the papers that morning the extraordinary statement that by the Highways Act of 1878 turnpikes were done away. He believed that was an opinion which prevailed in many parts of the country; but the process had been going on for the last 20 years, and the Acts had been allowed to lapse year after year, the Government of the time having little to do with the matter. It was in 1878, under his humble agency, that the late Government endeavoured to find a remedy for the very serious hardship that the occupier of agricultural land found himself labouring under when large disturnpiking operations took place behind his back, and he was saddled with an increase of rates, for which no provision was made when he entered into his agreement with his landlord. The Act of 1878, he contended, had not been a failure, the important provision as to casting a portion of the maintenance of the main roads on the county rate being the necessary preliminary of any future legislation. They had thus obtained the nucleus of a classification of roads. What the agriculturist said was that a small, unimportant, ill-repaired road would suit his purpose sufficiently well, and that he objected to pay for a road which was four or five times the size he wanted. Those roads had been constructed for the public convenience out of borrowed money ; turnpike tolls had been allowed to be charged to meet the interest on that outlay; and Parliament had permitted those turnpike Acts to expire, and the tolls had come to an end. But the question was, why was the occupier of land to have those charges thrown on him, and not the general public, which had been accustomed, heretofore, at all events, to pay a certain proportion of them, but which had now been relieved both from the inconvenience and the burden of turnpike tolls? His hon. Friend behind him said that that was a question which could not wait for settlement — it could not wait till his right hon. Friend (Mr. Dodson) had not only introduced, but had passed, a County Government Bill and an Amendment of the Highway Act. The task of carrying such a measure through the House would be heavy, and what chance was there of its being speedily accomplished? If his right hon. Friend had a plan of operations in his mind, and knew the mode in which he was to assist the highway rate—if he had his scheme and an opportunity of bringing it forward, that would be something for them to go upon. But his right hon. Friend said nothing of that sort; he had given them his objections to the system of subventions, which they were all aware of, and also his objections to the proposal of handing over certain taxes. The late Government had been found fault with for having embarked in the system of subventions; and he certainly was not greatly enamoured of that system for local purposes. But there was a very bitter cry on this question; and he did not think there would be any great harm if the Government said that until they could put the matter on a permanent and solid foundation they would place a Vote of £200,000, or some amount of that sort, before Parliament, and distribute the money in aid of that local charge, not because they were not perfectly conscious of the objection to subventions, but because they perceived that the country generally had been relieved from a large expenditure and a great inconvenience in regard to the roads which they constantly used for purposes of business and pleasure. Now that they had got a county authority which grudged to spend much money on the main roads, and which was obliged to have surveyors to verify the condition of those roads, they had all the machinery requisite, and a contribution in aid of the county rate might be given for the benefit of the districts and parishes in which the roads might be considered insufficiently aided. If the Government were minded to take that step, they might make a further contribution in aid of local expenditure, intrusting that contribution to the county authority, to be given in addition to their own. The county authority would thus be merely the instrument in carrying the aid to the districts and parishes. The subvention in aid of lunatics had, in his opinion, worked extremely well; but he would admit that the subvention in aid of the police had not operated in the direction of public economy, nor would he wish to see it extended. But the sole cause of that he believed to be that the Home Office, through their Inspectors, laid so much stress upon smartness of dress, drill, and efficiency, and had a criterion of military efficiency which they were able to apply, notwithstanding the dead weight of county resistance. The tendency of the county was economical; that of the Inspectors, as regarded the police, was otherwise. He did not wish to be bound by any particular scheme of subvention; but he had shown how it might be done, and he would willingly support the Motion of his hon. Friend the Member for Oxfordshire.

MR. THOROLD ROGERS maintained that the burden of keeping up the roads ought in justice to fall upon the land, the taxation upon which, compared with landed property in Germany and other countries, was ridiculously light, and which, but for the existence of the roads, would be comparatively valueless. It was the interest, and therefore the duty, of the owner of real estate to maintain the means by which he could bring his goods to market, and carry his produce over land. The burden thrown upon the occupier was already too heavy, and if the maintenance of the roads were charged upon the Imperial Exchequer it would be the unfortunate occupier who would bear the brunt of it. The *soi-disant* farmers' friends who supported the Motion were, therefore, in reality, the greatest enemies the farmer could have.

SIR GABRIEL GOLDNEY contended that no reason had ever been shown why the maintenance of turnpike roads should be thrown upon the rates of localities at all. He understood the complaint of his hon. Friend the Member for Oxfordshire to be that that which ought to be a public burden was cast unfairly upon special localities. Turnpike roads, since their commencement in the reign of Charles II., had never, under any circumstances, been chargeable on the highway rate until the year 1841. In and subsequently to the year 1841 Acts had been passed entailing the burden of their repair on the localities. For his part he believed that the expense of maintaining roads, which were made, as expressed in the very words of their Acts, for the national benefit—for the passage of troops, for example, in time of need—ought to be borne, not by the localities, but by the general public.

Mr. RATHBONE thought that unless Parliament dealt with the question as a whole they would only be drifting more and more into inequalities. The question ought to be met by a different mode of levying local taxation, which would make the rich colliery owners and manufacturers who used the roads pay for their maintenance, instead of the cost falling upon the ratepayers. He had always considered that there was a strong claim upon the owners of personal property to contribute towards local burdens; but he objected very strongly to giving these small sops to local burdens without dealing with the whole question of local management and taxation. The inequalities existing in relation to the roads also existed in regard to the water supply and other matters. The whole system ought to be dealt with at the earliest possible moment. It had been urged on Government after Government, but somehow it had not been done. It was not wise to go on legislating piecemeal on this question; it only created difficulties which would have to be overcome in the future. He would suggest that a Royal Commission, consisting of the strongest men of the House, should be appointed, with instructions to have their Report prepared before next February. This would be a most valuable aid to the Government in carrying any measure of reform on the subject. He was certain it was possible to make a system of wise taxation more equal and just than it was at present, and to make its administration more economical and efficient; but he did not believe it could be without the appointment of a Commission, as the Government had not sufficient information in their possession. He hoped all the Motions on the Paper would be withdrawn, and that the Government would assent to his proposition, so that they might at last see a system of local taxation of principle and method in place of haphazard legislation.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I understand that the hon. Member for Oxforshire (Mr. Harcourt) means to divide the House upon this subject. In answer to the appeal which has just been made by my hon. Friend the Member for Carnarvonshire (Mr. Rathbone), who desires that a Royal Commission should be appointed for the purpose of considering this very large and diversified matter, and asks that it should not be dealt with in a piece-meal fashion, but completely as a whole. On that subject I may say that I do not wish to bind Her Majesty's Government, nor have I been asked to do so. It would require a preliminary consideration of the functions and province of the Commission before Her Majesty's Government could undertake to decide whether the labours of such a body could be made useful. As to the entire question, when it comes to be dealt with in a satisfactory manner, I am convinced that it must be dealt with mainly on the responsibility of the Government. Still, I will not express an opinion adverse to that of my hon. Friend — namely, that the question should be inquired into by a Royal Commission. My right hon. Friend near me (Mr. Dodson) has made statements on the part of the Government in regard to two matters. He has declared two things. In the first place, he said that he gives his support cheerfully to the Amendment of my hon. Friend the Member for South Durham (Mr. Pease); and, secondly, that Her Majesty's Government are very anxious to deal with the question. We are anxious to deal with it; and my right hon. Friend went a point beyond that statement, and frankly informed the House that Her Majesty's Government would have been anxious to place upon the Table of the House a measure dealing with a large portion of the subject, and an essential portion of it, and to have passed it during the present Session, had it not been for the circumstance that the time available for the purposes of Imperial legislation had been effaced by the local necessities of Ireland, partly in reference to the preservation of peace and order in that country, and partly in reference to the conditions of the Land Question, and that the demands which have been made upon our time have left a residue available for other purposes so small as to be quite insignificant. It appears to me that the real strength of the pleas urged by the hon. Member for Oxfordshire, and by all those who have spoken in a similar strain for a long period of years—that the real strength of those pleas is founded on one consideration, and on one consideration only—that the personal property of the district upon which the local rates were originally leviable was undoubtedly held in the letter and spirit of the law to be liable to contribution for local purposes. I must, at the same time, point out to the House that it is a most unsatisfactory substitute for the liability of that personal property to pursue the method which has been so much in vogue during the last 30 years, and was increasingly in vogue during the existence of the last Parliament, of making large transfers, one by one, from the local rates to the Consolidated Fund. For as far as the effect of this transfer from the local rates is concerned in the rural districts, do not conceal it from yourselves, and do not conceal it from the country, that however you may, in the first instance, in some measure, be granting relief to the agriculturists and the farmers of the country, every shilling of the relief finds its way, by a certain process, on each change of tenancy, into the pockets of the landlords, and it is that transfer and that pocket which is to be ultimately relieved. And what is the fund on which you lay the charge? Is it a fund supplied by real property alone? No; and you say, and say truly, that it ought not to be a fund supplied solely by real property, or by personal property. No, Sir; the Consolidated Fund represents a vast amount contributed from year to year, of which vast amount I, at least, for one, am convinced that at least one-half of it is supplied by the labours of the country. And, therefore, in the long run, and in the main, when you make these transfers, you are making them largely, by placing them on the labour of the country, not in the first moment, but after a short period, and by a certain process, by placing on the labour of the country taxes hitherto borne by the land. Now, I say that that is a very serious matter; and, in my opinion, the lesson to be drawn from it is this—that this is a process which ought not to be carried on piecemeal; but it ought be dealt with in view of the whole facts of the case, and upon a large scale. Let Parliament examine, and examine upon a large scale, what is the best mode of giving to real property that aid which it was once accustomed to receive from personal property, and let it make an adjustment of taxes, employing Imperial agency for their collection, but making a portion of the proceeds available for local purposes in proportion to what it thinks would be a just arrangement on the subject. If so, it can, in the very nature of the tax, avoid the difficulty I have described. It can avoid the difficulty of placing on labour burdens which never, in the history of the country, was intended in the spirit of the Constitution to place on labour. I challenge the hon. Gentleman to show that it is a right or just principle of legislation that a large portion of the local burdens of the country should be placed on the labour of the country as an inevitable consequence of these wholesale transfers carried on without any view of their ultimate bearing on the subject of local rates. Now, let us see what is asked of us. The hon. Member makes a Motion, one of the most innocent I have ever known submitted to Parliament in its terms; and I must say, from long experience, that my suspicion is excited in regard to all Motions which take the form of truisms or assertions in identical terms. The hon. Member for Oxfordshire moves—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, it is expedient so to amend 'The Highway Act, 1878,' that part of the maintenance of main roads may be defrayed from other sources than county rates."

They are paid for out of other sources than county rates now. The Motion, therefore, in its terms is absolutely unmeaning; at least, it is no more in its terms than the affirmation of a truism. Why are we to be called upon to vote for a Motion of this kind, if it is only in the nature of a truism? I decline to be bound to do something or other quite indefinite, except according to the declaration of the hon. Gentleman opposite, and which is not expressed by the vote before the House. If the hon. Member has a plan, he should state his plan in his Motion; but while he says—

> "It is expedient so to amend 'The Highway Act, 1878,' that part of the maintenance of main roads may be defrayed from other sources than county rates,"

he gives his own construction to that Motion. I want to know, suppose his Motion was accepted by the House, can it be imagined that the House or the Government are to be bound to do something under it? How are they to interpret it, and to know what it is that is wanted? Is not the House bound, in prudence, for its own dignity, and for the public utility, to speak in intelligible language when it expresses its opinion that the law ought to be changed in this way or in that. I am not, I think, taking an unreasonable objection. I have heard four different interpretations given to the Motion by Gentlemen who have supported it, and one of the speeches suggested to me a fifth interpretation which, I must confess, I thought quite as good as any of the other four. The first interpretation is that part of the expense of maintaining highways should be paid out of the Consolidated Fund. That is the interpretation, I think, of the Mover. A second interpretation is that of the hon. and gallant Gentleman who represents a portion of the county of Devon (Colonel Walrond). He says that the whole cost ought to be placed upon the Consolidated Fund. The hon. Baronet the Member for South Shropshire (Sir Baldwyn Leighton) stated in a speech which I must say was, I thought, pervaded by a spirit of justice more enlightened than that which was conspicuous in the speeches of other hon. Members—that the placing of the charge on the Consolidated Fund is a very rude method, and ought only to be temporarily adopted. Then came the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Hampshire (Mr. Sclater-Booth), who said he did not recommend before the Committee of the House of Lords, where he was examined as a witness, anything like a subvention from the Consolidated Fund. But the right hon. Gentleman has now discovered something totally different from what he recommended to the House of Lords, notwithstanding the long experience he had had when he went before that Committee. He now comes down and makes a proposition totally different. He says that he is prepared to support the Motion of the hon. Member for Oxfordshire; but he says that it ought not to be thrown in as a mere quota, and that it ought not to go in relief of the county rates, but in relief of that portion of the charge paid by the district. That is an essential check. But there is an evident flaw in this view. His main argument was that the county rate would be administered by those who would endeavour to exercise an efficient check over expenditure. Yes; but there are two objections to that. First of all, that by the present law the county authorities have not the power to exercise that check; and, secondly, that under the present system, and while the county authorities represent the principle of nomination and in no degree the principle of representation, it is impossible for them to serve the purposes of an efficient control over the local authorities. These are the four plans which have been submitted to the House. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Hampshire said it was a very hard case for the occupier, as perhaps it is, that he should be burdened with the cost of maintaining roads which he could not have anticipated when he made his bargain with his landlord. Then that suggests to me a fifth remedy quite as good as any of the other four—namely, that those of us who are landlords should take upon ourselves one-half of this burden. But whether four or five or 50 plans may be suggested, I must say that I think the adoption of these blind Motions, which express nothing, which in their terms have no meaning, or which are meant to be covers under which, by slow degrees, hon. Gentlemen may put forward their particular views, ought not to be accepted by this House. When my right hon. Friend near me speaks of dealing with county government as a whole, the answer is—"We cannot wait." It is admitted that the system of subvention is full of defects. Just let me remind the House how full of defects it is. In the first place, this is a system of subvention for England alone, and the proposal is to place half the cost of the maintenance of the main roads of England upon a fund to which Scotland and Ireland contribute in the same manner, and substantially to the same extent. I think that is a very serious and strong argument in favour of the doctrine that we ought to deal with this matter as a whole. In the second place, it is admitted that these methods are most unfavourable to economy. The real power in this case is in the parish, or in the district boards or authorities; and the parish or the district authority, as I believe, draws upon the county rate, with the county rate very nearly as helpless as the Consolidated Fund is. But when I say that I complain of the control of the local authorities over the Consolidated Fund do not let me be misunderstood. I do not mean that they control it in the sense of undue power over the public purse in augmenting the Public Expenditure. But we deserve it for the manner in which we have proceeded, for the manner in which we have brought in centralizing processes in connection with this system of local grants, and for the manner in which we have given them a turn and a tendency which is most injurious to that system of local government and economy which we all profess to reverence, and which we really believed to be one of our greatest treasures when it commenced some ten years ago. I wish that the right hon. Gentleman the late Home Secretary (Sir R. Assheton Cross) had been in the House when his right hon. Friend near him (Mr. Sclater-Booth) spoke on the subject of the Police Fund. There is one of the finest examples of the system we have been lately pursuing. When we have continued to tax the Consolidated Fund and the general taxpayer two or three or four times, we are told the trifling and trumpery benefits the local ratepayers obtain from the maintenance of the police ought not to be an inducement for us to wait for county government, but that we should redress the grievance. But how long has this been said? When this system of grants in aid was begun, as long as ten years ago, there were very great difficulties to be overcome in altering and re-casting the system of local authorities in the country, so as to place them in due relation to one another, to the public for whom they act, and to the Central Government. But we had an enormous leverage in our hands, by which we could overcome prejudice and opposition, and which was grounded upon other motives, because we held a purse, out of which we were prepared, on proper principles, to give largely in aid of the rates. That was found difficult—and so, what have we done? For the last six years we have gone on shovelling out large sums of money to no result, and upon no system, except to quell, for a moment, the appetite which grew with what it fed upon. £2,000,000 out of the public taxes were given away by the late Parliament; and the consequence is that our difficulty is greater now, because there is not the same power and the same inducements which you formerly had to bring local influences into conformity with the will and desire of Parliament. I think it is time to refuse to go on with this haphazard and piecemeal system, and that, at the first moment, when circumstances will permit, we should look at this question as a whole. It was not a satisfactory result, that was obtained from the labours of the last Parliament. I have pointed out what was done with regard to local grants, and that certainly effected a very important change in the balance of taxation as between land and labour; but the same Parliament, while relieving land, laid a heavy additional tax upon personal property by increasing the probate duties. In the expiring days of the last Parliament, £750,000 was laid by way of taxation upon personal property. Is it right that we should go on, time after time, always postponing the real process by which justice may be done among the various classes of the community, and that on the present occasion, in deference to a Motion, with regard to which I think I have shown expresses nothing, and which has for its main characteristic this—that it allows every hon. Gentleman in the House to apply it as he pleases. Under these circumstances, I think the hon. Gentleman will not be surprised that we cannot accede to his Motion. I do not wish to use the term offensively; but it is a hood-winking Motion. Let him raise the issue by some intelligible declaration if it is to be raised at all. But I put it to him, and to the House generally, that we are bound to consider the greatness of these questions, and to make some effort at the adjustment of the balance between real and personal property. We are here travelling away from this further and further, and it is time, I think, that we should declare that we will not advance in that direction. Let the hon. Gentleman urge upon us as rapidly as the state of Public Business will permit the despatch of the matter in hand; but do not let us take a course which is really unworthy of the dignity of the House in the discharge of legislative functions, and which certainly cannot have any comprehensive or accurate application to the principles of justice in reference to the various classes of the community.

SIR MASSEY LOPES said, all who were interested in land were much indebted to the hon. Member for Oxfordshire (Mr. E. W. Harcourt) for having initiated so interesting a discussion, and having ventilated a grievance of which the owners and occupiers of land so bitterly and yet so justly complained. The very serious depression which so generally affected the agricultural interest intensified the grievance. The charge for highways was one of the two most crying evils of which the agricultural community had to complain—the other was the education rate. These were new charges exceptionally imposed upon real property within the last ten years; they were not hereditary burdens. They were not taken into account or considered by him when he brought forward his Motion on local taxation in 1872. When he introduced that Resolution he was, to some extent, responsible for advocating the course which had been condemned by the Prime Minister, of making a subvention from the Consolidated Fund. He had, undoubtedly, recommended a subvention on that occasion; but if he had to suggest a course in the present case, although he might quite concur with his hon. Friend that a subvention from the Consolidated Fund might be the first step, yet he should not advise it in the present instance. He should infinitely prefer a local licence. With reference to these subventions, he wished to point out that, although since 1874 £2,000,000 a-year had been given by way of subvention to the local rates, the whole amount had been swamped and swallowed up by these new charges for highways and education. It was a fact, that the additional rate for education amounted to about £1,300,000 a-year, while the highway rate amounted to £500,000; and then there was the sanitary rate to be taken into account. These three imposts had absorbed the whole of the money given by way of subvention. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Gladstone) had always opposed these subventions; but he had never suggested any other adequate relief; and he must remind him that subventions in aid of the local rates for Imperial purposes in the country were first proposed by Sir Robert Peel and Lord John Russell. They publicly stated in that House that if the House adopted Free Trade it was absolutely necessary, as a matter of justice, that certain subventions should be given towards the exceptional taxes which were then being paid by the landed interest. What had been done since that time? Parliament had accumulated fresh charges on the landed interest; and notwithstanding the subvention of 1874, which, as he had shown already, had been swallowed up, nothing whatever had been done to relieve it. They complained, also, of the abolition of the turnpike trusts. What was the result of the abolition of tolls during the last 10 years? In 1870 there were, in round numbers, 1,000 trusts with 20,000 miles of road. In 1880 there were only 180 trusts with 5,000 miles of road, and in six more years all trusts would have run out. The repair of 15,000 miles of road at £30 per mile would add £450,000 to the burdens of the ratepayers, and the 5,000 miles yet to be disturnpiked £150,000 a-year besides; so that the abolition of turnpikes alone would have added £600,000 to the local burdens. Some remedies had been proposed that evening, which might very well be applied to the case. The carriage tax yielded £500,000 a-year; the dog tax £380,000, and the gun and game licences together yielded £230,000. In his view there could be no more proper tax than the carriage tax to be handed over to the localities. This, he said, might be handed over to the counties, put into hotch-potch, and then disposed of according to the proportion of mileage of main road in each highway district. That arrangement would be a fair one. But if the Government did not like to give so large a sum as that of the carriage tax, why should not the dog tax be applied to the purpose, and the amount collected by the county authorities by means of the police? It had been very truly said by his hon. Friend that Parliament admitted the grievance of the main roads being charged on the local rates when it passed the Act of 1878. But it was well known that that Act was never regarded as final, nor had it been altogether a satisfactory measure, although it was at the time considered as indispensably necessary to deal with the grievance. The hon. Member for South Durham admitted that the present law with regard to highways was not satisfactory, and that a comprehensive measure was required. He (Sir Massey Lopes) was sure the House would agree that it was absolutely necessary to consolidate the many Highway Acts in existence and replace them by an Act intelligible to all. Again, he thought, everyone would agree that there was a great want of uniformity in the bye-laws of the various counties, each of which possessed a different set, and these had constituted a continual source of heart-burning and annoyance. An attempt ought, therefore, to be made to introduce uniformity in the bye-laws prevailing in the various counties. The same want of uniformity was also true with regard to highway districts. Ten counties had adopted highway districts; 10 had declared they would have nothing to do with them, and the rest adopted a system of half-highway districts and half-parishes. He thought the Government should have the boldness to come forward with a compulsory and not a permissive measure upon this subject. Many hon. Members professed to sympathize with the landed interest in the present depression; but if there was any real desire to mitigate that depression, some of the legislative oppression, which was felt so heavily by the landed interest, must be removed.

MR. E. W. HARCOURT said, he would reply very briefly to the observations which had been made in opposition to the Motion he had submitted to the House. In the first place, he would refer to the Amendment of the hon. Member for South Durham (Mr. J. W. Pease). He regretted that he had been obliged to be absent from the House at the commencement of the hon. Member's speech. On his return, however, the hon. Member was just explaining to the House that the payment of rates by tenant farmers was a matter to be treated philosophically. He could not agree that this would convey any consolatory idea to the farmers in question. Then, with regard to his objection on the ground of the expense of inspection, which he pointed out would swallow up a great deal of the amount of the grant, it must be remembered that there was already in existence a number of Inspectors who could be made use of for this purpose. The whole of the speech of the hon. Member was in favour of the Amendment of the Act of 1878; but he must be well aware that this could not be done during the present Session. So that, in fact, his advice to the farmers was —"Wait." The hon. Member for South Durham was followed by the noble Lord the Member for Calne (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice), who remarked that it was extremely clever on his (Mr. Harcourt's) part to ask for immediate relief. In reply to that, he was unable to perceive the talent; it was a want so obvious to all practical men that ignorance in this matter would indicate a great dunderhead indeed. All he had intended to do was to make a recommendation. He was, however, perfectly willing, as were his Friends also, to take anything they could get. The noble Lord went on to say that the difficulty was owing to the bad administration in the counties. He (Mr. Harcourt) thought in matters of that kind hon. Members should speak of their own counties alone. It was possible that the county in which the noble Lord was interested was badly administered; but even if that were the case, it was no reason why he should accuse other counties of being in the same plight. Lastly, they were told that the only thing possible to be done by way of remedying the evil would be to establish County Boards. The contention, then, of the noble Lord was the same— "Wait." Then came the President of the Local Government Board, who said that the expense of the roads was less. But he had not told the House that the condition of the roads was much worse than it was. He stated that the main roads were now less used by the public than they were. But the fact that some brewers were paying £500 or £1,000 a-year for the use of the roads did not look as if that were the case. The right hon. Gentleman said—"Hands off from the Exchequer," and referred to the increased cost of police management, since the Government had contributed to their maintenance, as a proof of the great demand which would be made upon the

Exchequer. But it had been wisely remarked that the increased expenditure on the police was not due to local mismanagement by county authorities, but that it had been forced upon them by the expensive habits of the Government. He could not but regard the illustration of the hon. Gentleman, with reference to the green lanes being turned into highways, as having been used in a playful mood. He was well acquainted with country districts, and was aware what store we set by the violets and primroses of our village lanes, which no amount of subvention would tempt us to turn into useless main roads. Then he went on to say, before they added to the grants, they ought to consider whether any corresponding good would come out of them, and whether they would stimulate reckless expenditure. There, again, was an attack upon the local authorities, and doubt was cast upon their management. He next spoke of the road laws being in a transition state, and alluded to the Committee of the House of Lords then sitting, and stated that County Boards would shortly be established. This was exactly the official answer shadowed forth by his hon. Friend the Member for Mid Somerset (Mr. R. H. Paget) in the observations he had used in support of this Motion, and this was another repetition of the Government refrain—"Wait." He (Mr. Harcourt) felt certain that if the Government gave an offer of some kind in the present, they would not find the farmers hard to please; but they would be unwilling to be put off with promises as to the future. He would be quite content to accept either of the alternatives proposed by the right hon. Member for North Hampshire (Mr. Sclater-Booth) and the hon. Baronet the Member for South Devon (Sir Massey Lopes). But the hon. Member for Southwark (Mr. Thorold Rogers), who was a gentleman of very large beliefs, assumed that the taxpayer was patient, and was not eager for assistance. This showed that the Professor was not much up in the subject. He mixed up main roads and bye roads, and spoke of certain properties in Oxfordshire with which he professed to be acquainted. The hon. Member spoke of a road which, he said, led to his (Mr. Harcourt's) property. As a matter of fact, it did not lead to his property, but was very largely used by the hon. Professor himself when he was taking exercise to sharpen his appetite for dinner. At the close of his speech he said the land was much too lightly taxed; no wonder that he also should say—"Wait." The hon. Member for Carnarvonshire (Mr. Rathbone) objected to give small sops to local burdens without entering into the general question of local taxation. However, he (Mr. Harcourt) contended that it was much easier to deal with one stick out of a bundle than to try to deal with the whole bundle at once. The hon. Member suggested the appointment of a Royal Commission; and he, too, was one who counsels us to "wait." The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had said he could not deny that, in the first instance, personal property was liable to these things. But he further said that a subvention to the tenant would find its way into the pocket of the landowner, and would come out of the pocket of the labourer. He (Mr. Harcourt), as a practical man in a country district, could not and would not submit to such a definition. The three interests, landlords, tenants, and labourers, could not be separated, because what was for the good of the one must be for the good of the other. Furthermore, the right hon. Gentleman said that his (Mr. Harcourt's) thesis could not be controverted. Why, then, did he not vote for it? If the Government agreed to this they would be bound to do something at once, and, of course, they would be able, in their wisdom, to devise methods for carrying out the wishes of the farmer; and he (Mr. Harcourt) would answer for it the smallest assistance would be gratefully received. The only alternative, however, offered by the right hon. Gentleman was to wait until there was some grand scheme of county government prepared. This he took to be the crowning advice of the Government—"Wait." On this he would divide. They were not prepared to wait; and he would consider that those who went with him into the Lobby on this occasion would be representing the views of every farmer in England. The farmers wished for something at the present moment, and if the right hon. Gentleman would only give them that he would earn their lasting gratitude. This being so, he did not despair of seeing the right hon. Gentleman in the same Lobby as himself.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 145; Noes 159: Majority 14.—(Div. List, No. 170.)

Words *added.*

Main Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to.*

Resolved, That, in the opinion of this House, it is expedient to amend "The Highway Act, 1878," and especially those portions of the said Act which relate to main roads.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

LEASES BILL.—[BILL 108.]

(*Mr. Davey, Mr. Gregory, Mr. M'Cullagh Torrens, Mr. Lewis, Mr. Chitty.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Commitee.)

Clause 3 (Relief against forfeiture in leases).

MR. GRANTHAM said, he had an Amendment on the Paper; but, having communicated with those who had charge of the measure, he proposed to withdraw it, and to move another in page 2, line 2, after "assignment." He wished to add words to sub-section 2 of Clause 3, to provide that the person making the assignments mentioned should pay to the lessor such fee as he should require, not exceeding £1 1*s*. for each assignment. Under the circumstances, it appeared to him to be only fair that some acknowledgment should be made for the work done, and that the lessor should not have the work thrown on him without payment. During the whole of the term the leases had to run—and some of them were long, 99 years being a very common period—he had not the slightest control over the assignments, although it was necessary that a record should be kept of them. Members on both sides of the House with whom he had discussed his proposal seemed to think it was very fair; and he therefore trusted that the Attorney General would accept it.

Amendment proposed,

In page 2, line 2, after "assignment," to add the words "shall pay to the lessor such fee as he shall require not exceeding one guinea for each assignment."—(*Mr. Grantham.*)

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, the hon. and learned Member had appealed to him; but he had not charge of the Bill. No doubt the hon. and learned Gentleman had in his mind, when he made the proposal, the case of the large Companies who issued circulars, and who would, no doubt, suggest such an arrangement. It would suit large Companies; but in country places, where the leases were not so important and valuable, the case would be different, and the proposal would be a tax to the extent of £1 1*s*. He was aware it would only apply to cases where it was stipulated that the assignment should be prepared by a solicitor; but, in many cases, solicitors would be able to charge £1 1*s*. for doing nothing. The fee was supposed to cover the work of preparing a lease; but the solicitor would not prepare one, because this part of the Bill was to meet the very case where he had not prepared it. While the proposal would be beneficial in the case of London Companies, in other cases it would not be beneficial, but would mean the imposition of a tax of £1 1*s*. for the benefit of solicitors, who would receive it for doing nothing at all.

MR. LEWIS said, that although the Amendment was in the interest of a Profession to which he used to belong he could not support it. He could not help thinking that it would be an unsatisfactory addition to the clause. Why should the tax be paid in this instance, whilst it was not in many other instances? Take a policy of insurance; the office had to receive a notice with regard to insurance with a fee of only 5*s*.—that was the case of a Company which had to investigate the title of a person to whom it had something to pay. If the Amendment were accepted a tax would be inflicted upon the community, for which there was no reason at all. It was wrong in principle, and therefore he objected to it—it would be an encumbrance upon property which Parliament ought not to allow. He agreed with the Attorney General that they ought to get rid of this proposal as an obnoxious impediment in the way of the assignment of leasehold property.

MR. H. DAVEY said, the object of the Amendment was to provide some means by which the lessor might be told whom his tenants were; the fact would be conveyed to him by the notice of assignment. It was suggested by the hon. and learned Member for East Surrey (Mr. Grantham) that the lessor's solicitor could not be expected to take note of these things, and keep a register, unless he received a fee. He confessed, however, that he had thought the charge ought to fall on the lessor; but, under the circumstances, he had been willing to concede the amended Amendment which his hon. and learned Friend had placed on the Paper. The fact was the lessor had the lessee more or less in his power in matters of this sort. He hoped the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis) would not think it necessary to divide the Committee. On the whole, the Amendment was reasonable and proper, and one which he, having charge of the Bill, could agree to.

Mr. GREGORY was anxious to see people relieved from the liabilities they were under at present as to these objectionable covenants; and he took it that the proposal of his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Grantham) was a sort of compromise. He was willing to accept it as such.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James): Suppose a lessor's solicitor says—"I will not prepare a lease, although I am entitled to a fee." He would be able to do that, and yet could charge for doing nothing at all.

Mr. GREGORY: This provision applies only to the assignment.

Mr. GORST said, this discussion, so far as it had gone, showed the extreme inconvenience in matters of this kind of not having the Amendment on the Paper. An Amendment had been placed on the Paper by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for East Surrey, and that hon. Members had come down prepared to discuss; but, instead of their being asked to consider it when the Bill went into Committee, it was withdrawn, and a new one was presented in its place. The Attorney General had given strong reasons why the Amendment should not be accepted; and he would, therefore, suggest that it should be withdrawn. It could be placed upon the Paper and fully considered on Report.

Mr. DODDS pointed out that unless an Amendment were introduced in Committee there would be no Report; and, therefore, it would not be possible to raise another discussion on this matter. The Amendment was not an unreasonable one, and it would give great relief to the lessee; therefore he trusted the Committee would adopt it.

Mr. LEWIS said, he should be sorry to stand in the way of an amicable settlement of this question. Unlike the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst), he did not think it would be well to have a formal discussion on Report. He would withdraw his opposition to the Amendment, seeing that the latter was a compromise between the opponents of the clause and the promoters of the Bill. The whole matter was not very important; therefore, he hoped the Committee would not be detained on it any longer.

Amendment *agreed to.*

Question proposed, "That the Clause, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

Mr. WARTON: I have an Amendment to Clause 3, on page 2, line 39.

The CHAIRMAN: That will be on Clause 4.

Mr. WARTON said, he had made a mistake, and it was in line 29. The Amendment was very short, being merely to omit the words "before or" in line 29. The new provision ought not to apply to leases made "before," because, of course, there were now vested interests in those leases.

The CHAIRMAN: I must point out to the hon. and learned Member that as we have now put the Question, "That this Clause stand part of the Bill," his Amendment cannot be considered.

Mr. WARTON: Yes; but you did not give me time to move it.

The CHAIRMAN: The clause having been put, no Amendment can now be discussed.

Mr. WARTON: I thought I was in time.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. and learned Member can move his Amendment on Report. The Question is, "That this Clause, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill *reported;* as amended, to be considered *To-morrow.*

AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS ACT (1875) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Staveley Hill, Bill to amend "The Agricultural Holdings Act, 1875," *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Staveley Hill and Mr. Monckton.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 127.]

House adjourned at a quarter after One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 29*th March*, 1881.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Local Courts of Bankruptcy (Ireland)* (56).
Royal Assent—Consolidated Fund (No. 2) [44 *Vict.* c. 8]; Local Taxation Returns (Scotland) [44 *Vict.* c. 6]; India Office (Sale of Superfluous Land) [44 *Vict.* c. 7]; Local Government Provisional Orders (Godalming, &c.) [44 *Vict.* c. i].

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL (MILITARY OPERATIONS) — SURRENDER OF POTCHEFSTROOM.

QUESTION.

VISCOUNT CRANBROOK: I wish to put a Question to the noble Earl opposite as to the peculiar information which is published respecting the surrender of one of the British garrisons in the Transvaal. According to the accounts in the newspapers Potchefstroom was surrendered during the armistice, as the provisions were within one day of reaching it. According to one account, the surrender seems to have taken place after a severe fight, in which it is said that 19 officers and soldiers were killed and 90 wounded. I should, therefore, like to know whether the noble Earl has any official account of the affair?

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: The Secretary of State for War yesterday received the following telegram from Sir Evelyn Wood:—

> "March 28.—Fort Amiel, 12 noon.—Winsloe surrendered Potchefstroom on the 21st, before my mule waggons, which left Mount Prospect the 7th, had traversed the distance—200 miles. Terms: All honours of war, retaining private weapons and property; guns and rifles surrendered, but ammunition for both to be handed to Brand for custody during war, after which to be returned to us. Garrison not to serve during the hostilities at present existing. Garrison now marching *viâ* Kronstadt on Natal."

I have conferred already with Mr. Childers on the subject; but we are not yet in possession of sufficient information to guide Her Majesty's Government as to the reply to be sent to Sir Evelyn Wood.

EARL CAIRNS: I wish to ask if the Government have any knowledge as to whether there was fighting on the occasion of the surrender of the place; and, if so, whether there was, as reported, any loss of life?

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: The whole of the information we have on the subject I have just read; but if I were to venture any conjecture I should say that the newspaper accounts refer to killed and wounded during the whole time the garrison was beleaguered. That, however, is entirely conjecture on my part.

CANDAHAR.—QUESTION.

LORD WAVENEY asked Her Majesty's Government—(1) Which Government, the Indian or Afghan, receives at present the revenues of Candahar; and subject to what account? (2) In the event of Candahar being transferred to the Government of Abdurrahman, what means of protection for British subjects will be adopted; and, whether a consul, with right of flag and escort, will reside in that city?

VISCOUNT ENFIELD: With regard to the first portion of my noble Friend's Question, I have to state that, although the Secretary of State has not received any specific or detailed information on the subject, there is very little reason to doubt that the Indian Government have been in receipt of the revenues of Candahar during the occupation of the place. With regard to the second part of the Question, I may say that my noble Friend (the Marquess of Hartington) hopes shortly to be informed as to what arrangements the Indian Government have made with Abdurrahman with respect to Candahar; but at present we have no specific or detailed information on the subject.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS — FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE.

QUESTION.

THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE asked the Lord President of the Council, What are the intentions of the Privy Council with regard to the Orders relative to foot and mouth disease which expire on the 31st of March; and whether the Privy Council have decided what regulations they intend to impose for the next few months?

EARL SPENCER: In answer to the Question which my noble Friend has put to me, I will lay before your Lordships the course which the Privy Council have taken and intend to take with regard to the foot-and-mouth disease. There have been four Orders of a temporary character issued, and they expire on the 31st of March next. First, there is the "Markets and Fairs Order," by which all public sales of animals throughout England and Wales are prohibited, except by licence, the local authority being empowered to grant licences for the sale of fat stock for slaughter, while no sale of store stock is allowed without a licence from the Privy Council. This is a very strong measure, without doubt, applying as it does to the healthy districts; but there is every reason to believe that it has been effective, coupled with the restrictions imposed on the infected areas, in preventing the spread of the disease. It is clear, however, that such a severe measure could only have been enforced at a period of the year when the movement of animals is not so essential as at other times, and it is not proposed to continue that Order after the 31st instant. From that date, therefore, the holding of markets, fairs, and sales of animals will be unrestricted, except within the infected areas. The second Order, which expires on the 31st of March, is the Metropolitan Foot-and-Mouth Disease Order, which limits the markets to be held in the Metropolis to the one market at Islington, at which fat animals only can be sold for slaughter within 10 days, and within the limits of the Metropolis. One very fruitful source of disease has always been this central market, and it is certain that so long as disease exists in the country a free circulation of animals that have been exposed in the Metropolitan markets throughout other districts must tend to spread the disease. The Privy Council propose, therefore, to continue the prohibition against the exit of animals from the Metropolis that have been exposed in the market for another month—namely, till April 30. The third temporary Order which was passed was an Order affecting Scotland. It was passed with a view of preventing the introduction of this very insidious disease into that country. The Privy Council passed it, and by that Order all cattle coming from England were prohibited from entering Scotland until the 31st of March. The Order has been entirely successful, I am happy to say, foot-and-mouth disease having been completely kept out of Scotland. At the instance of the Highland Society, whom I consulted about renewing the Order, the Privy Council propose to renew this Order in Scotland until the 30th of April. They have made a modification in the Order to remedy an inconvenience which was felt by owners of stock in Scotland, who pastured animals across the Border, and who are now anxious to get those animals back to their farms. The Council will, therefore, give a relaxation of the Order to such an extent that Scotch owners who have stock across the Borders may, under a licence to be granted under certain conditions, bring them back to Scotland. The fourth Order, which has reference to the New Forest, we do not propose to renew. There is no disease, I am happy to say, around the New Forest, and the authorities in that district are anxious that the Order should not be renewed. There seems to be no necessity for renewing it. I now come to the General Infected Area Order, which affects all districts where foot-and-mouth disease exists. In the early part of the year, or the end of last year, the Privy Council carried out a large policy with regard to the infected areas. Instead of leaving a so-called "infected district" small in extent, we extended its area over the whole county, our anxiety being to forestall disease, because we found that if we waited until disease came it very often appeared at a market and spread over the county before we could take steps to stop it. The Order has been very successful, for we have had a constant diminution of disease from then to the present time. I have a Return showing the number of cases in the several districts in the different weeks from the week ending January 8 to March 26. In the week ending January 8 there were 256 outbreaks; in the week ending January 15, 217; in the following week they went down to 174; in the week ending 5th March to 70; and in the week ending 26th March to 34. That, I think, is a satisfactory result, and one which compares very favourably with other outbreaks that have taken place. The time, however, has now arrived when the Privy Council feel that they are no longer justified in keeping up such large areas, and they propose from time to time to reduce them so as to free those parts of the existing areas which have become free from disease from the restrictions under which they are now placed. In order to do this, particular information is required from each local authority as to the state of disease within the area, for it must be remembered that by Section 26 (3) of the Act the Privy Council having declared an area infected may at any time when there is not within that area, or within some particular portion thereof, any place infected with foot-and-mouth disease, declare that area, or that portion thereof, to be free. The Privy Council cannot, therefore, deal with any area, or any part of an area, until they know that the local authority has declared all infected places in that area or part of an area to be free. The Privy Council are going carefully through each area *seriatim*, and have called upon the local authorities to furnish them with the requisite information. As regards the restrictions to be placed upon those parts of the country which it may be necessary to keep as infected areas, it is proposed to consolidate and simply the orders which now apply to sales and movement within those areas. Under the new Regulations, markets and sales will only be allowed under licence of the local authority for fat stock to be slaughtered within four days, but not confined, as at present, to slaughter within the areas. Store stock sales will only be allowed by license of the Privy Council; and no sale, public or private, will be allowed on any farm or premises, unless the animals to be sold have been for 14 days on the premises, and have not been in contact with other animals. With a view to the protection of healthy districts in exceptionally dangerous positions, it is proposed to allow them to prohibit the introduction of animals from any other specified districts, with the special sanction of the Privy Council. I should like, as I have touched on these matters, to refer to the Regulations which we have made at the foreign animals' wharves. Your Lordships know that the Regulations with regard to disease there are exceedingly important, and unless carried out with energy and care there is always a danger of this insidious disease getting out from the market, and being spread in different parts of the country. We have introduced very important Regulations with regard to the foreign wharves. First of all, we have prevented a thing which, I believe, is legal, but which we thought was exceedingly dangerous—the sending of home-bred cattle to the slaughterhouses at those foreign wharves. That is not illegal; but a danger arises that there might be some animals with foot-and-mouth disease recently slaughtered there, and the owners coming in contact with the disease would carry it outside after leaving the market, and we think that an important Regulation to have had introduced. We have, further, got the Corporation—and I am bound to say the Corporation have been most ready to meet the views of the Privy Council in all these matters—we have got them to divide the market in sections, and provide each section with slaughterhouses. When that is carried out, foreign animals that may arrive with disease will be kept within a certain block, not allowed to leave, and slaughtered in houses specially prepared; and, further than that, all who come in to see the cattle, whether drovers or owners, are obliged before they leave to be very thoroughly disinfected. That is not a very pleasant process; but I believe it has been satisfactorily carried out, and we hope to prevent the danger from persons going backwards and forwards from those places to other cattle. We hope to arrange for different hours of holding the markets in such a way that those who go to the foreign wharf at Deptford shall not be able to go also amongst the cattle at Islington, which has spread the disease more than once. I believe the Corporation have agreed to make an alteration with regard to the hours in order to meet that. Then, my Lords, there is another point which is not exactly arranged, but which I am endeavouring to get the Corporation to agree to—namely, to have a separate body of men to attend upon the cattle at the foreign markets. Now, the drovers and attendants on those cattle are in the habit of going to Deptford and other places, and naturally when there is disease at Deptford they carry the disease to other markets and places, and that is a source of considerable danger. I took the opportunity some time ago of visiting Deptford, and I threw out a suggestion as to that, and we now hope to carry that change into effect. We hope to be able to diminish very largely the danger, which I am afraid must to some extent exist, from the arrival in England of animals diseased from other countries. We hope not only to carry out those Regulations at Deptford, but also to carry them out at other foreign animal wharves which are in different parts of the country. I wish also to say that my noble Friend behind me, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, has been in communication with various Governments abroad, and has urged them to make Regulations to stop the traffic of sending diseased animals to England from those countries. My Lords, I think I have stated the position in which the country stands with regard to these Orders. We are now very carefully going through all the different counties in England, and hope in every county to reduce the number of areas to a much larger extent than has been done before; and if your Lordships are interested in any particular county I should be glad to answer any question upon the subject and give any explanation. I may say we hope to publish nearly all these Orders in *The Gazette* to-morrow.

LORD DENMAN asked that further time should be given for the continuance of the necessity for the Orders for removal which were so easily obtained; and as the Privy Council was a deliberative body, there was yet time, before the 31st of March, to provide for their being enforced for a longer time, as they were so great a safeguard.

LOCAL COURTS OF BANKRUPTCY (IRELAND) BILL [H.L.]

A Bill for the establishment of Local Courts of Bankruptcy in Ireland—Was *presented* by The Lord O'HAGAN; read 1ª. (No. 56.)

House adjourned at a quarter before Six o'clock, to Thursday next, half past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 29*th March*, 1881.

MINUTES.]—PRIVATE BILL (*by Order*)—*Withdrawn*—Thames River.

PUBLIC BILL—*Select Committee—Report*—Married Women's Property (Scotland) [No. 152].

Earl Spencer

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

THAMES RIVER BILL (*by Order.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Evelyn Ashley.*)

MR. RITCHIE said, that at last this Bill, which had been so frequently delayed, came before the House for the purpose of enabling hon. Members to express an opinion as to whether, in its present form, it should be read a second time or not. He did not, of course, wish to blame the Government for the many delays which had taken place in regard to the second reading of the Bill. In fact, his (Mr. Ritchie's) feeling in reference to the delay was a mingled feeling. For some reasons he had been glad of the delay; for other reasons he regretted it. He was glad of the delay because it had afforded him more opportunities for investigating the subject; and upon each investigation he had become armed with a further authority in justification of the course which he now asked the House to adopt. On the other hand, he regretted the delay somewhat, because it had given the Government an opportunity, which they had certainly availed themselves of to the fullest extent, of endeavouring, to use a familiar word, to square hon. Members who were likely to be opposed to the second reading of the Bill. He himself knew of cases in which this influence had been exercised in a very extraordinary degree. He knew that it was not an unfrequent thing for the Government to endeavour to meet the objections which might be raised to their Bills by private Members; but it was somewhat of a novelty for the Government to endeavour, as he was told they had done in this case, to strike an absolute bargain with hon. Members who had signified their intention of opposing the Bill—that bargain being that if they would withdraw their opposition the Government would consent to make certain changes in the Bill; but that if they did not withdraw their opposition, then the Government would not make those changes. He understood that this mode of negotiation with hon. Members had been, to a certain extent, successful; but it was a course which would hardly redound to the credit of those in charge of the Bill. The Amendment which he had placed on the Paper was not the Amendment which he had originally placed upon it; and he thought it necessary to say a few words of explanation on the subject, in order that he might not lay himself open to the charge of having changed his front. He never intended to ask the House to refuse a second reading to this Bill on the merits of the Bill itself; but it was pointed out to him that his first Notice—"That this Bill should be read a second time on this day six months"—might be understood by some as being directed against the merits of the Bill; and, therefore, he came to the conclusion that the Amendment which he now had upon the Paper was one which more accurately represented the position which he desired to take up. He had no intention of entering into the merits of this Bill. Indeed, he contended that its merits were an altogether secondary consideration — that the question was one of far more importance than the merits of any particular Bill. The question, in point of fact, was entirely one of principle. He might point out that this Amendment, if the House assented to it, would not necessarily be fatal to the Bill. It was an Amendment which was simply directed against the mode in which the Bill was introduced; and if it were carried, there would be nothing whatever to hinder the Government from withdrawing the Bill and introducing it again to-morrow as a Public Bill.

Message to attend the Lords Commissioners;—

The House went;—and being returned;—Mr. SPEAKER *reported* the *Royal Assent* to several Bills.

THAMES RIVER BILL (*by Order.*)

Question again proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. RITCHIE said, he had already stated that his Amendment to this Bill was not directed against the merits of the Bill. He wished the House clearly to understand that. He did not propose to go into the merits of the Bill. In fact, he acknowledged at once that there was a necessity for legislation. The proposition might be or might not be of a most reasonable kind. That was not what he asked the House to consider. What he asked the House to consider was, whether this legislation was to be carried out by a private measure or by a public one; and if his Amendment were assented to, it would do nothing to hinder the Government from introducing the Bill to-morrow as a public measure. He hoped he should be able to convince the House that this was a Bill which ought to be dealt with as a public measure. He hoped he should be able to show the House that almost every one of the provisions of the Bill, taken by itself, would constitute the measure a public one; but, taken together, his case was absolutely overwhelming. Now, the first difficulty he had to contend against, in consequence of the mode in which the Bill had been introduced, was that they had not been favoured with a speech from the Member of Her Majesty's Government who was in charge of the Bill. That placed him in a somewhat difficult position, because he hardly knew on what arguments the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Evelyn Ashley) relied, and what he (Mr. Ritchie) had to answer. That was one of the difficulties consequent upon the mode in which Her Majesty's Government had chosen to introduce the Bill. If the Government had introduced the measure as they ought to have done—as a Public Bill—hon. Members would have had the reasons for introducing it, and the arguments in its favour, placed before the House by the Minister responsible for the Bill. But as it was, here was a Bill, dealing with a large and important matter, which was simply moved by the hon. Member in charge of it (Mr. Evelyn Ashley) lifting his hat. He was afraid that the course which had been taken by the Government would lead to his remarks being longer than they would otherwise have been, because it was necessary that he should endeavour to meet every single point Her Majesty's Government could raise; whereas, if the hon. Member had moved the second reading in the ordinary way, it would, perhaps, have been sufficient for him to have confined himself to answering the arguments used by the hon. Member. There had, however, been distributed to the Members of the House a Paper of "Reasons" in favour of the second reading of the Bill. Now, he did not think that that course was one which, as a rule, was a convenient one. He knew it was frequently taken in the case of a Private Bill; but he ventured to say that it never before had been taken in reference to a Bill in charge of a Minister of the Crown. The hon. Gentleman might say, and say truly, that these "reasons" had been distributed by the Thames Conservancy Board, who, he said, were the promoters of the Bill. No doubt, if the hon. Gentleman said so it would be true; but it was a curious coincidence that the names of the Parliamentary agents at the end of these "reasons," who, he presumed, were the agents for the Thames Conservancy, were also those of the agents to the Board of Trade. It might be a mere coincidence; but it led one to suppose that the Government themselves had something to do with the issue of these "reasons." He thought it necessary to ask the House, in the first place, to consider for one moment the difference in the mode of proceeding in reference to a Public and a Private Bill. A Public Bill, in the first place, was distributed to every Member of the House some days before the second reading was taken, so that hon. Members might make themselves acquainted with all the objects proposed by the measure. In the case of a Private Bill, no distribution took place to the Members of that House. In the case of a Public Bill, either upon its introduction or upon the second reading, the nature of its provisions was explained by the Minister of the Crown in charge of it, and a debate took place before assent was given to the principle contained in it. It was altogether different in regard to a Private Bill. It was read at a quarter to 4 o'clock, when there were very few Members in the House. It was read as a matter of course, and the House was committed to whatever principle there might be in it. As a rule, Private Bills did not initiate any new principle at all, but were simply for carrying out in some particular locality the principles already assented to by the House in previous measures of public legislation. He remembered perfectly well last Session that a Private Railway Bill was brought into this House, in which it was proposed to deal with the Lands Clauses Consolidation Act—a Public Act —and the House rejected it on the third reading, because it interfered with that Public Act, and because it was held that hon. Members ought not to be asked to reverse important principles of general legislation in a Private Bill. In this case there was another inconvenience which hon. Members, who had been so long deprived of their rights in regard to private Members' days, would readily appreciate and understand. If this Bill had been introduced as a Public Bill by the Government, as it ought to have been, the Government would have been compelled to place it on the Paper for a Government night; but here the Government came down with a Bill of great importance affecting the whole trade and commerce of London, and they proposed to bring it forward on a private Members' night. They carefully abstained from placing it on the Paper on a Government night; but they brought it forward on a private Members' night; and, in so doing, they staved off the Motions of hon. Members which already stood on the Paper until some indefinite period in the evening. The Government had interfered very largely with private Members' days this Session. It might have been necessary; but this was altogether an unnecessary interference with private Members' days and with the rights of private Members. He had pointed out what the difference was between the second reading of a Private Bill and a Public Bill. He now came to the Committee stage. A Public Bill passed through a Committee of the Whole House; and all the clauses were carefully considered. A Private Bill went upstairs; and even if referred to the large Committee, which the hon. Gentleman expressed his willingness to nominate in this case, it would never come back again so that its details might be discussed. A Private Bill did not appear again in that House until it was considered. There was another inconvenience in treating a Bill containing any very great principles of legislation as a Private Bill. A Private Bill Committee did not, as was the custom in a Committee of the Whole House, postpone, in the first place, the Preamble of the Bill. The House then considered the clauses, and if alterations were made in the clauses, the Preamble was afterwards amended in accordance with these altered clauses; but the first thing a Committee upon a Private Bill considered was the Preamble; and no alteration was allowed to be made in the clauses which was not in strict accord with the Preamble. He might mention that the Committee on the East India Railway Bill in 1879 felt it to be so inconvenient to deal with matters involving great principles in a Private Bill that a special Report was made by them pointing out the inconvenience of such a proceeding. He had now to refer to the reasons which had been distributed against his Amendment in opposition to the Bill. The first, which he would put shortly, was that this was properly a Private Bill; and why? Because, forsooth, the Thames was a locality. Private Bills dealt with localities; and as the Thames was a locality this ought to be a Private Bill. Now, he did not deny that, technically, the Bill could be introduced as a Private Bill. His Amendment did not say that, technically, it could not be introduced as a Private Bill. What the Amendment said was that it ought not to be introduced as a Private Bill; and that was the whole ground of the argument. The House knew that, on more than one occasion, Bills had been introduced into that House as Private Bills, and Resolutions passed to the effect that they ought not to be dealt with as Private Bills. Those Bills were all, technically, Private Bills; but the House had said that they ought not to have been so dealt with. The hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn), whom he regretted to see was not in his place, some years ago moved the rejection of a Private Bill, not because it could not technically be called a Private Bill, but because it contained provisions such as constituted it a Public Bill. So with the Manchester Education Bill, which was introduced as a Private Bill. It complied with the Standing Orders, and passed through all the forms which usually applied to Private Bills, thus showing that it was technically a Private Bill; but the House said—"This is a Bill involving large principles, which ought not to be dealt with by any Private Bill." The House assented to a Resolution to that effect almost identical with the Resolution he asked the House to assent to now. Therefore, he did not assert that there was anything informal in the introduction of this Bill; but while saying that, he altogether denied the validity of the grounds contained in the so-called "Reasons" to which he had referred. The idea of calling the Thames through 200 miles of its course, touching, as it did, many large and important towns, and conveying the trade and commerce of London upon it—the idea of calling it a "locality" was simply ludicrous. One might as well call the Mississippi a locality. There would be just as much reason for such a designation as to call the Thames a locality. Another of the "reasons" given was that Public Bills must relate to the whole community. Of course they must; and that was exactly what he said. He contended that this Bill related to the whole community. Another statement put forward in the "reasons" against his Amendment was that Bills brought in at the suit of the promoters were necessarily Private Bills, and that this Bill was brought in at the suit of the Thames Conservancy. No doubt that was so; but that was the fundamental point of his objection. He objected to this Bill being brought in at the suit of the Thames Conservancy Board. He contended that it ought not to be so brought in; but that it ought to be introduced as a Public Bill upon the Motion of a Minister of the Crown. That was the whole of his case. Some confusion was attempted to be created by saying that it could not be a Hybrid Bill, because Hybrid Bills were for carrying out national works, or works in relation to Crown property, or for public objects in which the Government were concerned. Now, he utterly denied that statement in reference to Hybrid Bills; and he held that this Bill ought to be a Hybrid Public Bill. A Hybrid Bill was as much a Public Bill as any other Public Bill; but as it interfered with private rights it had to comply with the Standing Orders, like a Private Bill. It was then brought into the House, read a second time, and referred to a Hybrid Committee. Sir Erskine May's book explained to them what the difference was between a Public and a Private Bill—

> "Every Bill for the particular interest or benefit of any person or persons is treated, in Parliament, as a Private Bill. Whether it be for the interest of an individual, a public company, or corporation, a parish, a city, a county, or other locality, it is equally distinguished from

a measure of public policy in which the whole community are interested."

Further—

> "Though a Bill relating to a city is generally held to be a Private Bill, Bills concerning the Metropolis have been dealt with as Public Bills —the large area, the number of parishes, and the variety of interests concerned, constituting them measures of public policy, rather than of local interest."

Then Sir Erskine May proceeds to give instances in which Bills affecting the Metropolis had been dealt with as Public Bills. There were the Metropolitan Police Bills of 1828 and 1839, the Metropolis Local Management Bill of 1858, and the Main Drainage Bill of 1865, which were all passed as Public Bills. In 1851, 1852, 1878, and 1880, theMetropolitan Water Supply Bills were introduced as Public Hybrid Bills. Those Bills affected the locality of the Metropolis; and the fact that they affected the Metropolis, it was held, constituted them matters of public interest. The Thames Embankment Bills of 1862 and 1863 were introduced as Public Bills; but as private property and interests were affected the Standing Orders were complied with, and other proceedings taken as in Private Bills; and the same course was taken in 1867 and 1876 with the Metropolis Gas Bills, in 1874 with the Metropolis Water Supply and Fire Prevention Bill, and in 1877 with the Metropolitan Toll Bridge Bill. Bills affecting the City of London only have, as a rule, when dealing with the property, interests, and jurisdiction of the City, been dealt with as Private Bills; but the moment such Bills interfered in any way with the area outside the City so as to affect the public interests of the Metropolis they ceased to be Private Bills, and became Public Bills. Sir Erskine May said that Bills concerning the City of London, but, at the same time, affecting public interests and involving considerations of public policy, had been introduced and passed as Public Bills. In 1864 the Weighing of Grain (Port of London) Bill was held to be properly a Public Bill, as affecting an extensive area and a population of 3,000,000, and its object being to substitute weighing for measurement of grain. In 1870, on the second reading of the Brokers (City of London) Bill, objection being taken that it ought to have been brought in as a Private Bill, the Deputy Speaker stated that the Bill had been referred to the Examiner, who had decided otherwise. In 1871 the Court of Hustings (City of London) Bill, which established a Court having jurisdiction over the Metropolis, was brought in as a Private Bill; but on notice being taken of the extent and public importance of the measure it was withdrawn. It would thus be seen that, although Bills which affected only the property, interests, and jurisdiction of the City were introduced as Private Bills, the moment they affected the Metropolis at large, or involved considerations of public policy, or affected public interests, they ceased to be Private, and became Public Bills. It would also be seen that the extensive area and large population themselves were sufficient to constitute a Bill a public one. So far, Bills affecting the Metropolis and the City had been dealt with. The same principles hold good in other localities. The case he was now about to refer to more nearly approached the question now before the House. In 1856 the Passing Tolls on Shipping Bill was held to be a Public Bill. It concerned the harbours of Dover, Ramsgate, Whitby, and Bridlington—abolished passing tolls, transferred these harbours to the Board of Trade, imposed rates, and repealed local Acts; but being a measure of public policy its character was not changed by the fact that these harbours only came under its operation. And, again, the Harbours Bill in 1861 affected the same four harbours and the local Acts under which they were administered, but otherwise dealt with so many matters of general legislation as to be, unquestionably, a measure of public policy. In 1875 the Dover Pier and Harbour Bill, backed by the Government for public objects, was introduced as a Public Bill, but proceeded with as a Hybrid Bill. What the House would have to consider was whether this was a Bill affecting public interests. Did it involve questions of public policy? Did it affect a large area and an extensive population, and did it deal with matters of general legislation? If so, it would be no answer to say that it only affected the locality of the Thames, for it was held that, although a Bill of this character might only affect one or two harbours, that did not take away from it the character of a Public Bill, because it dealt with matters of public importance.

He would ask the House whether a Bill to abolish pilotage on the River Thames was not obviously a question of a public character? This was a Bill affecting the counties of Essex, Kent, Middlesex, Surrey, Berks, Bucks, Oxford, and Wilts; and he contended that that itself would constitute it a Public Bill. Then Bills dealing with any important principle have been hitherto Public Bills. In the case of the Manchester Education Bill of 1854, which was introduced as a Private Bill, the House said it was a measure which ought not to have been so introduced, but that it ought to have been dealt with as a public measure. It had been contended that Bills dealing with the conservancy of the Thames had been hitherto, in most cases, dealt with as Private Bills. This contention he would refer to presently. He hoped he had shown the House, not on his own authority, but on that of one whose auauthority they all recognized, what was the broad line of distinction between Public and Private Bills; and he would now ask the House to consider the provisions of the present Bill, in order to ascertain whether it came within the category of Public or Private Bills, whether it affected large masses of the population, and whether it dealt with great questions of public policy. The propositions of this Bill were, roughly speaking, five in number. It abolished compulsory pilotage above Gravesend; it gave everyone a right to navigate the Thames without any qualification; it repealed all the powers, rights, duties, obligations, and privileges of the Waterman's Company; it increased the tonnage dues payable in the Port of London; and it constituted the Thames Conservancy Board a smoke nuisance authority in the counties of Essex, Kent, Middlesex, Surrey, Berks, Bucks, Oxford, and Wilts. Now, with reference to that part which constituted the Thames Conservancy Board the smoke nuisance authority, that was altogether a new power conferred on them. They were authorized by this Bill to enter lands belonging to anyone without saying why or wherefore, to demand the production of all the plans that the owners had, and it also gave the Board power to inspect factories. There were large numbers of towns upon the banks of the Thames which were seats of very great industries, and those who were engaged in those industries looked with some apprehension upon the creation of a new nuisance authority, it having been supposed that they were already under regulations of proper local authorities. They altogether objected to the creation of another new authority to overlook their factories and works. Even this point itself would constitute the Bill one of a public character. But the next power which it proposed to give the Conservancy was to raise the tonnage dues in the Port of London, and in order to do this it was necessary to amend a public statute—namely, the 4 & 5 *Will.* IV., c. 32. This statute enacted that no vessels in the River Thames should be subjected to tonnage dues unless they were over 45 tons register; and by the present proposition of the Government vessels of over 20 tons register would be liable to tonnage dues. This would be a very heavy burden of taxation upon a large number of vessels, and putting aside altogether for the moment the point that it interfered seriously with a Public Act of Parliament, he thought the question, affecting, as it did, taxation, was not a proper matter for a Private Bill, but a matter of public policy that should be dealt with in a Public Bill. With reference to the navigation of the Thames, it stood at present in this way—no one could take charge of a barge or wherry of any kind, or ply for hire, without having gone through an examination, and without being properly qualified by apprenticeship, and without having become a member of the Waterman's Company, whose rights and privileges had been conferred by Act of Parliament; and, therefore, this Bill affected rights and privileges conferred by an Act of Parliament. He believed there were something like 1,200 of the watermen who would be affected by these provisions in the Bill. It might be right and proper that these men should be deprived of their privileges by Act of Parliament; but the propriety of doing so by a Private Bill, in which there was no attempt to provide any compensation for the men who were to be so deprived of their privileges, was open to grave objection; at any rate, it was a question which demanded full discussion, and that discussion could only be obtained if the measure were introduced as a Public Bill. He would not say anything with reference to the principle of abolishing public Companies by means of a Private Bill. That might be very convenient or not; but he thought it was an objectionable course. It might be desirable to abolish certain Companies now enjoying special privileges; but it ought to be done publicly by a public legislative measure, and not by a Private Bill. He now came to another provision of the Bill—namely, the one which dealt with compulsory pilotage. It was now proposed, by a Private Bill, to repeal an important provision of the Merchant Shipping Act of 1854. That Act distinctly declared, in Section 353—

> "Subject to any alteration to be made by any pilotage authority in pursuance of the power hereinbefore in that behalf given, the employment of pilots shall continue to be compulsory in all districts in which the same was by law compulsory immediately before the time when this Act comes into operation."

The River Thames was one of the districts referred to in that section. There was also given power to the pilotage authorities to make certain exemptions. The Bill now before the House proposed to abolish compulsory pilotage on the Thames. That might be very right and very proper; but his contention was simply and solely that it ought not to be done by means of a Private Bill. The question was certainly one of importance to London, and not only to London and to this country, but it was positively an international question, because every ship that came to the Thames, whether it was a foreign or a British ship, was at present subject to the law—under the Merchant Shipping Act—of compulsory pilotage, unless coming under certain exemptions. The present Bill took away the powers of the Trinity House and abolished compulsory pilotage. The House would understand the great importance of this question when he told them that the tonnage of sea-going vessels which went up the Thames in one year was something like 10,000,000 of tons; and yet this Bill proposed to deal with a matter of such enormous importance by means of a Private Local Act instead of by a public measure. It would be said, and said truly, that this question had already been investigated by a Select Committee of the House of Commons. He only wished to refer to this in order to show the great difference of opinion which existed on this subject, and to show that it was a matter on which opinion was pretty evenly divided. The Select Committee, it was true, in their Report, recommended the abolition of pilotage generally; but the recommendation was only carried by the casting vote of the Chairman, and a counter Report was proposed, which was only rejected in a similar way by the casting vote of the Chairman. This was what the counter Report said—

> "The Committee are of opinion that the evidence proves conclusively that the system of compulsory pilotage now in force, though capable of improvement in details, fulfils in a very high degree that which is admittedly its principal object, namely, the preservation of life and property from the dangers attendant on the navigation of the entrances to the various ports of the United Kingdom."

That passage had reference to pilotage generally. Of the Thames it said that "the state of the pilotage of the Thames is not satisfactory;" but it did not recommend its abolition—on the contrary, it recommended the constitution of a pilotage authority for London, in the appointment of which the merchants and shipowners of London should have direct representation. Now, he only instanced this in order to show the necessity of having this question fully discussed before the House assented to the second reading. He wished to show that there was a divided opinion upon it. There were masses of Blue Books *pro* and *con* on the matter; he asked the House whether a question of such great national importance, and upon which there was so much difference of opinion, should be smuggled through the House at a quarter to 4 in the afternoon. It was a question that required debate, and it should be considered at the ordinary time of Public Business. He wished next to ask for the attention of the House to what he considered to be a very important point in his case. He did not rely upon it exclusively; but he thought it was a most important point. It was this — that although Thames Conservancy Bills, in regard to which he should have something to say in a moment, had been brought in and passed through the House as Private Bills, yet Bills dealing with pilotage had never been introduced as Private Bills; but they had been invariably dealt with by Public Acts of Parliament, and not by private measures. In 1853 an Act was passed vesting the right of pilotage of ships outward from the Port of London, and the right of pilotage of ships inward to the same port, in one body of pilots subjecting them to uniform authority and control; but there was no attempt to bring that in as a Private Bill, although it only affected the Port of London, and, therefore, partook of the nature of a Private Bill. On the contrary, it was passed as a public measure. The Act of 1854—the Merchant Shipping Act—was a public measure. He had already alluded to that Act; but it was necessary to call the attention of the House to another important point in reference to it. In 1862 the Merchant Shipping Act Amendment Bill was brought in as a Public Bill. It dealt, amongst other things, with the question of pilotage. The "reasons" which had been circulated by the promoters of the Bill said—

> "Alterations of local pilotage laws have in recent times always been made by Private Bills or Provisional Orders."

But the promoters forgot to say that those Provisional Orders were of no validity whatever until they were assented to by Parliament, not in a Private Bill, but in a Public Bill. The Merchant Shipping Amendment Act of 1862 actually—after stating that the Board of Trade could abolish pilotage, in any particular pilotage district, by means of a Provisional Order—said in sub-section 6 of Section 40—

> "No such Provisional Order shall take effect, unless and until the same is confirmed by Parliament, and for the purpose of procuring such confirmation the Board of Trade shall introduce into Parliament a Public General Bill or Public General Bills."

Therefore, the Public Act of 1862 expressly guarded against such a proceeding as that which was now being attempted by the Government. Pilotage could not be abolished in any particular district by means of a Private Bill; but it distinctly provided that it should be done only by a Provisional Order, and that such Provisional Order, before it had any validity, must be confirmed by a Public Act. Notwithstanding this, the Government now came forward with the so-called Private Bill, and were endeavouring to set the provisions aside which the Merchant Shipping Amendment Act of 1862 specially enacted. In 1863, 1864, and 1865, Public Bills were introduced, confirming Provisional Orders, in conformity with the Act he had cited, for the harbours of Hartlepool the Clyde, the Tyne, and Sunderland. They only dealt with localities; but, by virtue of the Act of 1862, it was impossible to do away with pilotage without obtaining the consent of Parliament by means of a Public Act. In 1870 and 1871, the Government of the day introduced a Bill to abolish compulsory pilotage; but they were not Private Bills, but Public Bills. He had, he hoped, thus shown to the House that, with reference to the question of pilotage, the Bills that had been introduced to abolish pilotage, without one single exception, had been Public Bills; and, in point of fact, the proceeding now adopted by the Government had been specially guarded against by the Act of 1862. There was one other point in the matter to which he desired to call the attention of the House. He had shown that the pilots of the Port of London existed under a special Act of Parliament. The Bills of 1870 and 1871 proposed to abolish compulsory pilotage; but they also contained clauses for compensating the pilots for their disestablishment, in precisely the same way as the proctors were compensated when the Divorce Act was passed. But here they had a Bill, introduced without any compensation clauses whatever, which proposed to take away privileges which had been conferred by Act of Parliament, and under which men had served their apprenticeship, and qualified themselves for the fulfilment of duties which were now to be rendered non-compulsory. And if this Bill went upstairs to a Private Bill Committee, even the Committee proposed by the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Evelyn Ashley), and a most conclusive case was made out by the pilots and others for compensation, the Committee would have no power to insert clauses giving compensation; and, therefore, unless the House was prepared to assent to the comfiscation of rights conferred by Act of Parliament, it ought not to give this Bill a second reading. There was another and a fatal objection, to his mind, and it was that this Private Bill repealed an important part of Section 353 of the Merchant Shipping Act of 1854—a public measure—and set aside the provisions of another Public Act, the 4 & 5 *Will.* IV. c. 32. He maintained that this was altogether unprecedented. A Private Bill had, on more than one occasion, varied and extended Public Acts, but had never repealed and reversed the policy and principle of Public Acts. Sir Erskine May, in his book, said—

> "It has been questioned whether a Public Act may properly be repealed or amended by a Private Bill; and, undoubtedly, such provisions demand peculiar vigilance, lest public laws be lightly set aside for the benefit of particular persons or places. But no rule has been established which precludes the promoters of Private Bills from seeking the repeal or amendment of Public Acts, and there are precedents in which this course has been sanctioned by Parliament."

He would ask the House to consider the precedents which Sir Erskine May gave in his book, where Public Acts had been varied or repealed by Private Acts of Parliament, and the House would see that there was not a single one which was analogous to the propositions contained in the present Bill. He was exceedingly sorry to weary the House with this matter; but it was really one which was so much of precedent that he was compelled to exhaust the subject as far as possible. The only instances of an interference with Public Acts by private ones were these. In 1832 the Bristol Riots Amendment Act of 7 & 8 *Geo.* IV. c. 31, was passed. Now, the Bristol Riots Act was simply an extension of a Public Act, in order to enable compensation to be given in Bristol for riots which had taken place there. That could by no means be a reversal of the principle of any Public Act; it was simply an extension of it. In 1864 the City of London Tithes Act repealed an Act of Henry VIII. It repealed the Act, but it re-enacted it; the only difference being that whereas the original Act made the tithes vary with the rents, this Private Bill, which amended the Public Act, placed the tithes at a fixed sum. It was assented to by the clergy, the vestry, the incumbent, the bishops, and the patrons of the livings; and the Bill was in no sense a reversal of the principles of any Public Act. And so in 1864 the Metropolitan District Railway Bill amended the Thames Embankment Act, which was a Public Act. But there was no question of principle there. The Public Act gave the City Gas Company access to the river; and the Private Bill, for the formation of a railway, provided for compensation to the City Gas Companies in case their access and privileges were in any way interfered with. These were the whole of the Public Acts which had been amended, so far as he could ascertain, by Private Bills, and there was not one of them which reversed the principle of any Public Act, whereas this Bill absolutely reversed the principle of compulsory pilotage, which was enacted by the Act of 1854, and it increased the tonnage dues of vessels, from vessels of 45 tons to vessels of 20 tons. Now, it had been said, and it would be said again tonight, that the Thames Conservancy Bills had been introduced into that House as Private Bills. Now, if everything was to be said by the friends of this Bill that could be said upon that subject, he should contend that the Thames Conservancy Bill was by no means on all fours with the present measure. This was not a Conservancy Bill at all; it was a Pilotage Bill. The Thames Conservancy Bills were simply with reference to arrangements of traffic and keeping open the channel of the river, and dealing with piers, and other such matters; but this was altogether a different Bill, dealing with the pilotage of vessels, a matter in which they had no right to interfere, and in which they had never interfered. As a rule, the Thames Conservancy Bills had been Private Bills, and in 1857, 1867, 1870, and 1878, they had dealt, as he had said, only with matters regulating the traffic of the Thames, and piers, and the keeping open the navigation of the Thames. But there was one very remarkable provision in the Act of 1870. The Act of 1870, to which he should like to direct the attention of the House, was to this effect—it enabled the Conservancy to levy tolls; but it expressly confined this power to the levying of tolls upon vessels already subject to tolls. It said that they could collect tolls and charge the dues in respect to certain vessels now liable thereto, whereas by this Bill it gave the Thames Conservancy power to tax people who had never hitherto been taxed. One other very remarkable fact about these Bills was this. So long as they confined themselves to questions merely affecting the proper conservancy of the Thames, they had been Private Bills; but in 1864 he found a Public Bill—the Thames Conservancy Act of 1864, and on trying to ascertain how it happened to be a Public Bill, while all the other Bills were private ones, he discovered that it proposed to do, to a certain extent, exactly what this

Bill proposed to do. The Act of 1864 was not confined simply to the ordinary conservancy of the Thames. Section 49 said—"The powers given to the Trinity House to erect sea-marks, &c., is repealed," and that necessitated the repeal of a Public Act of Parliament, as this Bill did. Section 50 amended the Merchant Shipping Act of 1864, as this Bill did. Section 63 amended the Waterman's Company Act again, as this Bill did; and it was in consequence of these, amongst other things, that it was a Public Bill. The House would see that these were some of the very things the present Bill proposed; and therefore it ought, like the Act of 1864, to be a public measure. He hoped he had, though at some length, shown the House that it had hitherto been the practice to deal with matters of public interest by Public Bills; and he had further shown that this Bill, in every one of the provisions he had called attention to, dealt with a question of public interest. Matters affecting large areas, many counties, and large populations, were matters hitherto dealt with by Public Bills; and, seeing that this Bill affected eight counties, many towns, and large populations; that no Bill which dealt with pilotage in the manner it was proposed to be dealt with in this Bill had ever been brought forward as a Private Bill; but that the Act of 1862 specially provided that legislation of this nature must be by means of a Public Bill; and seeing, further, that such questions had always been so dealt with, he saw no reason why, on this occasion, they should take an exceptional course. He had shown that the Conservancy Bills did not deal with pilotage; that there was no precedent whatever for reversing a principle contained in a Public Act by means of a Private Bill; and that this Bill did reverse the principle of Public Acts. He had also shown that although the Thames Conservancy Bills had been Private Bills, the moment they proposed to repeal Public Acts they ceased to be Private Bills, and were brought in as Public Bills. But, before concluding his remarks, there was another point he might mention, and that was the extraordinary mode in which the Bill had been introduced. It was very well known that a Private Bill must be introduced into that House with the names of two Members upon the back of it; and, as a rule, the Members who were interested in the locality affected by the measure were readily induced to place their names upon the back of the Bill; but, on turning to the back of this Bill, he was unable to find the names of either of the Members for the City of London, or of the Members for any of the counties or towns over which this Bill proposed to give authority to the Conservancy; but they would find the names of the right hon. Gentlemen the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain) and of the Secretary to the Board of Trade (Mr. Evelyn Ashley). The circumstance was totally unprecedented in the history of that House. It was no answer to say, as he had no doubt would be said, that in one particular case the name of his right hon. Friend the Leader of the Opposition (Sir Stafford Northcote) was upon the back of a Private Bill. That was no case in point. The Bill which the right hon. Gentleman's name was attached to was a Bill upon which the names of two Members for the locality were also placed as the introducers of the Bill. The name of the right hon. Gentleman was added simply to show that the assent of the Board of Trade had been obtained to the provisions contained in the measure. And what was that Bill? Was it a Bill dealing with a question of great principle such as the Bill now before the House? It was a Bill for the purpose of placing part of the river under a Public Act which had been passed in the previous Session, and in the Public Act itself there was a clause, stating that it was desirable, upon the first opportunity, that the provisions of the Act should be extended to that particular part of the river. The House would see at once the great difference between the present case and that of the Bill to which the right hon. Member for North Devon had attached his name. He had seen it stated in the papers, he thought in the speech made by the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Board of Trade, in receiving a deputation on this subject, that the reason why the Board of Trade had placed the names of their Representatives upon the back of the Bill was that the Thames Conservancy had no direct representation in that House. That was merely throwing dust in the eyes of people. Did the hon. Gentleman maintain that there was direct representation in that

House for the 100th part of the persons or public bodies who presented Petitions for Private Bills in that House? The Bills were taken charge of, as a rule, by Members who were interested in the locality. If, however, there had ever been a body which had representation in that House, it was the Thames Conservancy. They were, until a few days ago, represented by two Members in that House—two Members of the Thames Conservancy—one of them being the Lord Mayor and the other a Gentleman whose loss, he was sure, every Member of that House, to whatever Party he belonged, must, not only for the sake of the House, but for the sake of the public generally, greatly deplore—he meant the loss of his lamented Friend Sir Charles Reed. The House would thus feel that there was not the slightest pretence for saying that there was no one to take charge of the Bill, and that, therefore, the Board of Trade had kindly taken charge of it. He had no doubt that if the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Board of Trade took charge of every Bill which had no father for it, he would soon be overwhelmed with children of that sort. But the real fact was that it was not a Conservancy Bill at all; it was a Board of Trade Bill; it was conceived and created in the Board of Trade; it was the outcome of a Board of Trade inquiry, and it had nothing whatever to do with the Thames Conservancy. He would like to put a question to the Secretary to the Board of Trade. He hoped the hon. Member was listening, because he expected him to answer the question. He would ask the hon. Gentleman distinctly, whether it was or was not a fact that the Bill was originally intended by the Board of Trade to be a Public Bill in the ordinary way; and was it or was it not a suggestion on the part of the Board of Trade to the Thames Conservancy that they should petition to have it passed through the House of Commons as a Private Bill? He asked this because there was rumour that it was originally intended to introduce the Bill as a Public Bill, and that it was at the suggestion of the Board of Trade that the Thames Conservancy Board came forward to father the Bill. He was afraid that he had trespassed on the attention of the House at considerable length; but he hoped not at undue length, considering the great importance of the issue. He desired to impress upon the House again that he was not asking them to pass any opinion upon the merits of the Bill. It might be a good Bill or it might be a bad Bill; with that he had nothing to do, but he had to ask hon. Members on both sides of the House to consider whether it was right and proper that the Government, presuming on the large majority behind them, should so tamper with the Rules and Regulations for the transaction of Business in that House, as to attempt, by means of a Private Bill, to pass through a measure dealing with questions of great national importance, and of general legislation, in the way they were attempting to do by the present measure. He repeated, that if the House assented to the Amendment he intended to move, it would be simply assenting to a Resolution which declared that the Bill ought to be a Public Bill and not a private one; and if that Resolution were agreed to there was nothing to hinder the Government from bringing forward the Bill to-morrow in the ordinary course by means of a public measure, and passing it into law in the course of the ensuing Session. He begged to move the Resolution which appeared in his name.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "the character and objects of this Bill are such as to constitute it a measure of public policy, which ought not to be dealt with by any Private Bill,"—(*Mr. Ritchie,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

SIR SYDNEY WATERLOW said, the question now before the House was one upon which he did not desire to say much after the very long and able speech which had been made by the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets in submitting the Resolution. He should not refer to the clauses of the Bill any further than might be necessary for the purpose of indicating that he thought the Bill ought to be a Public Bill and not a private one. But upon one point he wished to be distinctly understood. He was not objecting to the measure because he objected to the principle of the Bill as described in the Preamble.

He felt as strongly as the right hon. Gentleman who had charge of the Bill that the question of compulsory pilotage ought to be dealt with at once, for it had been a disgrace for years past to everyone concerned—a disgrace to the Board of Trade, a disgrace to the Trinity Board, and a disgrace to many rich owners of large vessels who, for years, had been sheltering themselves by registering their vessels in the Port of Glasgow or elsewhere, although they belonged to the Port of London. They did this in order to screen themselves from the costs and charges of damage incurred when they ran into craft on the river, because they were enabled to plead that their vessels were in charge of a compulsory pilot. He desired, as a matter of principle, to protest against the Bill which had been introduced by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade being dealt with as a Private Bill. It had not been his lot to have any very large experience of the Rules and Orders which controlled and directed Private Bills in that House; but from what little he did know, and from what he had heard from the greatest authority in the matter—namely, the Chairman of Committees, he considered that there might be much mischief in introducing a Bill of this kind in this way, as it was placing a measure of such great importance, endorsed and brought in by two Members of the Ministry, in the hands of private promoters and of Parliamentary agents. He was told that practically a Private Bill was in charge of a Parliamentary agent, who acted for the promoters, and that it was a rule never to refuse to allow a Private Bill to be withdrawn if the promoters felt their interests were being affected by any Amendments to the Bill. He should, perhaps, be told that though this was practically right, technically it was wrong, and that a Private Bill could not be removed from the House except with the consent of the House. But he had made inquiries upon that point, and he found that there was not a single precedent for refusing consent to the Parliamentary agent to withdraw the Bill if anything happened to be suggested which was prejudicial to the interests of the promoters. If the present Bill went to a second reading, and a Committee were appointed, it would be impossible to prevent the Committee from considering the constitution of the Conservancy Board. They had upon the Paper now a Notice of Motion affecting the Thames Conservancy; but supposing an Amendment were introduced to alter the constitution of the Board, the Members of the Conservancy Board would feel that they might lose their position if they kept the Bill before the House, and they would, therefore, withdraw it. Now, he thought the House must see that large and important interests of a public character were contained in the Bill; and he ventured to say that the measure was not a Conservancy Bill at all; but it was, to all intents and purposes, a Pilotage Bill. The Preamble said that it was desirable to abolish compulsory pilotage. Now, this question of compulsory pilotage had been a scandal for a great many years. He would only go back as far as 1870, when a Pilotage Bill was brought in; and it was felt to be a subject that ought not to be dealt with by a Private Bill. It was said that it only proposed to deal with pilotage. Nevertheless, it was made a Public Bill, and it was referred to a large Committee. That Committee sat for several months in 1870 and made a Report, and the materials in that Report were most important, and ought to be considered in discussing the Bill now before the House. In 1871, another Pilotage Bill was brought in—a Public Bill—based upon the Report of the Committee of 1870, and he desired especially to call attention to the two principles of that Bill. Clause 1 proposed to abolish compulsory pilotage just as the present Bill did, with a little difference in form. Clause 2 gave compensation for diminution of earnings to the persons injured by the abolition of compulsory pilotage. He wished Members of the House to bear in mind the second part of the Bill. Well, the next thing they had was a Report from a Committee appointed by the Board of Trade for the purpose of making a Departmental inquiry. That Committee sat in 1879, and the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade stated to some members of a deputation who waited upon him a short time ago in reference to the questions contained in this Bill that the present measure was based upon the recommendations of that Report. What was the last recommendation of that Report—the Report of a Committee appointed by the Department? These were the words—

> "Lastly, as regards any question of vested interests or compensation, your Committee believe that they must be dealt with by the Executive Government in carrying out what is proposed in the Report."

What did the Government do? They brought in a Bill as a Private Bill without a single clause with regard to vested interests and compensation, and by making it a Private Bill they precluded the possibility of introducing any clause making a charge upon the Consolidated Fund for the purpose of compensating anyone who might be entitled to it. He was not there to say that this class of persons or that class of persons ought to be compensated. He had simply read the recommendations of the Committee, and they said that the question ought to be considered. He appealed to the right hon. Gentleman and to hon. Members on both sides of the House whether it was fair to bring in a Bill to preclude the possibility of anyone getting compensation. If they were not going to give compensation, at any rate, let them allow discussion upon it. If any man possessed rights, he should have an opportunity of stating his case in order to see whether his claim was one that Parliament ought to consent to, and they ought not to shut him out by refusing to allow his claim to be discussed at all. Then there was another strong objection to this Bill being a Private Bill. The promoters of the Bill were not satisfied with simply dealing with matters affecting the Conservancy of the River Thames. They desired, in Clauses 29 and 30, to interfere with one of the most important manufactures on the banks of the Thames. They were seeking to obtain powers which would enable them to determine whether or not furnaces used by cement manufacturers were properly constructed or not. It might be very proper that there should be an inquiry; but he wanted to point out that there was a Public Bill for discussion on Thursday which proposed to raise that question, and which proposed to give by a Public Bill powers to Inspectors to determine whether it was or was not carried on in a proper way. He asked the House to say that such legislation ought to be proposed in a Public Bill, and not in a Private Bill. He thought that it was unfair in a Private Bill to seek to create a new smoke authority giving powers beyond the powers granted by Parliament in legislation upon this subject. He thought it was unfair in a Private Bill to seek to extend the limits of the Smoke Nuisances Act, which, he believed, was a public measure; and when that Act was passed there was a sort of compromise made that the Act should extend to certain limited manufactures, and not to all manufactures, and within those limits alone they would subject themselves to penalties. Now, he ventured to say that many millions had been spent on the banks of the Thames in cement, and if this trade was to be dealt with, let it be dealt with by a public measure. His hon. Friend the Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie) had touched upon almost everything that it was necessary to mention. Therefore, he would simply ask the House not to assent to the proposal; he did not ask the House to reject it. The Bill ought to be considered; it was of great public importance, and he trusted that the Government would consent to bring it in as a Public Bill, and that they would all have an opportunity of discussing it, and that every hon. Member might have an opportunity of expressing the feelings and views of those of his constituents who were affected by it.

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY said, it must be a great satisfaction to his hon. Friend, after having so long a time been straining on the leash, to have at last a spring at the Board of Trade by bringing forward his Motion against this abominable Bill. But he must say that the eloquence which the hon. Member had shown might have been employed in a better cause, because he (Mr. Evelyn Ashley) hoped, before he sat down, to be able to convince the House that the provisions of the measure were such as ought to be brought forward in a Private Bill. He would begin first of all by answering what had been said as to the Government withdrawing this Bill, and not bringing it in again as a Public Bill. He believed that it was impossible to do so. He was informed by authorities in whom they had confidence that the Standing Orders could not be complied with, that the Notices given were exhausted, and that, therefore, the Bill could not go on, but would disappear altogether, as it would be unable to pass in the present

Session at all. That, he believed, from what he was informed, was a correct view, and he was speaking on the authority of one conversant with these matters. But he would like to make one remark. The hon. Gentleman opposite spoke about "squaring" Members. He had no objection to the use of these words; but it struck him that there had been a great deal more "squaring" and Lobbying by the opponents of the Bill than by the promoters. He gathered that what the hon. Gentleman referred to was simply this—There were certain Members interested in the upper navigation who came to the promoters of the Bill and said that they did not disapprove of the Bill as a whole, but that they objected to certain clauses which would give undue power to the Conservancy Board in the matter of entering on lands. Well, the matter had been inquired into, and the answer given was that they would communicate with the Conservancy. Ultimately, they did inform the Conservancy that the powers asked for on their behalf were much too great and too vast, and they undertook that when the Bill came into Committee the clause should be qualified so as only to give the Conservancy the ordinary powers of a sanitary authority.

MR. RITCHIE remarked, that it was made a condition of the undertaking being given that the Members referred to withdrew their opposition.

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY said, that was so. The hon. Gentleman opposite put him in a very difficult position. He would tell the House why. The hon. Member began by stating that he had nothing to say against the merits of the Bill, and that, as far as he knew, he believed the merits were all right. Further, the hon. Member was ready to admit that technically it might be a Private Bill. The question, therefore, reduced itself to this—that although the Parliamentary technicalities sanctioned this as a Private Bill, and although the merits of the Bill ought to be supported, still the hon. Gentleman opposite preferred that it should not be brought in as a Private Bill. He would like to consult the preferences of the hon. Member; but, nevertheless, if it were brought in as a Public Bill, he did not think the hon. Member would be satisfied.

MR. RITCHIE said, the hon. Member would remember that he had said if the Government introduced the Bill as a Public Bill he would undertake not to put down a Notice of opposition.

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY said, that was because it happened to be introduced as a Private Bill; but he would show the House that the measure was compatible with the law of Parliament in connection with Private Bills. First of all, Sir Erskine May told them that every Bill for the particular interest or benefit of any person, or persons, was treated as a Private Bill, whether it was for the interest of the individual, a public company, a county, or other locality. He supposed the hon. Member would not deny that this was a locality. The Thames was, no doubt, often called by our minor poets an imperial stream; but, like any other stream, it had its "metes and bounds;" and the measure was for the benefit of those interested in the navigation of this special river. A Private Bill dealt with an exception to the general law, as in this case, all which, therefore, would be covered by the definition given by Sir Erskine May. The hon. Member seemed to think that the test of a Private Bill was whether the matters dealt with by it were of great importance. Now, what could be more important than the constitution of the City of London Police Court? Yet that was established by a Private Bill. Wherever there was a Corporation, or Commissioners, or a body, having jurisdiction over an entire area, they could come forward as petitioners for a Private Bill. The Standing Orders enabled them to present a Petition to that House, and upon that Petition leave was granted them to bring forward a Private Bill, and it was not necessary for them to proceed by Motion, as it would be in the case of a Public Bill. That was the answer he had to make to the long list of cases which the hon. Member quoted, in which the measures referred to were not brought in as Private Bills. The hon. Member had laid great stress on the fact that the Metropolitan Water and Gas Bills had been introduced as Public Bills. The real fact of the matter was that in those cases there was no person or body who represented the area concerned. Almost all the Bills introduced in connection with the Corporation of London had been Private Bills, because the Corporation covered the whole area; and in the same way the Thames Conservancy Bills, with two exceptions, had been brought in as Private Bills, because the Thames Conservators had jurisdiction over the whole area. The two exceptions were Bills introduced in 1864 and 1867. The reason why they were not brought in as Private Bills was because they were brought in, in a certain sense, adversely to the Thames Conservancy Board. Their object, in point of fact, was to reform the Thames Conservancy, and they were opposed to the views of the Thames Conservators in certain respects. Therefore, the Thames Conservators did not appear as petitioners, and those Bills were brought in on Motion and not on Petition. But the Thames Conservancy Acts of 1867, 1870, and 1878, were passed as Private Bills, and were brought in on the petition of the Conservators as Private Bills. The London Corporation Bill, which dealt with the important matter of the municipal franchise of the City of London, and with the relief of the inhabitants from taxation, was also brought in as a Private Bill. Objection was taken to the introduction of that Bill as a private measure; but Mr. Speaker said—

> "It cannot be questioned that the Bill is, according to Standing Orders, a Private Bill, inasmuch as it is brought forward on the petition of a corporate body."

He had already said that the Thames Conservancy Acts, every one of them, with the exception of the two he had mentioned, were brought in and introduced as Private Bills on Petition, and not as Public Bills upon Motion. The hon. Member said—"Oh! but this is a thoroughly wrong principle. You are introducing a Bill as a private measure which modifies existing Acts of Parliament;" but the hon. Member anticipated him by quoting from Sir Erskine May's work on Parliamentary practice which argued against the view he took. But the hon. Member proceeded to disparage this statement—in fact, he only relied on Sir Erskine May when Sir Erskine's view was favourable to him. The hon. Member came down to the House with a text-book, and he ought to say whether it was a good authority or whether it was not. In the early part of his speech he quoted Sir Erskine May as an authority; but when he found that Sir Erskine May went against him on the question that a Private Act never modified a Public Act, then he said that he disagreed with Sir Erskine May. Now, he (Mr. Evelyn Ashley) ventured to say that Sir Erskine May laid down what was quite right when he said that a Private Act might modify a Public Act, because it was done almost every day in the year—for instance, in Improvement Acts, which modified the General Sanitary Acts. He wished, however, to call the attention of the House to those points urged by the hon. Member as constituting points of so much importance that the measure ought not to be dealt with as a Private Bill, and to show that there was no real modification of Public Acts. First of all, the hon. Member took the question of compulsory pilotage. Now, that question of compulsory pilotage was in no way the creation or the creature of Public Acts. If hon. Members would look at the Report of the Committee of 1870 on Pilotage, they would see what the Committee said at the beginning of that Report. They said—

> "In fact, the existence or non-existence of the obligation, and the nature and extent of the exemptions from it, differ in such an arbitrary and capricious manner as to show that they must have arisen fron local and special legislation without reference to general principles of any kind."

Hon. Members would find that the custom of compulsory pilotage varied in almost every port of the Kingdom, and that it was not the creation of public enactments, but almost always the result of custom or a Private Bill. The hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets seemed to suppose that compulsory pilotage was the rule of every English port; but one-half of the ports of England had no compulsory pilotage at all, and, indeed, in this very Port of London there were many ships which went up every day, and which were exempt from compulsory pilotage. He believed, in point of fact, that two-thirds were already exempted by law from compulsory pilotage. What could be stronger than the fact, which the hon. Member slurred over, that the Merchant Shipping Act of 1854, in the three following sections, provided:—

> "Sec. 332. Every pilotage authority shall have power, by bye-law made with the consent of Her Majesty in Council, to exempt the masters of any ships, or of any class of ships,

from being compelled to employ qualified pilots, and to annex any terms or conditions to such exemptions, and to revise and extend any exemptions now existing by virtue of this Act or any other Act of Parliament, Law, or Charter, or by usage, upon such terms and conditions, and in such manner, as may appear desirable to such authority.

"Sec. 353. Subject to any alteration to be made by any pilotage authority in pursuance of the powers hereinbefore in that behalf given, the employment of pilots shall continue to be compulsory in all districts in which the same was (by law) compulsory immediately before the time when this Act comes into operation.

"Sec. 376. Subject to any alteration to be made by the Trinity House (and to the) the pilotage districts of the Trinity House within which the employment of pilots if compulsory in the London District, &c., &c."

So that the Trinity House might actually do that on their own motion, which was now proposed to be attempted by a Private Act. The hon. Member quoted the Act of 1862, which empowered the abolition of compulsory pilotage by a Provisional Order; but he said that the Provisional Order must be ratified by a Public General Act. But how ran the law upon the question? The Merchant Shipping Act, 1862, Section 39, provided—

> "Whereas it is enacted by the principal Act that every pilotage authority shall have power to exempt the masters of any ships, or of any classes of ships, from being compelled to employ qualified pilots, &c., &c. Be it enacted that it shall be lawful for the Board of Trade by Provisional Order to
>
> "4. Exempt the masters and owners of all ships, or of any classes of ships, from being obliged to employ pilots in any pilotage district, or in any part of any pilotage district."

Did the hon. Member know that every Provisional Order, however insignificant its subject-matter, whatever the subject it dealt with, had to be ratified by a corresponding General Act at the end of the Session; therefore, what the hon. Member stated only amounted to this—that any Pilotage Provisional Order must be dealt with in the usual way; but it was rather strong to say in regard to a subject which, as he (Mr. Evelyn Ashley) had shown, might be dealt with by the Board of Trade by a Provisional Order, and by the pilotage authorities, without coming to Parliament at all, that it was of so sacred a character that it could not be dealt with by a Private Act. The hon. Member next referred to the case of the Waterman's Company; but the case of the Waterman's Company must fail absolutely. Was the hon. Member aware that the Waterman's Company, at the present moment, was the creature and creation of a Private Act? [Mr. Alderman LAWRENCE: No, no!] Well, the powers granted to it, and which it now enjoyed, were conferred upon it by the Waterman's and Lighterman's Act of 1859, which was passed as a Private Act, and repealed from Acts, and if they could not deal with a body and corporation which were the creation of a Private Act by another Private Act he did not see how they could bring in any Private Act at all. The third point the hon. Member referred to was the Tonnage Act, the Act of William IV., which he said was repealed and modified by this Act. Again, he called the hon. Member's attention to the fact that the Tonnage Act, 4 & 5 *Will.* IV., c. 32, which this Bill modified merely by reducing the minimum of tonnage liable to pay these dues, was virtually a local Act, because it was an Act which empowered the King to levy dues upon ships for the benefit of the Corporation of London. The whole of these dues went to the Corporation of London, who were then the harbour authorities. Was the hon. Member aware that the powers of that Act, and the dues leviable under it, were all transferred to the Thames Conservancy Board by a Private Act of Parliament? It was a fact that one of the Thames Conservancy Acts transferred all these questions; and why, then, did the hon. Gentleman object now, in 1881, to the identical thing which was done by a Private Act in 1867? The other point alluded to by the hon. Gentleman was that the Bill constituted the Thames Conservancy a smoke nuisance authority; and he (Mr. Evelyn Ashley) could only say that there was a very strong recommendation on the part of the Committee that something should be done by Parliament in this respect. It was alleged that the navigation of the river was seriously impeded and damaged by the smoke which at present arose from the cement works, and it was suggested that something should be done to check the nuisance. Clauses had been introduced into the Bill to deal with the matter; but it was proposed to deal with it in a guarded manner. If it was found that the navigation was impeded by the smoke coming across the river, then the Thames Conservancy would be empowered to go to the owners of the cement works and call upon them to abate the nuisance. He ventured to think that this was a matter which a Committee upstairs would be quite able to deal with, and if the Bill was a little too sweeping in its character it might be modified. These particular provisions were certainly in no way inconsistent with the provisions usually inserted in Private Bills. The hon. Member said that the measure should be a public measure, because it subjected ships to tolls they were never before subjected to.

MR. RITCHIE: What I alluded to was the power this Bill gives to the Thames Conservancy to extend the power of levying tolls upon ships of 45 tons to ships of 20 tons.

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY said, he had already dealt with that question, and he had shown that it had already been dealt with by a Private Bill. As to the grave charge which the hon. Member brought against the Board of Trade of having put their names upon the back of the Bill, the hon. Member talked as if it were one of the greatest outrages ever known. Now, he (Mr. Evelyn Ashley) said, in the first place, that if they were sinning at all they were sinning in good company. As the hon. Gentleman had already pointed out, the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir Stafford Northcote) had placed his name on the back of a Private Conservancy Bill when he was President of the Board of Trade, and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith) had also placed his upon the back of a Private Railway (Plymouth and Totnes) Bill when he was First Lord of the Admiralty—a railway in a district with which he was not in any way connected as a Member of Parliament. Now, he (Mr. Evelyn Ashley) did think it would be an objectionable thing for a Minister of the Crown to put his name upon the back of a Bill that was brought in by private persons for their own private emolument; but he saw nothing wrong in placing their names on the back of a Bill promoted, as this was, by a Corporation charged with serious duties, who wished to obtain powers to enable them the better to carry out those duties. There had been no secret about it. The Thames Conservancy brought in this Bill on petition at their own expense; and he and his right hon. Friend put their names on the back because they thought the object of the measure was good and they wished to give it their assistance. No doubt they could easily enough have obtained the names of other hon. Members to have followed theirs. It was perfectly certain that if they had imagined that that would have pleased the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets they could have done so without the slightest difficulty; but they had no object in throwing dust in the eyes of the public. They had come forward as the guardians of the public for the purpose of keeping control of the Bill and pressing the matter upon the House of Commons, and they had made no secret of their intention. It seemed to him that it dealt with nothing unusual, and that there was nothing unprecedented in the course they had taken; and he confessed that he himself could not see upon what grounds the Motion of his hon. Friend was brought forward. Then, as to the question of compensation which had been alluded to by various speakers, he hoped if the Bill went before a Committee of that House that the Committee would require strong evidence in order to satisfy themselves that compensation should be granted to the pilots, and for this reason—that, so far as he was aware, all the evidence went to show that there would be just as much work for the pilots when pilotage was not compulsory as there was now. Let it be distinctly understood, because there was great misapprehension about it, that the Bill did not interfere in any way with the private or peculiar privileges of the licensed pilots. It left them as they were, subject to the control and licence of the Trinity House. All they said was that no ships should be required to take pilots compulsorily above Gravesend; and even then, as he had already said, the whole evidence went to show that there would be as many pilots employed as before. It only stood to reason that captains coming from a sea voyage, and knowing the crowded and confined state of traffic on the river, and the difficulties of the navigation, must always require the assistance of a pilot; but if it was considered desirable that the pilots should receive compensation there would be no difficulty on that point. So far as the question of pilotage was concerned, they might even strike out the pilotage clause altogether without interfering with the rest of the Bill; but if they thought it was desirable that the pilots should have compensation, they would only have to come down to this House and get a Resolution passed that compensation should be given, and he had no doubt that proper steps would be taken to obtain compensation for them. There would be no difficulty in the matter at all, and if the pilots proved that they were entitled to compensation they would get it; but he believed there was no ground for compensation in the case at all. There were one or two other points upon which it was necessary that he should touch, because the hon. Member had certainly managed to put a great many points into his speech. The hon. Member said that there was this disadvantage in a Private Bill, as compared with a Public one, that Public Bills were distributed to Members, whilst Private Bills were not. Now, he would remind the hon. Member that Private Bills were always to be got. It was merely a question of walking, when they came down to the House, as far as the Private Bill Office. There was this additional fact, that Private Bills could be obtained before Parliament met, whereas a Public Bill was not usually printed and circulated until the day before the second reading. The hon. Member had said he did not dispute the merits of the Bill; but he thought, as he had charge of the Bill, that he ought to say two or three words in regard to its merits. Now, the evils of compulsory pilotage were three-fold, and necessitated a great amount of confusion in the pilotage service. Of the number of vessels which went from Gravesend to London Bridge, one-half had to take compulsory pilots, whilst the other half had not. In point of fact, there were three kinds of pilots to serve the ships. They charged different rates, and received different payments for the same service. Compulsory pilotage was regarded as a serious tax upon the shipowner, and the evidence went to show that if they did away with the charge for compulsory pilotage, all they would do would be to throw the pilots into one class, by which means they would ensure better discipline, uniformity of charge, prevent a great deal of confusion which existed in the navigation of the river, and generally have the pilotage service better rendered. At present there was this difficulty in regard to compulsory pilotage. The employment of a pilot under compulsion gave the shipowner immunity in case of a running down. Cases of this sort occurred—two ships came almost from the same place, the one obliged to carry a pilot and the other not obliged; the ship obliged to carry a pilot was free from all liability, while the other was liable to pay for damage. As to the Waterman's Company, there was also a very strong case, and one that called for an immediate remedy. He was unwilling to detain the House, because he was afraid that he had already been a great deal longer than he ought to have been; but he wanted to point out to hon. Members that the principal provisions of the Bill were founded upon the Report of the Thames Traffic Committee. That Committee was appointed by the noble Viscount (Viscount Sandon) who was then at the head of the Board of Trade, and in consequence of a collision upon the river, in which a large number of lives were lost. The Committee of Inquiry into the collision of the *Princess Alice*, stated in their Report that the accident was largely owing to the control of the navigation being under the Waterman's Act. The Waterman's Company had originally certain duties to perform, in consequence of which they were liable to be impressed for service in the Royal Navy, and, in spite of that liability having been removed, their privileges had still been continued. There was, again, a claim on the part of the Waterman's Company to a concurrent jurisdiction with the Metropolitan Board as to the police of the river. Another evil of the monopoly was that, under some circumstances, steam-boats were compelled to change their crews and engage men belonging to the Waterman's Company. For instance, a steamboat might, during the summer, be running daily between Ramsgate or Sheerness and London Bridge; and in the event of the proprietors choosing to put the vessel on from Gravesend to London Bridge during the winter months, they would be obliged to dismiss the whole of their crew and re-engage another belonging to the Waterman's Company.

Hon. Members would see from the evidence that barge-owners, wharf-owners, pilots, dock-masters, officials of the Customs and Board of Trade, and Thames police, all united in condemning in the strongest manner the longer existence of the privileges of the Waterman's Company, and that the only persons who were in favour of their continuance were the watermen themselves. There was no question of disestablishing the Waterman's Company as a Guild; all that it was proposed to do was to take away their special privileges, leaving them in the enjoyment of their property. In conclusion, he would only say there never was any intention of sending the Bill to an ordinary Private Bill Committee; on the contrary, it had been the intention from the first that it should be examined by a Select Committee. He trusted the House would not be led away by an abstract discussion upon the right method of introducing this subject, and thereby delay the passage of a measure containing provisions of the greatest importance, which would, in his opinion, tend very much to improve the navigation of the River Thames.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS: I would ask Mr. Speaker, whether it is in Order for two Ministers of the Crown to bring in a Private Bill on business of their own Department with only their own names upon it?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member asks me whether it is out of Order for two Official Members to place their names on the back of a Private Bill. Two cases have already been cited by the hon. Member the Under Secretary to the Board of Trade in which Official names have appeared on Private Bills. I cannot say I think the practice a convenient practice; but, as there are precedents for it, I am not prepared to say it is out of Order.

MR. RITCHIE: Mr. Speaker, may I ask your attention to the particular point as to whether there is any precedent for a Private Bill appearing in this House with only the two names of Official Members upon it?

MR. SPEAKER: I am not aware of any precedent of that kind.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS said, he did not propose to go into the merits or the demerits of this measure. He proposed rather to endeavour to answer a few of the observations which had fallen from the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down. He thought the Under Secretary to the Board of Trade had succeeded in proving the case of those who, like himself (Baron Henry De Worms), believed that this Bill ought to be a Public and not a Private Bill. He had been gratified to hear, at the commencement of the speech of the hon. Gentleman, an admission that the Bill had been brought in by the Board of Trade, although he could not help feeling that much time would have been saved to the House had that admission been made at an earlier period. [MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: I did not make that admission.] He begged pardon of the hon. Gentleman; but he had understood him to say that it was a Board of Trade Bill. He had taken down his words. However, as the hon. Gentleman now said the Bill was not brought in by the Board of Trade, he could only accept the explanation he gave, although it was difficult to reconcile that statement with the fact that the only names on the Bill were those of the two heads of the Department. But the question was not only one of law or of right; it was not a question simply whether, legally or technically, the Bill should be a Public or a Private Bill. He ventured to think it was also a question of expediency that was involved. Although they had heard many reasons why, in the opinion of the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary to the Board of Trade, it should be a Private Bill, they had heard from him no argument whatever to show why it should not have been a Public Bill. There was, however, one special reason which, in his (Baron Henry De Worms') opinion, indicated why it should be a Public Bill, and that point had been alluded to by the hon. Member for Gravesend (Sir Sidney Waterlow)—namely, compensation to the watermen. That question might, of course, appear a very insignificant one to hon. Members opposite; but he ventured to think that those Gentlemen who above all others were, as a rule, so fond of arrogating to themselves the protection of the working classes, should, as a matter of fact, consider that, in introducing this measure in a private form, they were virtually depriving many thousands of honest workmen of employment, and also of the compensation to which they would have been entitled, had the measure been brought in as a Public Bill. Another argument of great strength against the Bill being made private was to be found in the fact that the expenditure of public time would not have been greater had the measure been introduced, as it ought to have been, as a Public Bill. A small amount of time was allotted by the Rules of the House to Private Business, and this was generally found to be amply sufficient for the purpose; but it was clear that the present debate would be prolonged, and would thereby show the inconvenience of the system adopted in the present instance by the hon. Gentlemen in charge of the Bill. With regard to the reasons which had prompted them in bringing in this Bill as a private and not as a public measure, he ventured to think that one of them might be found, if rumour was to be credited, in the fact which was whispered in the Lobby and elsewhere, that it was anticipated the Bill as a public measure might meet with a certain amount of opposition from Gentlemen who sat below the Gangway. If that were the reason—and he had good grounds for thinking it was—it would form a somewhat dangerous precedent, because if, whenever opposition was apprehended, it was to be in the power of the Government of the day to introduce what was really a public measure under the guise of a Private Bill, it was very difficult to know where the application of this principle would stop. With regard to the Bill itself, it had been said by hon. Gentlemen opposite that this Bill did not involve any question of money, and that, therefore, the Thames Conservators were allowed to introduce it as a private measure, the officials of the Department of the Board of Trade placing their names on the back of it. But had it not occurred to hon. Gentlemen opposite that this Bill, which dealt with the interests of thousands of persons and with millions of money, was hardly a measure which should be confided to the hands of a public body, however respectable that body might be? He was reading the other day a description by an old writer of public bodies quite as respectable as the Thames Conservancy, and had been struck with the reference to the freedom from personal responsibility enjoyed by individual members of corporate bodies. The lines ran thus—

> "Corporate bodies they, each member free
> From personal responsibility.
> In what they say there's often many a flaw;
> But that's no matter—what they say is law."

That definition met, in some measure, the case in point. The Thames Conservancy was to take in hand the whole of the Queen's highway—the River Thames—termed by hon. Gentlemen opposite, "a locality." Of course, it was not to be disputed that every part of the country was a locality; still, he thought in legislation they must be to some extent guided by the importance of the locality, as well as the importance of the interests immediately connected with it; and he said that the hon. Gentlemen opposite had in no way made out a case for handing over the River Thames in its entirety, and the interests of all connected with it, without compensation, to the Thames Conservators. Why the liberties, privileges, and rights affecting a vast amount of capital should be handed over to the Thames Conservators had not been shown. At the present time the whole of the management of the River Thames was vested in five bodies. He thought it would have been a more statesmanlike act on the part of the Board of Trade if, instead of creating a new body, they had endeavoured to place the whole of the river under the control of that Department. Hon. Members often heard Questions asked in that House as to the power of the Government to make such and such a Vestry do certain things, the answer invariably being that it was impossible to interfere with the Vestry, because they did not choose to be interfered with. Now that, he thought, was a strong argument against creating a new Vestry, and vesting in them all the rights and privileges connected with the River Thames and its navigation. He would conclude by recording his opinion that the Goverment would do well and wisely were they to adopt the suggestion thrown out by the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets to withdraw the Bill and re-introduce it as a public measure, in which form it might not meet with the kind of opposition now offered to it.

Mr. Alderman LAWRENCE said, the House had heard from the highest authority that evening, that there was no precedent for two Ministers of the Crown placing their names alone on the back of a Private Bill. That, he thought, was in itself a sufficient reason for at once rejecting the present Bill, because they ought to be very cautious of setting precedents of that kind. What was the reason for introducing the Bill in its present form? He could not congratulate the Secretary to the Board of Trade upon the defence he had made of the Bill on the present occasion. The hon. Gentleman had said the Bill was made private on the ground of convenience; but he (Mr. Alderman Lawrence) was obliged to say of the reasons he had adduced in support of the measure, that it was almost impossible for anyone to allow their validity. He objected to this Bill altogether. It was called a Conservator's Bill by the Board of Trade; but he had himself spoken with the Conservators, and they told him it was a Board of Trade Bill. Of course, he believed both statements, and looked upon the measure as a concoction, or stirring up together, of the views of the Thames Conservancy and the views of the Board of Trade. He knew the Conservators were anxious to carry their portion of the Bill, and that they were ready to submit to any terms and suggestions that might be made to them by the Board of Trade. The House was aware that the Thames Conservancy was a comparatively newly-formed body, and all newly-formed bodies were at all times anxious to extend what was called their sphere of usefulness, and promote the advantage of the public. In the present case, he must say that this was not to be done without carrying out some little interested views of their own. When the Thames Conservators were first appointed they had £1,200 paid to them, which sum was to be divided amongst themselves in the manner they might think proper. He believed they divided the money amongst themselves according to the number of attendances in the course of the year. Shortly after this a Public Bill was brought in extending their jurisdiction from Staines to Yanlet Reach; and it was then proposed to increase the £1,200 a-year which they were receiving to £1,800 a-year. Another Bill was subsequently brought in, which further extended their jurisdiction from Staines to Cricklade, and an additional £700 a-year was given to the Conservators, making altogether £2,500 a-year. The present Bill would place immense responsibility on the Conservators. It empowered them to deal with the smoke nuisance along the river from Cricklade to Yanlet, and to impose a great charge upon the community along their line of jurisdiction. It also gave them the right to put out any light along the river that might interfere with the navigation, as conflicting with the lights now on the river. And, further, they were to have increased powers on the abolition of the Waterman's Company. For those increased duties they were to have another £1,000 a-year. His hon. Friend the Secretary to the Board of Trade said this was a case of urgency. Undoubtedly, it was a case of urgency with the Conservators, because if the Bill did not pass they would not get the additional £1,000 a-year. The Bill also provided that the extra £1,000 should be allotted amongst the members as they might think fit; but it appeared that nothing was to go to the Chairman, the Lord Mayor of London. He understood that this £1,000 was to be divided into moities, one of which was to go to the Deputy Chairman, and the other to the rest of the members. Thus, £3,500 a-year was to be given to the Conservators for the duties they had to perform. He had no doubt the Conservancy Board would soon suggest other duties that they might discharge with advantage to the public. No doubt, they would be quite ready to take upon themselves the duties of the Trinity House, and then there would be another sum wanted. Therefore, he agreed with the Secretary to the Board of Trade when he described the Bill as urgent. Now, with respect to the Bill being brought in as a Private Bill. It was obvious that, to use the invariable Ministerial phrase, the present state of Public Business would have made it impossible to introduce a Public Bill on the subject this Session. They had heard this from every one of Her Majesty's Ministers in connection with other matters, and they now heard it from the Secretary to the Board of Trade with reference to the present Bill. He had nothing to say against the officials of the Board of Trade, who performed their duties in an admirable manner; but he thought it was clever to suggest that this Bill should be brought forward as a Private Bill, on the petition of the Conservators; and that the Board of Trade were ready to meet them, and refer it to a large Committee upstairs, and that the Bill would easily pass as a Private Bill. But there would be no chance of passing it this Session if brought in as a public measure. He urged that if the Bill were allowed to go forward as a Private Bill, an injurious precedent would thereby be formed. The present measure was only the fringe of what the Board of Trade intended to do. The Secretary to the Board of Trade had given an idea of what was intended, in reply to a deputation that waited upon him, when he said the question of the re-constitution of the Conservancy Board, and also of the Trinity House, had been mooted by some gentlemen, and it had been pointed put that the Board of Trade might take a sort of increased control over the navigation of the river. He said—

> "As to that, however desirable it might be that this question should be understood and considered at some future time, and although he thought it would be necessary to reform the constituency of the Thames Conservancy Board, he did not think that the Government could hold out any hope that it would be done this Session. This was a Bill promoted by the Thames Conservancy, and the Board of Trade had undertaken its conduct in Parliament, considering it as a public duty, and especially because the Conservancy Board had no direct representation in the House of Commons. The other reforms alluded to were really outside the purview of the Bill, and the Government must remit them to a more convenient opportunity."

This showed that the Bill was only the fringe of what the Board of Trade intended to do. That being the case, he wished to know whether the House was prepared to go into a Bill that only dealt with a fragment of the whole question, and that, too, in the form of a Private Bill? With regard to compulsory pilotage, he should offer no opinion. He would only remark that the Bill for abolishing compulsory pilotage, referred to a Select Committee in 1870, was brought in as a Public Bill, and was endorsed by the right hon. Gentleman then President of the Board of Trade, and now Chancellor for the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. John Bright). It also bore the names of the present First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) and that of the right hon. Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld). That Bill, as he had pointed out, was brought in as a Public Bill, and referred to a Select Committee, who made a Report; but the Bill was afterwards withdrawn. The compulsory pilotage, now proposed to be dealt with, affected the port of London only, and he gave no opinion upon the subject. With respect to the powers given by the Bill to the Conservancy Board for dealing with the smoke nuisance, he pointed out that they were of that astonishing character that they might be used to the detriment of the interests of all the great works along the River Thames. All those works would be subject to inspection under this Bill; the proprietors would thereby be put to the greatest inconvenience, and, perhaps, forced to close their concerns, because they might not be able to fulfil all the requirements of the Conservancy Board; while the proposed penalties were of the most serious character. The hon. Member for Gravesend (Sir Sidney Waterlow) had ably referred to the great cement works established on the river. These works already met with the greatest competition from foreign manufacturers, and this Bill was regarded by all interested therein with the utmost alarm. Under all the circumstances he had enumerated, it became a question whether the Bill ought to be allowed to pass. He had now to say a few words with reference to the Waterman's Company. The Secretary to the Board of Trade appeared to him to have spoken upon this point with very little knowledge of the subject, when he implied that the Waterman's Company was organized for the first time in 1859. Why, the Waterman's Company was in existence and had its rules in force hundreds of years ago, and an Act of Parliament was passed in the time of Philip and Mary—in 1555—which ordered them to do as they did now. The Act provided that no barge, craft, or wherry, or any kind of floating craft, should be navigated on the River Thames, except there was one man upon that craft who had served, at least, two years in active service upon the river. That was the regulation in force at the present day. No person could be in charge of a craft who had not been previously at work upon the River Thames for two years. Then the Secretary to the Board of Trade went on to describe the Waterman's Company as a monopoly. You had only to cry "monopoly," and everyone would run away as from the cry of "mad dog." The Waterman's Company was not a monopoly. The term could not be applied justly to 6,000 men and 2,000 apprentices. All these men were obliged to serve their apprenticeship and work for two years on the river before they could take charge of a barge. Nobody called the body of chemists or surgeons a monopoly because they had to undergo examination. The navigation of the Thames had been carried on for centuries by men who were certified as being competent to perform their duties in this respect. It was all very well to say that the men were not such as could be wished. But he maintianed that if hon. Members looked at the amount of work done, and the millions of money represented by property and ships upon the River Thames, they would see that the number of accidents was very small, and that the work was generally very well done. The Secretary to the Board of Trade stated that this portion of the Bill had been founded on the Report of the Traffic Committee, which had before them the circumstances in connection with the loss of the *Princess Alice*. It was stated that all the men who navigated this vessel were members of the Waterman's Company. But there was nothing in that, because every craft must be navigated by men of the Waterman's Company. He would, with the permission of the House, read a list of the ships that came up the Thames annually. In the year 1878 it appeared there were sailing vessels from foreign ports, 5,818, with the tonnage of 2,250,000 tons; sailing vessels coastwise, 30,580, tonnage 1,547,000 tons; steam vessels from foreign ports, 3,585, tonnage, 3,100,000 tons; and steam vessels coastwise, 7,497, with the tonnage of 2,103,000 tons. In all, 47,480 vessels, with the tonnage of about 9,000,000 tons. In addition to these, there were the whole of the river steamboats, barges, and other craft, which were not recognized by the Custom House. He had before him also a Report of the accidents on the River Thames, which it was most important for the House and the public to consider. The Traffic Committee said—

> "The casualties on the Thames are, as might be expected, numerous; but it must not be supposed from the terrible calamity in which the present inquiry originated that the loss of life, or even of property, caused by these casualties is large in proportion to their number. From the last *Wreck Register* it appears that between June, 1877, and June, 1878, there were on the Thames above Gravesend 419 casualties reported to the Board of Trade, of which 373 were collisions. In all these cases, however, only six lives were lost."

Let hon. Members contrast with that state of things the loss of life in the streets of London. The traffic in them was far more dangerous to the public than the traffic on the River Thames, which was carried on by the Watermen's Company, and which had been misdescribed by the Secretary to the Board of Trade as a monopoly. Again, according to the Report, during the three years, 1875, 1876, 1877, there were 36 vessels and 95 barges sunk between London Bridge and Yanlet Reach, the number of lives lost being only 15. Again, let hon. Members contrast with that state of things the loss of life in the streets of London. He had had a paper bearing statistics of the street accidents in London, but he could not lay his hand on it just now. He believed, however, that in 1879—and the average of the last 10 years would be fully as many—there were 144 lives lost and 2,560 people maimed in the streets of the Metropolis. From this, hon. Members would see what a large number of accidents there were in the streets compared with the number on the river, notwithstanding the enormous amount of property on it, and the number of small and large craft, including steamers and small boats. He did not think the Secretary to the Board of Trade would, by his proposal, at all provide greater security for life on the river; and he would remind the hon. Member that the Departmental Committee, appointed at the instance of the noble Lord the Member for Liverpool (Viscount Sandon), was appointed solely to consider the question of the loss of life, the rule of the road, and for various other matters connected with rivers. The Board of Trade, in this Bill, had not introduced one of the suggestions of the Committee as to the Thames. There were one or two clauses in the Bill which he did not understand. Hon. Members who supported it said they gave to the Conservators further powers in regard to the navigation of the Thames; but he did not see what those "further powers" meant. It had been pointed out also, that it was an advantage to have this Bill in the form of a private measure, because of its early deposit in the month of December; but the announcement of the title was not sufficient to give a correct idea of what the measure consisted. The Bill was called a measure for the abolition of compulsory piloting, for rendering the river free, and for the repeal of all Acts inconsistent therewith; but it was a misleading title, for no one would suppose from it that there were clauses dealing with the smoke nuisance and abolishing the Waterman's Company. It was a deluding title and a deluding Bill, and he hoped the House would not allow it to proceed any further.

MR. BAXTER said, he rose not to make a speech, but to make an appeal to the Government. It was, no doubt, evident to the Board of Trade that many hon. Members who were going to vote against the Bill were strongly in favour of some of its leading provisions. But, surely, it ought to be a Public Bill. Depend upon it, there was no practice more dangerous or reprehensible, and against which the House ought most determinedly to set its face, than attempting to over-ride public legislation by means of Private Bills. Such a course was calculated to give rise to an immense amount of jobbery, and to cause great confusion, and, therefore, to bring discredit on the legislation of the country. It was because he was anxious that the main provisions of the Bill should become law in a proper and legitimate manner that he now rose to make an earnest appeal to the Government to withdraw it, and to deal with the question in a public measure.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: I am disposed to attach great importance to the opinion of my right hon. Friend, and I think it will be a saving of the time of the House if I state at once the course I propose to take on behalf of Her Majesty's Government. I should like first to protest, on behalf of my hon. Friend (Mr. Evelyn Ashley) and myself, that we are not engaged in an insidious attempt upon the privileges and dignity of this House, and that we have not intentionally taken any step which is not in strict accordance with precedents in similar matters. It has been said by hon. Members that this measure, although brought in by the Conservators, is really a Board of Trade Bill. Well, I do not want to dispute about terms. Of course, technically speaking, as I explained to the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets, it is the Bill of the Conservators of the Thames; they will have to pay the expenses of its promotion; but, no doubt, the Bill is concurred in by the Board of Trade, and it correctly represents the opinion of the Departmental Committee appointed by the noble Viscount (Viscount Sandon), my Predecessor at the Board of Trade. In that sense, I admit to the full that it is the Bill of the Board of Trade; and that, if it were to be brought in as a Public Bill, it would be brought in in its present form by the Board of Trade on behalf of the Government. Our object in bringing it in as a Private Bill was perfectly open—there need be no secret about it. It was to save the time of the House and promote the progress of Public Business. It is a matter of general agreement that the House is overworked and choked with Business; and the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, I think, said that he would be one of the greatest benefactors the House had ever known who would devise a means of saving the House some of the labour it at present has to undertake. I am afraid I cannot claim to be such a benefactor, because my first attempt in that direction appears not to have met with the general assent of the House. But the object was to save the House from unnecessary labour if we could do so in accordance with precedent, and without doing injury to any private interest. We felt it to be a necessary condition to our bringing in the Bill as a private measure, that no private interest should be in any way injured. Well, I want to know what private interest is injured by this being brought in as a private and not as a public measure? One advantage the opponents of the measure have derived from the manner in which it has been dealt with has been that it was deposited on the 21st December, and has consequently been before them since that time; whereas, if it had been brought in as a Public Bill by a Minister of the Crown, the provisions would not have been known until the measure had been introduced and laid upon the Table. As contrasted with the proceedings in connection with a Public Bill, the private interests concerned would have their complaints fully investigated before a Select Committee upstairs, if the measure were proceeded with as a Private Bill, and would have the advantage of being heard before that Committee by counsel. We knew that the watermen were poor persons, and would not be able to employ counsel; therefore we agreed—as we wished everything they had to say on their case to be duly considered—to move an Instruction to the Committee to hear them by counsel, or personally, if they preferred it. As far as our intention is concerned, therefore, we have shown ourselves anxious that no injury should be done to any private interest, and that all should be represented. The second point was this—we had to see that there was sufficient precedent for the course we had taken. The hon. Gentleman the Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie) gives up this part of the case. He admits that we are within our rights in this matter; but if we had not been right, and if the Bill had not been technically in accordance with forms and precedents, it would have been stopped by the Examiner on Standing Orders, or by you, Mr. Speaker. But, then, it is said that, as a matter of principle outside the Standing Orders, it ought not to have been brought in as a Public Bill. There have been six Bills introduced dealing with the Thames, four of which have been private and two hybrid. The former contained provisions similar to those in this Bill; and as to the latter, they contained provisions altogether extra to those of the present measure which justified their being put in a separate category. There is one provision in this Bill which has not been put in previous Privates Bill—namely, that referring to the abolition of compulsory pilotage; but, though I cannot find an exact precedent, I find that in the case of the Mersey, the Tyne, and other rivers of the country, Private Bills have been passed dealing with the same subject in the same way—that is to say, by abolishing compulsory pilotage. Therefore, we had a right to think that we had sufficient precedent in our favour to justify us in proceeding by Private Bill, if, by so doing, we could save the time of the House and promote the course of Public Business. What has the debate of this evening taught us? It has taught us, in the first place, that there is a pretty general assent on both sides of the House as to the necessity for some such Bill. The hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets has given us a promise that if this Bill is brought forward as a public measure, he will not oppose it on the second reading—he has said that his objection is not to the merits of the Bill, but to the way in which it has been introduced.

Mr. RITCHIE: I do not wish the right hon. Gentleman to misunderstand me on this point. What I said was, that if the Government would bring it in as a public measure, I would not put down any Notice of opposition to block it.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: That is a very small promise indeed. I understood that the hon. Member did not propose to offer any objection to the Bill on its merits. ["No, no!"] I thought that there was a general feeling on both sides of the House in favour of the merits of the Bill, the only exception to that general feeling being conveyed in the speech of the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of London (Mr. Alderman Lawrence), who thought it his duty to defend the Waterman's Company—which, it appears, has the honour to be one of the City Guilds, though it seems to possess extravagant privileges which no other Guild, at the present time, possesses. I am not surprised at the hon. Member for the City of London defending the Waterman's Company, because he has a natural tenderness for obstruction. He is a member of the Corporation of the City of London, and we have recently had evidence of their tendency in the matter of the Griffin. They have insisted on placing an obstruction on land, and it is not surprising that the hon. Member should defend interests which place obstruction in the way of a measure dealing with water. After hearing the debate I have come to the conclusion that, considering there is a general feeling in favour of legislation on this subject, whilst there is an equally general feeling against that legislation taking the form of a Private Bill, it would, probably, facilitate rather than hinder the progress of the Bill if we were to accept the suggestion made to us and were to ask the leave of the House to withdraw the measure in order to introduce it again as a Public Bill. My hon. Friend the Secretary to the Board of Trade explained to the House why he had not been able to adopt this course at an earlier stage. He stated that he had been informed by the authorities he had consulted that it would be impossible. I do not know if it was so understood; but my hon. Friend did not wish to be taken as referring to the authorities of the House, but only to experienced gentlemen outside whom he had consulted in reference to this matter. But I have since had the advantage of consulting a much greater authority—namely, Mr. Speaker—and I find that those who advised my hon. Friend were mistaken, and that it is practicable to withdraw the Bill for the purpose of re-introducing it in the form of a public measure. Under the circumstances, the chief objection we had to the course having been removed, with the permission of the House, I would withdraw the Bill.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I think the right hon. Gentleman has come to a very wise conclusion, and one which will certainly facilitate progress, and assist the House in dealing with the question. I do not at all mean to say that it might not be worth while considering whether better methods might not be adopted for shortening the procedure and saving the time of the House in the discussion of many classes of Bills; but I do say this, that the House expects to be consulted on such matters, that any change that is to be made should be made with the full concurrence of the House, and that it is a mistake to attempt to deal with a question of this sort in a Private Bill. I hope the House will assent to the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman, and that the Bill will be withdrawn in order that the subject may be considered, as it deserves to be considered, as one of a public character. It is to be understood that no opinion has been expressed, one way or the other, on the merits of the Bill. It must not be assumed with regard to a great many of us who have objected to the manner in which the Bill has been introduced, that we assent to the principle of the measure. There is one remark I should like to make as to the closing words of the right hon. Gentleman. I must say I was surprised when the Secretary to the Board of Trade told us, in an authoritative way, that it would be impossible to take the course suggested, and change the Bill from a private to a public measure. Certainly, the inference drawn by myself and others who sit near me when that statement was made was, that the hon. Gentleman had consulted yourself, Sir, and the other Authorities of the House—that it was in consequence of such consultation, that he told us that it was impossible to take the course suggested by the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets. It now appears that it was not the intention of the hon. Member to convey that meaning; but that he only wished to give us to understand that he had consulted persons familiar with the drawing and procedure of Bills outside the House, and not the high Authorities of the House itself. That explains the difference between the statements of the hon. Gentleman and the right hon. Gentleman; but I must say it is to be regretted that anyone speaking from the Treasury Bench should make such a statement as that, which, although, perhaps, not intentionally, certainly misled a good number of Members. I trust the matter will now close.

Mr. NORWOOD congratulated the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade on the decision he had arrived at, because he considered it objectionable that the matters contained in the Bill should be dealt with in a private measure. He (Mr. Norwood) wished to appeal to the right hon. Gentleman to eliminate from the Bill all reference to the question of pilotage, with a view of bringing in a Bill next Session dealing, not merely with the river above Gravesend, but with the seaward approaches to the Thames. He had been a Member of the Committee which, in 1870, went very fully into this question and made a Report, from which he would give an extract. The Report said—

> "A considerable amount of evidence has been tendered to the Committee showing that the pilotage that exists on the Thames is in a very unsatisfactory state, and that it is expedient to create a distinct pilotage authority for the Port of London, representing its trade and commerce, and your Committee concur in the suggestion for such a change."

At present they were in the hands of a private, self-elected body, in regard to the Thames, although every other river of importance in the country had its own special pilotage authority. He would strongly recommend the President of the Board of Trade to deal with the whole question of the pilotage of the River Thames in a separate Bill.

Mr. RITCHIE said, that, after the very satisfactory statement of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, he would ask the leave of the House to withdraw the Motion he had placed on the Paper.

Mr. JENKINS regretted that the Bill was to be withdrawn, believing that if it had been referred to a Select Committee upstairs, much valuable time might have been saved. There was much to be complained of in regard to the navigation of the Thames, especially in so far as the safety of small craft was concerned. He trusted that the new Bill would be brought forward without delay.

Sir HENRY TYLER had a word to say with reference to what had fallen from the hon. Member for Hull (Mr. Norwood) as to pilotage on the Thames. His constituency felt strongly on this matter, for they insured a large number of small vessels, and these craft met with a great many disasters on the Thames. The people on whose behalf he was speaking felt the matter all the more, inasmuch as when they proceeded against the owners of the vessels that did the damage, they were told that they could only recover from the pilots. From the pilots they found it impossible to recover anything. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would bring in his Bill without delay.

Amendment and Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Bill *withdrawn.*

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: I beg to give Notice that, on Thursday, I will move for leave to introduce another Bill on this subject.

QUESTIONS.

CONTROVERTED ELECTIONS—KNARESBOROUGH—REPORT OF THE ROYAL COMMSISIONERS.

Mr. JACKSON asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether his attention has been called to the following paragraphs in the Report of the Royal Commissioners appointed to inquire into alleged Corrupt Practices in the Borough of Knaresbro':—

> "We find that Corrupt Practices did not extensively prevail at the Election of 1874:
>
> "We find that Corrupt Practices did not extensively prevail at the Election of 1880:
>
> "We cannot close our Report, having regard to the conclusions we have arrived at, without expressing our regret that the expense of this inquiry should, under Statute 31 and 32 Vict. cap. 125, sec. 15, fall upon the ratepayers of Knaresbro';"

and, whether, having regard to the unanimous finding of the Commissioners, he will recommend that the cost of the Commission be defrayed by money to be provided by Parliament?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Before the Question was put on the Paper by the hon. Member, I had this subject introduced to me by my hon. Friend the hon. Baronet (Sir John Ramsden) very much in the sense of the Question of the hon. Gentleman—that is to say, indirectly conveying the regret that the inhabitants should be subjected to the burden which falls upon them. The hon. Member wishes to know whether I will recommend that the cost of the Knaresborough Commission be defrayed by money to be provided by Parliament? Well, this is not a question of mere administration, but is one which has to be determined by the law, and the cost of the Commission must, according to the law, be paid by the place concerned. There has been possibly—I do not give an opinion—some miscarriage or some error on the part of the Election Judges. At any rate, the circumstances before them led them to a conclusion which is not borne out by the facts. The case of Knaresborough appears to me to be analogous to that of suitors in Courts of Justice, who are brought there and subjected to charges and, perhaps, annoyance; but who, at the same time, are ultimately found to have committed no offence. Those are cases which we all very greatly regret; but it is not easy to discover a remedy for them.

PUBLIC HEALTH—VACCINATION—COW-POX.

Mr. P. A. TAYLOR asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether it is a fact that there is no well-ascertained case of spontaneous cow-pox on record; whether it is a fact that the common practice for many years has been to inoculate the calf with the virus of human small-pox, thus causing, in the words of Sir Thomas Watson, "a vast amount of mitigated small-pox;" whether it is a fact that within the last few years the mortality from small-pox at the Hague and other cities in Holland and Belgium (whence he proposes to obtain fresh lymph) has been enormously large; and, whether he will bring in a Bill to abolish Compulsory Vaccination?

MR. HIBBERT (for Mr. DODSON): I do not know what my hon. Friend would consider a well-ascertained case of spontaneous cow-pox; but cases of outbreaks of this disease among cows are specifically mentioned in the treatises on this subject, as well as in the Evidence before the Select Committee in 1871. I am informed that it is not a fact that the common practice for many years has been to inoculate the calf with the virus of human small-pox. I have no statistics as to the mortality from small-pox in Belgium; but in Holland the mortality in the epidemic of 1870-72 was very large indeed. There is nothing to show what proportion of the cases were vaccinated; and it must be borne in mind that neither in Belgium nor in Holland is vaccination compulsory. The President of the Local Government Board has no intention to bring in a Bill to abolish compulsory vaccination.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881 — PRISONERS IN KILMAINHAM GAOL.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY (for Mr. SEXTON) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Irish General Prisons Board have, under the authority conferred upon them by the Lord Lieutenant's regulations, specially exempted any person now confined in Kilmainham Prison from the operation of that article of daily routine which requires all persons under the Lord Lieutenant's warrant to go to bed at half-past eight in the evening; whether, under the rule authorising the General Prisons Board to

> "Permit the Governor to modify the routine in regard to any prisoner, so far as to dispense with any practice which, in the opinion of the Governor, is clearly unnecessary in regard to that particular prisoner,"

such permission has been given and exercised in the case of any prisoner with reference to the time of going to bed; and, whether, as to remain in darkness from such an early hour as half-past eight in the evening enhances the penalty of imprisonment, the Lord Lieutenant will direct that any prisoner who may desire shall be allowed to have light in his cell, and to read or write until, say, eleven or twelve o'clock?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: There is no regulation specially exempting prisoners from the operation of the rule which requires them to go to bed at half-past 8; nor has the Prisons Board given any permission to the Governor of the gaol to alter the hours. Any prisoner who wishes to have the regulation modified in his favour can apply to the Prisons Board, and the application will be duly considered. But, as a matter of fact, no such application has been made by any person arrested under the Lord Lieutenant's warrant.

EVICTIONS (IRELAND), MOHILL, CO. LEITRIM.

MR. BIGGAR (for Mr. FINIGAN) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the many evictions for non-payment of rent recently carried out and in course of being carried out in the Mohill Union, in the county of Leitrim; and, whether he will cause an inquiry respecting these evictions to be instituted, with a view of ascertaining the amount of rent as compared with the Poor Law valuation?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: I understand there have been 12 evictions carried out in this district since the 1st of February, all for non-payment of rent. In every case the evicted tenants have been re-admitted as caretakers. I have no information as to the number of evictions pending. As regards an inquiry respecting the amount of rent, as compared with Poor Law valuation, that is a matter over which I have no jurisdiction.

EVICTIONS (IRELAND).

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he is making himself acquainted with the evictions now proceeding in Ireland, and with the circumstances attending each?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: I am glad to be able to state that I am watching the evictions with great care.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: Having heard that, I beg to give Notice I shall ask the right hon. Gentleman the following Questions on Thursday:—Whether he is aware that during the service of some processes on Tuesday, 22nd instant, on the property of Lord Oranmore and Browne, near Claremorris, a man named O'Brady, who was serving the processes, came to the house of a man named Pat Mullen, and when he arrived at Pat Mullen's house he found the man dead, and laid out in the usual way on the table, and whether, upon seeing this, he placed the process on the dead body of Patrick Mullen? I will also ask him, on the same day, Whether, during the service of ejectments on the Grattan-Bellew property, at Mount Bellew, an old man, who was so alarmed by the presence of the police and the service of the processes, died suddenly on the occasion?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: The hon. Member knows that I could not get the information before Friday, and perhaps he will put the Questions on Monday.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I have no objection to put them on Monday, and I may put a few more on the Paper to-night with regard to evictions in other parts of the country.

EVICTIONS (IRELAND)—PROPORTION OF RENTS TO VALUATIONS.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he could state the proportion which the rent bore to the Government valuation in cases where tenants had been evicted?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: I have no official means of ascertaining it.

STATE OF IRELAND—LAND LEAGUE MEETINGS—GOVERNMENT REPORTERS.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (for Mr. HEALY) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, in view of the powers of arrest and imprisonment for eighteen months given under the Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, the Government will cease sending policemen to meetings to take longhand notes of a speaker's words, in view of the liability to error of untrained men in accurately recording what has been said, and of the painful consequences which may arise to speakers owing to the longhand note-takers' errors or incompetency?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: The only answer I have to give is that the Government have no intention of altering the present arrangements, under which they are kept informed of the proceedings at public meetings of the Land League.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (for Mr. HEALY) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether it is usual for the Government to send note-takers to public meetings in England; and, if not, whether the Government will consider the advisability of introducing the practice of the Irish Executive, in the case of public meetings in Ireland?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: If it were necessary, in the interests of law and order, to send note-takers to public meetings in England, it would be done, as it is in the case of Ireland.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (ENGLAND)—SCHOOL ACCOMMODATION.

MR. LYULPH STANLEY asked the Vice President of the Council, Whether, since, in the opinion of the Education Department, eighty cubical feet and eight square feet of area are admittedly insufficient school accommodation for each child in average attendance, their Lordships will make provision in the new Code that the measurement of denominational schools, as well as of board schools, shall be such as will secure to the school children in both cases alike a sufficient amount of space for their health, and for their efficient instruction?

MR. MUNDELLA: It is the constant aim of the Education Department to secure more than the minimum space laid down in the Code, which is correctly stated in the Question of my hon. Friend. If my hon. Friend will compare the average attendance throughout England and Wales with the accommodation calculated at eight square feet, he will find that the accommodation is generally in excess even of 10 square feet. We are not prepared at once to insist upon the enlargement of the minimum. We hope, however, gradually to bring about a general increased average both of attendance and of accommodation.

INLAND REVENUE—BEER LICENCES (IRELAND).

MR. BIGGAR asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If it is the fact that the Commissioners of Inland Revenue require beer retailers in Ireland, who merely desire to sell beer by retail for consumption off the premises, to take out a beer dealer's licence at an additional Duty of £3 6*s.* 1¾*d.*; and, if so, is he aware that the same requirement is not enforced upon similar traders in England, although the Statute empowering the issue of such licences applies to England as well as to Ireland; if he would inform the House if the charge for such retail beer licences for England is now £1 5*s.*, and for Ireland £4 11*s.* 1¾*d.*; and, if so, is it his intention to rectify this anomaly in any way; and, has it been brought under his consideration that by the Inland Revenue Commissioners' order of this present month, traders proposing to become beer and wine retailers in Ireland for consumption off the premises at the rate of Licence Duty imposed by the Inland Revenue Act of last Session, are also required to pay a beer dealer's licence, thereby more than doubling the Licence Duty; and whether a similar order is in force for England?

MR. GLADSTONE: In answer to the Question of the hon. Member, I have to say that it is quite true, as stated in the Question, that there is a distinction in the amount paid by beer dealers for a licence in Ireland and that paid by beer dealers in England; but the distinction had not grown out of the recent legislation, and has no connection whatever, as the hon. Member is well aware, with the Act of last Session. It is the fact that some of the Acts that are passed for England do not apply to Ireland, and that Justices in Ireland have not the same powers as regards licences for sale off the premises as Justices in England have. The Act of last year makes no change in the qualification on the subject. If it were deemed desirable to re-open the question of magisterial licences, there would be no objection taken by the Irish Revenue Department to allowing magistrates in Ireland the same power as regards beer licences, which would have the effect of meeting all the inequalities which the hon. Gentleman complained of. It would be better, however, to put the Question to the head of the Irish Government, and on the part of the Revenue Department there will be no objection.

HALL-MARKING—REPORT OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE, 1879.

MR. C. M'LAREN asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether he has considered the Report of the Select Committee on Hall-marking, 1879, and Mr. Hankey's Draft Report, which was supported by three Members of the present Government; and, whether the Government will deal with the question of Hall-marking in the present Session of Parliament?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: The whole subject has been carefully considered by the Board of Trade, and a Bill is being drafted; but, considering the present block of Public Business, there is little hope of its introduction this Session.

THE LORD CHAMBERLAIN'S DEPARTMENT—FIRES IN THEATRES.

MR. MACFARLANE asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If he can state that the safety of the public is secured in theatres and other places of public entertainment in case of fire; and, if not, if he can give any assurance that he will give the question his immediate attention?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I have communicated with the Lord Chamberlain on this subject, and he wishes it to be stated that, as far as the theatres licenced by him are concerned, he has caused the recommendations of the Select Committee of the House of Commons which considered the subject in 1877 to be embodied, as far as possible, in the Regulations issued by him for the guidance of managers. The theatres are inspected from time to time, and managers held by their licences personally responsible for the safety of the public. With regard to new theatres, the responsibility of framing new Regulations for adequate security from fires is imposed, by the Metropolitan Buildings Act of 1878, on the Metropolitan Board of Works, whose printed Regulations on the subject are, I presume, open to the inspection of the hon. Member. I have addressed myself to the hon. and gallant Member for Truro (Sir James M'Garel Hogg), and he has assured me that in all new theatres very stringent measures are taken for the prevention of fire and for the escape of persons in the event of fire.

Mr. MACFARLANE asked, What precautions were taken in the case of music halls?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I am not acquainted with the Regulations of the Middlesex Magistrates in that matter.

LAW AND POLICE—RIOT AT BASINGSTOKE.

Mr. M'COAN asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been directed to the report in the "Pall Mall Gazette" of March 28th, of a riot which took place on Sunday at Basingstoke; and, whether he will take any steps to prevent the threatened recurrence of a similar scene on Sunday next?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: The circumstances of this scandalous transaction have been drawn to my notice, and I am awaiting a further report on the matter. Everything that I can do will be done to prevent the recurrence of a similar scene next Sunday.

MERCANTILE MARINE—BRISTOL CHANNEL PILOTS.

Sir PHILIP MILES asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether any steps have been taken to examine into grievances of the Bristol Channel pilots, as stated in a Memorial forwarded by them in December 1880 to the Board of Trade?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: In their Memorial, the pilots complained of injuries caused by unfair selection, and asked that the pilotage authority should be transferred to the Trinity House. Their Memorial was referred to the pilotage authorities, who replied that remedies already existed for cases of unfair selectio[illegible] e change which the pilots desire [illegible] only be effected by a Provisional Order or an Act of Parliament. No application for a Provisional Order has been made, and we are not in a position to initiate legislation on this subject.

Sir William Harcourt

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL (NEGOTIATIONS)—RELIGIOUS TOLERATION.

Mr. O'DONNELL asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If complete religious toleration, as in other parts of the Empire, will be secured under the terms of pacification in the Transvaal?

Mr. GRANT DUFF: I may, perhaps, be allowed to answer that Question, and to say that the intention of the Commission which is to be appointed will be drawn to this important subject.

ARMY RE-ORGANIZATION—THE 87TH AND 88TH REGIMENTS.

Major NOLAN asked the Secretary of State for War, If, in view of the separation decided on between the 87th and 88th Regiments, it is proposed to promote any more officers from one of these regiments to the other?

Mr. CHILDERS: In reply to the hon. and gallant Gentleman I have to say that I cannot undertake at this moment to interfere with the promotion in the 87th and 88th Regiments; but that the question of promotions in Battalions, which will in July be combined in territorial regiments, differently from their combinations in Brigades, is receiving very careful consideration.

SOUTH AFRICA — THE TRANSVAAL (MILITARY OPERATIONS)—SURRENDER OF POTCHEFSTROOM.

Sir JOHN HAY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War a Question, of which I have given him private Notice, as follows:—If he can give the House any information as to the report of the surrender of Potchefstroom during the armistice; and if the attack reported to have been made by the Boers during the continuance of the armistice was not contrary to the usages of civilized warfare; and whether the Boer leaders who led the attack will be exempt from the amnesty?

Mr. CHILDERS: I have to state that we have received the following telegram from Sir Evelyn Wood, dated noon yesterday:—

"March 28.—Fort Amiel, 12 noon.—Winsloe surrendered Potchefstroom on the 21st, before my mule waggons, which left Mount Prospect the 7th, had traversed the distance—200 miles. Terms: All honours of war, retaining private weapons and property; guns and rifles surrendered, but ammunition for both to be handed to

Brand for custody during war, after which to be returned to us. Garrison not to serve during the hostilities at present existing. Garrison now marching *viâ* Kronstadt on Natal."

Immediately on its receipt, I conferred with Lord Kimberley; but we are not yet in possession of sufficient information to guide Her Majesty's Government as to the reply to be sent to Sir Evelyn Wood. I may remind the right hon. and gallant Baronet that a question may arise whether the news of the prolongation of the armistice could have reached Potchefstroom before the 21st instant. But on this and other points I express at present no opinion.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I wish to ask the Secretary of State for War, Whether, in the inquiry he proposes to make in order to ascertain whether the news of the prolongation of the armistice can have reached Potchefstroom before the 21st, he would take into account the fact that that news might have arrived quicker if sent through the Orange Free State than by the longer route through the Transvaal?

MR. CHILDERS: I have already been consulting those who are acquainted with the locality, with a view of arriving at some understanding on the specific point. I cannot say more at present.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS—FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON asked, If the County of Salop had been declared to be a county free from foot-and-mouth disease?

MR. MUNDELLA, in reply, said, that after the 31st instant the county of Salop would be entirely free from any restrictions. With respect to the general success of the Orders in Council, he was glad to be able to report that last week the number of outbreaks was reduced to 34. In the first week of the year the outbreaks were 278, and since then they had been steadily declining. In the week ending 5th March the number was 70, in the week ending the 12th it was 68, in the week ending the 19th it was 35, and in the week ending the 26th it was 34.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT asked, What other counties were to be exempted?

MR. MUNDELLA hoped the Question would be deferred until Thursday. They were considering them county by county, and, having got through half the counties, they hoped to complete them by Thursday.

ENTAIL (SCOTLAND) BILL.

MR. WARTON asked the right hon. Member for Montrose to say after what hour the Entail (Scotland) Bill would be brought on?

MR. BAXTER replied, that no one opposed the Bill except the hon. and learned Member for Bridport; and as the hon. and learned Gentleman, not very courteously, had declined to listen to a private explanation of the nature of the Bill, and of the reasons why noble Lords and hon. Gentlemen on both sides had asked him to introduce the Bill, he had merely to state that he should bring on the measure whenever he could.

MR. WARTON: I must say, Sir—["Order!"]—in Parliamentary language, that what has been stated by the right hon. Gentleman is not correct.

MOTIONS.

COINAGE (DECIMAL SYSTEM).

RESOLUTION.

MR. ASHTON DILKE rose to move—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, the introduction of a Decimal System of Coinage, Weights, and Measures ought not to be longer delayed."

The hon. Member said, that in this country social questions were almost always postponed to political questions, as the latter involved few private interests, but stimulated Party spirit. The Motion he was proposing was essentially not a Party one, because it had been supported on many occasions by Members both of the Conservative and Liberal Parties. He noticed the President of the Board of Trade in his place, and he believed the subject of the Resolution would get the same reception as it did in 1863 from Lord Palmerston's Government, when they suffered defeat on this particular question. He hoped that defeat would be a good omen for the present Motion. It was quite intelligible that social questions should be sacrificed for political questions; but he thought it would be a rather serious blot in their representative institutions if the principle was carried too far, This question was first raised in the House of Commons in 1824; afterwards a Commission of Inquiry was appointed, in which Mr. Spring Rice, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, and afterwards Lord Monteagle, took part. That showed that the Government of those days were less occupied with political matters than they were now, and more disposed to devote themselves to the interests of the commercial classes of the country, who had always supported and petitioned in favour of this measure. In 1843, another Commission, composed of scientific men, reported strongly in favour of this particular scheme. In 1853, a Committee of the House of Commons, which confined its inquiries to decimal coinage, reported in favour of that system. In November, 1854, a great amount of evidence, collected by that Committee, was published; but there was no Report. In the years 1862-3-4 there was great activity in relation to the question, and Mr. Ewart's Committee was appointed in 1862, and collected an immense mass of evidence, which had been the basis of all subsequent investigations. In 1863, Mr. Ewart brought in a Bill which, despite the opposition of Lord Palmerston's Government, was carried on its second reading by a large majority. That led to the Act of 1864, which made the metric system permissive in the country. No doubt, the argument against his Resolution would be that the system, being permissive in England, if it was advantageous would have been taken up. But there was a curious piece of evidence in the Report of the Commission on that point. An over-zealous Inspector of Weights and Measures having summoned a tradesman for having in his possession weights and measures of the metric system, the tradesman produced the Act of Parliament, and pleaded that he was permitted to use them. The magistrates disagreed, and the opinion of the Law Officers of the Crown, to whom it was referred, was that though a man might lawfully use the weights and measures of the metric system, he might not have them in his house. The House would, therefore, see that the permission was not of much use. In 1871, a Bill to make the system compulsory was rejected by a majority of 5. No doubt, the reason of the great outburst of activity on the subject in 1861 was due to the Exhibitions which were held; and after the Paris Exhibition of 1855 an Association was formed to encourage the decimal system throughout the world generally. The Commission, which had reported on this subject, had reported practically in favour of the system he proposed, and it was a great comfort to its advocates to think that the coinage of this country might be easily changed into the decimal system with so little inconvenience. The pound sterling would be retained as the unit, the florin would be retained, and the farthing, which was the 960th of a pound, would be the 1,000th instead. It would be admitted that that was a very slight alteration. Some said that if this system were carried out it would lead to the abolition of the half-crown; but he did not see that it should do so. The half-crown was a handsome and useful coin, and he was quite in favour of its retention. The sovereign would be 1,000 mils, the shilling 50, the sixpence 25, and the half-crown 125. The only alteration that would be required would be a slight alteration in the stamping of the coins, and that the number of mils should be indicated on one side of the coin. With regard to the copper coinage there would be more difficulty. What he maintained was that, with the retention of the pound sterling as the unit, the cost of the change in our copper coinage was not such as ought to deter us from making such a beneficial alteration as the introduction of a decimal system of coinage. The alteration in the case of the penny would be very simple. The penny would become the 250th part of a pound instead of the 240th part, as at present. He admitted that the change might cause a certain inconvenience in some of the small transactions of life; but it would be noticed that, on the whole, the balance would not be against the poorer classes. There would be a loss of 4 per cent; but it would fall rather on the dealer than on the consumer. To show that he was disinterested in bringing the matter forward, he might mention that in his particular business the alteration would be a distinct, though not a very large, loss to himself. He proposed to retain the sovereign and the whole of the silver coinage, and to make only a small alteration in the copper coinage. The only new coin he proposed to have was one of nickel of the value of 2½*d.*, or 10 to a florin. He thought the decimal coinage had now arrived at a distinct, crystallized stage. The whole of the evidence collected on this subject was distinctly in favour of one course, and that course he proposed to adopt if the House approved of his Motion. The proposal was that a Bill should be introduced dealing with the coinage next Session. With regard to the system of weights and measures, there was a great diversity of opinion. The more radical course was the proposed adoption of the metric system pure and simple, as it existed nearly over the whole of Europe. This would immensely facilitate commercial transactions with every country in Europe. There was also the medium course, which he should be willing to adopt if it should be proved that the bulk of the commercial opinion of England was in favour of it, and which was recommended by the Commission of 1841-2. It proposed the retention of the yard, but the introduction of a measure of 1,000 yards in place of the present inconvenient mile, which was 1,760 yards. It also proposed to do away with the 60 or more measures of corn in use in different parts of the country at the present moment, and to introduce the cental, the measure now in use in Liverpool and other ports. It also proposed, instead of 5½ yards to a pole of ground, to adopt the measure already used by English land surveyors, the chain being divided into links. That system was already a decimal one, and might be conveniently extended, and made the only legal system. His personal preference was decidedly in favour of the general adoption of the metric system, because it would bring us into community with almost the whole of the European countries. It was a curious fact that our trade with countries which used the metric system increased so much more rapidly than with those which did not. A great saving of labour would be effected by the adoption of that system, and the Decimal Association had elicited, by means of a Circular to schoolmasters, the important fact that whereas it took an average of two years and ten months to teach a child the present English system of coinage and weights and measures, it would only take a few days over nine months to teach the metric system. It might be said that the common people would have a difficulty in learning that system; but it must be remembered that education had made, and was still making, rapid advances in this country. That system had been introduced into almost every country in Europe, and also into the South American Republics, where it could not be said that a very high average of education and general intelligence existed. He had read a good deal of commercial correspondence on the question, and he only found one of his correspondents unfavourable to the adoption of his proposal. In that single instance the objection was that the decimal system was already largely in use in commercial houses, the practice being to regard a shilling as ·05 and a penny as ·004 of a pound. So that the only objection to his plan was that it was already largely in use in an irregular manner. Mr. Locke, the eminent English engineer, when he was constructing railways in France, used the decimal system both in paying the workmen, and in respect to the finer and more delicate parts of machinery; and the testimony which he bore on the subject was, that it took English workmen in France only from a fortnight to a month to master the decimal and metric system. Mr. Locke also found the decimal system so convenient, that when he returned to England and commenced making railways here he used that system first, and converted his calculations back into the English standards afterwards. Our scientific men had not used anything but the metrical system for the last 40 years; and the great accuracy now acquired in mechanical work, such as the casting of guns and the like, was only to be obtained by the use of the decimal system. Sir William Armstrong, B. Whitworth, and Sir Thomas Fairbairn—almost the greatest possible authorities on a subject of that sort—might be cited in favour of that system. Again, one of the most strenuous upholders of the decimal system, either as to value or as to weights, was the late Sir Rowland Hill, the author of the penny post reform. The actual saving of clerical labour which would attend the change would be very considerable. He thought that clerks in England were badly paid, and he should be sorry to do anything which would injure them. But though the saving of labour effected by the introduction of machinery had been very great, employers had, nevertheless, generally found their labour bills much increased. In fact, the moment they gave facilities for increased production, and made things simpler and clearer, although they might cause some little temporary suffering and inconvenience, yet they inevitably increased the demand enormously in a very short period. By the adoption of the decimal system, calculations would be rendered vastly simpler and easier, and the consequent saving of time that would thereby be effected would not only be one-third or one-half, as some authorities estimated, but far larger. Several important bodies of commercial men, including the Institute of Chartered Accountants of England and Wales, the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, and the Associated Chambers of Commerce of the United Kingdom, had considered the question, and had passed resolutions in favour of the adoption of the decimal system; even Moshesh, the son of the famous Basuto Chief of that name, had, at a meeting of Basutos, thanked the Government for introducing a uniform scale of weights and measures as the greatest boon they could give them. As far as the difficulty of introducing the system into this country was concerned, he could only say that the difficulty was one which had been grappled with successfully in other countries. It had been adopted, for instance, in France, Holland, and Portugal; and the case of Holland was very similar to this country. The Dutch, while adopting the system, had retained Dutch words as the names of the divisions in their coinage, which might be very well done in this country. The question was, in his view, one of great importance to the commercial and agricultural classes; and it was clear that in other countries in which it had been adopted the classes in question had found great convenience from the use of the system. In fact, the evidence he had adduced showed that this view was held, and that the commercial classes, at any rate, wished the settlement of the question not to be delayed any longer than was absolutely necessary by reason of the pressure of other Business more important to the nation. The longer it was delayed the more difficult the settlement must be. Transactions were becoming more and more complicated, and there would be greater reluctance to deal with the matter. There was probably no civilized country in the world which had such a puzzling system of weights and measures as we had in England; and, as far as agricultural trades were concerned, our present system was simply a disgrace. We had made improvements lately; but they had not yet resulted in anything very great, and we were not much further advanced than before. We had even been further on the road than we were now. When the Education Code was first introduced by a Liberal Government, the metric system was taught in our schools; but the first thing the Conservatives did when they came into power was to knock that on the head. We were as yet very far from being in the position in which we ought to be if we were to keep our place among the nations. One great reason for the commercial classes approving the proposal was that it was a measure of Free Trade, and one which would afford much greater facilities for commerce than existed under the present system. The metrical system was in use by more than one-third of the whole population in the world; and a small matter like this might very well turn a considerable amount of commerce from our shores, owing to the difficulty which foreigners had of understanding our complicated and difficult system of weights and measures. There would, no doubt, be some trouble in introducing a new system in this country; but it would not be anything like so great as was apprehended. The trouble he regarded as a mere bugbear. They had, no doubt, many good things which foreign nations had not. They had Free Trade, and their vast supply of coal, and, besides, they had great national energy; but they had not the good thing of which he spoke, and of which foreign nations were possessed. He admitted that the passing of an Act establishing the metric system would do harm at first to the Government who introduced it; but in the end that Government would be strengthened by passing such a measure. Every interest that was disturbed, and everyone who was put to a little trouble, however he might be benefited in the end, would grumble and growl; but, even though they might displease a few people, it would be well to risk a temporary unpopularity. It would not be the least or meanest achievement of a Liberal Government to deal with a question which had been standing over so long against the distinctly-expressed wish of every commercial body of importance in the country; and it was to be hoped they would give it that attention which its gravity and importance demanded.

MR. DILLWYN seconded the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That, in the opinion of this House, the introduction of a Decimal System of Coinage, Weights, and Measures ought not to be longer delayed."—(*Mr. Ashton Dilke.*)

MR. STEVENSON thought they had had a pleasant illustration of the state of matters in that House in contrast to the period of "urgency" which had so lately existed, for they now appeared to be at liberty to spend an agreeable evening in discussing a proposal which he ventured to submit was by no means an urgent one. One would think, from the term of the Motion, that there was a movement in favour of change; but there was less demand than formerly for the introduction of the decimal coinage system, and he expected the movement would remain in a state of comparative quiescence for a long time to come. The House had in past times humoured Members possessing this hobby, and on one or two occasions majorities had been voted in favour of propositions by these Members, on the understanding that on the Bills being read a second time they should go no further. In the year 1853, when the present Prime Minister was Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. J. B. Smith asked him, as a new copper coinage was about to be issued, whether he would take that opportunity of introducing the decimal system. Undoubtedly, if that system was ever to be adopted that was the proper time for it; but the Chancellor of the Exchequer replied "that he had no intention of making any change. A fresh supply of coin was necessary for this country and the Colonies. We had to consider the Colonies, who had adopted the same system as ourselves; and any interference with it was a matter of great importance and delicacy"—altering the value of those particular coins which were the basis of the whole idea of value to the mass of the population—"and so serious a change ought not to be undertaken on abstract opinions without ascertaining that the ground under our feet was secure." These words were as true now as then. We had to consider not only learned men and merchants, but also costermongers and their customers; and the latter had not memoralized the Government to say that they were defrauded and could not spend their money to the best advantage with our present system. A consideration of what was best for the great masses of the people would lead to the conclusion that we had better make no change. When a point was made of the correspondence between French coins and weights, it should be remembered that in the new bronze coinage, 1*d.* weighed one-third of an ounce; ½*d.* one-fifth of an ounce, and ¼*d.* one-tenth of an ounce; so that 3*d.* made an ounce weight, and that the ½*d.* was an inch in diameter. In the debate of 1855, Sir William Brown ardently advocated the decimal coinage; but Mr. J. B. Smith deprecated the introduction of the decimal system, lest the unpopularity of the change should interfere with the metric system, of which he was as ardent an advocate. To establish a system of decimal coinage would simply be to introduce confusion, because it would interfere with that which was the standard of value in the minds of the people. The Government, however, consented to an Inquiry by a Royal Commission, who reported in 1859, and who fully exhausted the subject. The Commission, he might add, knocked the system on the head, and Lord Overstone had propounded a set of questions on the subject, which had never been answered. In a paragraph in the Report, too, it was stated that, as regarded comparative convenience for the reckonings of shops and markets, the superiority rested with the present system. The florin was introduced as a step to decimal coinage, but it had never taken its place as a unit of value in this country. It was one of the most stupid coins that had ever come from the Mint, which had stopped the coining of half-crowns—a most useful coin—many years ago, but only soon to coin them again. But it was argued that other countries had adopted the decimal system. That, no doubt, was so; but they had not destroyed their old unity of value—the Spanish dollar in America, and the sou in France—and the metric system of weights and measures could not in France by law be forced into the minds of the people. He might refer to a French cookery book, published in 1870, to corroborate that statement. There he found receipts in which all the old terms of weight and measurement—pounds, inches, ounces—were employed, which showed that the language of the kitchen did not agree with that of the law, which had introduced a new language by which all the old ideas were disturbed. The greater simplicity of a decimal coinage for calculation was asserted; but if they wished to add to 2*s.* 6*d.* the sum of 1*s.* 3*d.*, they saw at once that the amount was 3*s.* 9*d.*; but expressed in decimal notation, it would be this—to 1 florin 2 cents and 5 mils (the value of 2*s.* 6*d.*) add 6 cents and 2½ mils (the value of 1*s.* 3*d.*), and you get the sum of 1 florin 8 cents and 7½, or, rather, 7·5 mils, as the equivalent for 3*s.* 9*d.* The argument of simplicity was in favour of the old notation. The penny and the mil were the unity for all statistics of cost on railways, such as the cost of fuel per train mile; and for this purpose decimals of a penny were voluntarily used. In like manner the inch, divided into 100 parts, was used at Woolwich. Parliament had already done all that was reasonable in the way of the metric system. They had rendered the language of it legal in contracts, and the Weights and Measures Act of 1878 had authorized the use of metric weights for scientific purposes and for manufacture, but not for trade. The Act also authorized the Board of Trade to sanction decimal multiples and divisions of existing standards. The Act also decimalized the troy ounce for gold and silver sales, abolishing pennyweights and troy pounds. This useful Act has been copied in the Colonies. They were all familiar with the score and the dozen; but there was no similar word in any language he knew for a group of ten; and human nature did not work by decimals. Eggs, oysters, and bottles of wine were all sold by the dozen even in France; indeed, the French wine trade, partly, no doubt, in deference to the demands of English and American consumers, had reverted to making their cases hold 60 bottles instead of 50. Besides, our coinage fitted in with our existing system of weights and measures, and that was an important and practical consideration. It was observable, too, that for all the quotations of the stock and share market vulgar fractions were preferred to decimal, on account of the convenience of the natural use of halves, quarters, eighths, and sixteenths. That, he believed, was the experience of the American markets, in common with our own, as he proved by extracts from a New York price list. Again, as long as we had the bulk of the carrying trade of the world, the British ton and the pound sterling would prevail. Such were the reasons—all of them connected with business and remote from theory—which induced him to vote against the Motion.

MR. ANDERSON believed they were all perfectly agreed that there was very great difficulty in making this change; but he thought the hon. Member for South Shields (Mr. Stevenson) had considerably exaggerated those difficulties. For instance, when he talked about human nature working in dozens, he must say that was a proposition that hardly commended itself to his mind. He did not find, for example, that they were given 12 fingers or 12 toes. But they had 10 fingers and 10 toes, and that might be considered as a natural suggestion in favour of the decimal system. But he would not pursue that point. Even taking the difficulties, the hon. Member was not quite accurate in all his particulars when speaking of shillings being used in New York; because, wherever they went in America, the dollar and the cent were the current mercantile coins. Then the hon. Member said they must look to the Colonies; but in Canada, their premier Colony, they had the decimal system of coinage. The hon. Member (Mr. Dilke) had not said a great deal about money of account, and it appeared to him the money of account should be decimal rather than the coinage. From the Resolution placed upon the Paper it was impossible to gather what scheme was proposed, and it was for that reason he put down his Amendment that it was a fit subject to go to a Committee. The scheme suggested by the hon. Member was that a pound should be the unit; but it appeared to him that was much too large a unit. In France and Italy the unit was a franc, which was only the twenty-fifth part of a pound, and it would be a mistake to make the unit a pound. In America the unit was the dollar; and if they did not adopt an international unit, he thought the natural unit they should adopt would be the franc, as in Italy and France. If they were, however, to stick to their own coinage, in his opinion, a florin ought to be the unit, and that would be a unit that it would be easy to divide into hundredth parts. Then, he could not see the extreme difficulty that the hon. Member (Mr. Stevenson) saw in necessarily abolishing the penny. They had already changed the actual value of the penny, because they knew there was not a pennyworth of bronze in it; and it was, therefore, easy to change the nominal to four mils instead of five mils, and then they would not be abolishing the penny at all. He thought there was no doubt, as regards educational and mercantile matters, that the money of account ought to be decimal. It would be an enormous saving both in the cost and trouble of teaching children, and in the cost of mercantile transactions, if we adopted money of account which was decimal. But there was a very much greater difference when they came to weights and measures, because there was much greater confusion, and the change would certainly produce a very considerable amount of confusion in the country. He did not think the hon. Member (Mr. Dilke) had suggested any mode that was at all feasible by which they could take and decimalize their present weights and measures. They dared not hope to do it with their present weights and measures; and, consequently, there would be nothing for it but to make a complete change and adopt the metric system. No doubt, there would be a great gain in adopting a system that in the course of time would be international; and if it could be done with any moderate amount of present inconvenience to themselves they ought to do it. Possibly by remitting it to a Select Committee to consider, something might come out of it. It was now a long time since there was a Committee, none since 1862, when a great deal of valuable information was brought forward. The world was older now, and the decimal system had become more general. Therefore, it was now time that another Committee of the House should take evidence upon it; and, with that view, he should move—

"That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire whether any basis can be found for a decimal system that would not so seriously disturb existing conditions as to make it practically inexpedient to change."

MR. BOORD seconded the Amendment.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "a Select Committee be appointed to inquire whether any basis can be found for a decimal system that would not so seriously disturb existing conditions as to make it practically inexpedient to change,"—(*Mr. Anderson*,)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. J. G. HUBBARD said, that he was amused at the statement of the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. Dilke), that every Commission and Committee which had been appointed had reported in favour of a decimal coinage. He was one of a Royal Commission appointed in 1857, in which his Colleagues were Lord Monteagle and Lord Overstone, which collected a vast amount of evidence and expended great labour in the investigation of the subject; and finally, after three years' work, in 1859 issued a Report which was distinctly adverse to the introduction of a decimal system as a practical measure. He thought the educational argument of the hon. Member almost ludicrous, as he was at a loss to see how so simple a system could afford any valuable instruction whatever. Like logarithms, the decimal system was even now applied in computations where scientific accuracy was needed—It was so employed in Insurance Offices and in the Bank of England. He did not think decimal measurements would be received by the agricultural community with much favour. Besides, a cadastral survey of the whole country was on the eve of completion, with the areas given by the acre, rood, and pole; and it would be a cruel thing for all that enormous labour to be thrown away. Nor was the system at all applicable to division. Commodities were naturally divided by the hand into halves, quarters, and eighths; but division into tenths and hundredths was virtually impossible. There was no unanimity whatever as to details among the authorities who recommended the decimal system; and it ought not to be forgotten that, however willing merchants and actuaries might be to adopt it, it would be a very difficult matter indeed to force it upon the costermongers and apple-women of St. Giles's or the New Cut. The poor people, indeed, who received payments reckoned, by pennies would be suffering by the decimalization of the coinage to an extent something like 4 per cent—a loss which only the most urgent reasons could justify Parliament in inflicting upon them. Moreover, convenience was not altogether on the side of the decimal system. There was no doubt that, for the purposes of division, our own system was infinitely more convenient and more practical. Different units were adopted for different articles; and he thought it would be much better, instead of imposing on the community an artificial system, to leave trade and finance to find the unit most convenient to them.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN said, that although his hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle-on-Tyne had not found many supporters in the House, yet he might be congratulated on having raised a very interesting and instructive debate—not so exciting as some which had hitherto occupied their attention, but which had a very great importance of its own. The hon. Member had justly claimed credit for disinterestedness, since those who were interested in newspaper enterprize would be likely to suffer pecuniarily if anything occurred to depreciate the value of the penny, unless it were met by increasing the price of their advertisements. He could not pretend to the disinterestedness which animated the hon. Member for Newcastle, who said they (the Government) would have statues raised to their memory if they initiated this reform. He (Mr. Chamberlain) preferred much more that the constituencies should give them their votes now, than that they should raise statues a century hence. He complained that the Resolution said too much, because it jumbled together into one Resolution two questions which ought to be separately treated. The question of decimalization of the coinage was not necessarily connected with the decimalization of weights and measures; and one of these alone would cause such a disturbance in the habits of the people, that the hon. Member might have been well satisfied with asking the House to swallow one morsel first. He complained also because the Resolution said too little. It did not tell them whether this great change was to be enforced compulsorily or was to be permissive. Now, that was a point on which they ought to have had some information before they were called upon to vote upon this question. The Committee of 1862 and the Commission of 1869 had both reported in favour of the permissive decimal system. If the measure was to be permissive, and if there were to be two systems running side by side, there would be great expense, great liability to fraud, and great confusion; and he very much doubted whether the new system could be successfully introduced. If they violently compelled the people to adopt this system before they were educated up to it, Parliament would be doing a very unpopular thing, and it would be easier to do away with the House of Lords, and to disestablish the Church of England, than to introduce the decimal system under such circumstances. His hon. Friend did not define the particular system which he wished the House to adopt. He (Mr. Chamberlain) did not see his way to absolutely pledging the Government and the House of Commons to an immediate and compulsory adoption of this great change without knowing what that change was definitely to be, and by what methods it was to be carried into practice. With regard to the decimalization of weights and measures, he was at a loss to discover what was the exact proposal of the hon. Member. He thought that the hon. Member said that he himself preferred the metric system, but that he would be willing to adopt certain alternatives, including the cental with a one pound unit. But the cental was already a legal weight in this country, having been adopted chiefly for the regulation of the enormous corn transactions of the Liverpool merchants; but had not superseded the old bushel throughout the country. Such a system would not in the slightest degree facilitate our international transactions. As a matter of fact, the weight of evidence was in favour of the introduction of the metric system if the change could be made without great difficulty; but there was by no means unanimity with regard to it. He had just heard that in the manufactory of Sir Joseph Whitworth, who himself was a great advocate of the decimal system, it had been found necessary to give up that system, and that the workmen preferred to work on the scale of eighths to a scale of tenths. The late Master of the Mint, Sir John Herschel, believed that the French system would not be found convenient in this country. Professor De Morgan said that the inconvenience of introducing the new system at home would, in his opinion, far more than counter-balance any advantage which might result from its adoption in our foreign transactions. Sir George Airey also said that the advantages of the decimal scheme were not worth mention in comparison with the difficulties with which it was surrounded. Now, he was not himself prepared to endorse those statements to the full, though they came from very high authorities. Indeed, his own experience of the two systems, carried on side by side, led him to believe that there would be considerable saving of time and trouble from the adoption of the scheme proposed by his hon. Friend, if once established. Hon. Members must not, however, shut their eyes to the fact that the inconvenience would at first be so enormous as to amount to nothing short of a revolution. In the first place, there was the cost of the change. In 1869, evidence was given to the effect that no fewer than 30,000,000 separate weights and measures existed in the country. That number had, no doubt, since been doubled. The cost of replacing all these weights and measures and of providing new standards universally throughout the country would probably be between £5,000,000 and £6,000,000. That was, however, a mere fraction of the total expense. No one who had not seen the great works at Middlesborough and other ironworks, could have any idea of the enormous amount of capital which was embarked in implements, all of which would have to be altered. A new stock would have, in some way or other, to be substituted for the old, and a vast variety of articles, such as screws, hinges, bar iron, and rod iron, would have to be replaced, with the result of great inconvenience, suffering, and loss. They had had some experience, he might add, of the difficulties which stood in the way of change. They attempted some time ago to introduce the Imperial bushel; but it had in a great number of cases been rejected by the population, who went on measuring by their own bushel. He did not, in bringing those difficulties under the notice of the House, wish to over-estimate them, or to contend that they might not be overcome; but in considering the question they must count the cost, and there ought to be the most careful inquiry, and a really popular demand outside the House, before such a change was attempted. The experience of foreign countries was, he might add, not so much in favour of his hon. Friend's proposal as he seemed to suppose. Looking at the Report, the other day, of the Commission of 1857, he found certainly a Return from France stating that the change to the new system had been made there without the slightest difficulty; but there was another Return from the present Foreign Minister of France, M. de St. Hilaire, in which he spoke of the change as being most unpopular, and that at the time of its introduction the greatest difficulty was experienced in many districts in bringing the new system into use. Not only in France, too, but in the United States and in Holland, the use of the old money and the old weights had continued down to the present time. That was especially the case in Holland, where the old system was cumbrous to a degree of which they had no experience in this country. He would also point out that foreign nations derived advantages from assimilating their weights and measures to those of contiguous countries, with which they carried on a large commercial intercourse; but that it did not follow that we should find ourselves compensated for making the change in anything like an equal degree. He now came to the proposal to introduce a decimal system of coinage. Many of the considerations which he had already brought before the House also applied to this portion of the subject. But he chiefly wanted to know what system his hon. Friend proposed that the House should adopt. Did he advocate the pound and mil system? If he did, the analogies to be drawn from foreign countries were against him, for abroad a unit of low denomination was always adopted as the unit of the decimal system. In this proposition of the hon. Gentleman, however, he was not altogether disinterested, as he, no doubt unintentionally, made himself the advocate of class interests;

and on that account, if on no other, he thought the hon. Gentleman's proposal ought to be resisted in the interests of the poorer classes. At present they had two units of value—the pound, which regulated all large transactions, and the penny, which was the basis of all the petty cash transactions in the country. In a decimal system both could not be retained; and his hon. Friend proposed to sacrifice the penny, and so to revolutionize the whole petty cash system of this country. The working classes were the least able to appreciate the results of such a change, and, consequently, it must cause them great inconvenience. The classes whom his hon. Friend would relieve from inconvenience were the most intelligent and best educated. But the inconvenience which the working classes would sustain by the adoption of the pound and mil system was not the only objection to the system. Under that system there was no equivalent for the coins in most frequent use among the lower classes. Lord Sherbrooke, some years ago, made an amusing calculation of equivalent values under this system. A fourpenny-piece would be ·0166 and sixes *ad infinitum;* 3*d.* would be ·0125; 1*d.* would be ·00416 and sixes *ad infinitum;* ½*d.* would be ·002083 and threes *ad infinitum;* and ¼*d.* would be ·0010416 and sixes *ad infinitum.* He (Mr. Chamberlain) did not say that it would be impossible to make an adjustment; but the working classes would suffer from it, and they could not afford to do so. The adjustment which was made in France was strenuously opposed by the working classes, because the retailers took advantage of the legal change to the detriment of their customers. By any such change the working classes would assuredly suffer, and they would not be patient under the suffering. A great proportion of the wages of the country, too, as well as trade prices, were based upon the penny, and any alteration of that basis would involve the greatest possible confusion and inconvenience, and an equivalent would be very difficult to arrange. If the House, however, was of opinion that the time had come when a compulsory decimal system of coinage should be introduced, he hoped they would not be in favour of such a system as that which the hon. Member for Newcastle-on-Tyne had in his mind, which would carry with it the greatest amount of inconvenience to the greatest number of people. There were alternative schemes—the penny scheme, for instance, which had always been considered one of the most dangerous rivals of the pound and mil scheme. The objection to it was that, under that system, the highest unit of value would be 8*s.* 4*d.*, and that would not be sufficiently high to be convenient for the great mercantile transactions in which this country was engaged. He could only say that if that scheme was rejected because it was unpopular with the mercantile classes, *à fortiori,* the scheme of the hon. Member for Newcastle should be rejected because it would be inconvenient to the working classes. It was not fair to ask the House to adopt a vague general Resolution without saying what scheme was to be applied. On the whole question one thing was generally agreed upon, when the matter was before the House in 1855, that in a change of this kind the greatest caution should be observed; that nothing should be done until the mind of the people had been prepared for the change; and that until a demand for that alteration was made with something like practical unanimity, the change should not be attempted. Mr. Ewart, when he brought in his Bill in 1863, although he proposed to make a compulsory change, urged that what was really required was that the minds of the people should be prepared, and that especially the metric system should find some place in the education of the young. Now, he asked his hon. Friend what proof he had given that since that time the question had made any progress at all? There was no evidence of Petitions or of public meetings. This was a question with regard to which it was no use going in advance of the general feeling of the people. It had been abundantly proved in the past that one could not by legislation destroy systems which accorded with the general practical wants of the people, and which had, perhaps, a hold upon their prejudices. A generation passed away in France after the introduction of the decimal system before it was finally adopted, and Portugal took 15 years before it finally adopted the metric system. He held also that they should not attempt to force a great change of this sort upon the people from the inside of the House of Commons.

The pressure ought to come to the House of Commons from the outside; and when the people clearly expressed a desire for an alteration of the present system, Parliament would, no doubt, carry out their wishes. He hoped his hon. Friend would not press his Resolution to a division. If the hon. Member should do so, he would vote against him. He doubted, however, whether any good result would attend the reference of the question to another Select Committee. Five Select Committees and Royal Commissions had sat on the subject since 1840, and he did not think that any further information could be collected. He hoped, therefore, that his hon. Friend would be satisfied with the discussion which had taken place, and would not press a division.

MR. ASHTON DILKE said, that he was particularly anxious to see whether any change of opinion in that House had taken place within the last few years, and he therefore proposed to accept the Amendment of the hon. Member for Glasgow.

MR. ALDERMAN LAWRENCE observed, that the litre system would be in favour of the upper classes, because by it they would obtain a pint and three-quarters of wine, whereas they now got only a pint and a-half in a bottle; but the effect of the system on the working man would be that he would get seven-eighths of a pint of beer or other liquor instead of a pint.

MR. GLADSTONE said, he did not propose to go into the general argument, which had been thoroughly exhausted by the speeches delivered on both sides of the House. He only wished to point out the practical position of the question. His hon. Friend proposed to abandon his Resolution and to accept a proposition which was entirely different, which, however, he did not think an expedient one. His hon. Friend proposed to accept, in substitution for a Motion that the introduction of the decimal system should no longer be delayed, an Amendment that a Committee should be appointed to inquire whether any basis for such a system could be found that would not seriously disturb existing conditions. His hon. Friend was certainly largely reducing his demand if he was disposed to be satisfied with such an Amendment. But the real question was, whether a case had been shown for a Committee. He fully concurred in the arguments of his right hon. Friend (Mr. Chamberlain) on the inconvenience of any system involving a change in money. He had never objected to a decimal coinage *per se;* but he had always opposed an alteration in the penny, which must operate to the prejudice of the poorer classes, and would affect nine-tenths of the transactions of daily life. He was sure no fresh information could be obtained after the laborious investigations of Lord Overstone's Commission. There was no one whose opinion on such a question was entitled to so much weight as Lord Overstone. He did not think that that already overburdened House should have such a task thrown upon it as that which was proposed by the Amendment of the hon. Member for Glasgow.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Question put, "That those words be there added."

The House *divided:*—Ayes 28; Noes 108: Majority 80.—(Div. List, No. 171.)

PATRONAGE OF BENEFICES (CHURCH OF ENGLAND).—RESOLUTION.

MR. EDWARD LEATHAM rose to call attention to the Evidence taken by the Royal Commissioners appointed to inquire into the Law and Practice as to the Sale, Exchange, and Resignation of Ecclesiastical Benefices, and their Report thereon; and to move—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, the simoniacal evasions of the law, and other scandals connected with the exercise and disposal of private patronage in the Church of England, are such as to call for remedial measures of the most stringent and radical character."

Mr. Speaker, I do not think, Sir, that I am chargeable with much of the impatience of a fanatic in calling attention for the fourth or fifth time to the traffic in Ecclesiastical Benefices. How any Churchman can read the Evidence which was taken by the Royal Commission on Patronage appointed more than two years ago, and not be moved by it to the advocacy of immediate legislative action, is one of those things which, I suppose, one must be born in the lap of the Church to understand. Of course there is one explanation, and it is one which I have often heard—that the indictment which may be based upon that Evidence against the whole ecclesiastical system of the Church of England is true; that these scandals and abuses are either inherent in the system, or so firmly and inseparably built into it, that there is no defence and no escape so long as the Church is connected with the State. If that be so, the sooner we have disestablishment the better; but if that be not so, and the disease have not yet passed beyond the reach of remedy, surely those who think this are bound to bestir themselves, and that at once, if only in the interests of common decency. When, therefore, I heard that my hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope) was preparing a Bill upon this subject I felt no surprise, but, on the contrary, I experienced a sense of relief, for I hoped that at last this unpalatable subject might have passed into other hands. Unfortunately, when my hon. Friend's Bill appeared it was very far from satisfactory. But whether the Bill be satisfactory or not, what is thoroughly unsatisfactory is that this great question should remain in private hands, however able. It is the Government alone, and a strong and resolute Government alone, which can deal with it effectually; and I hope that this debate will not close without our hearing from the Government some definite avowal of policy. And do not let the House suppose that I am about, at this hour, to weary it by a repetition of facts and arguments with which I fear that it is already too familiar. The Evidence which was taken by the Royal Commission is so important, and has cleared up so many doubtful points, that it constitutes almost a new departure in the history of this question. It is with this evidence that I propose chiefly to deal to-night; and if I shall leave many aspects of the question untouched, it is not because I think that what has been advanced on previous occasions has lost any of its cogency, but because I am anxious to add to it new considerations and new arguments, with which the most recent information has armed me. For I propose to discuss the question from a new stand-point. I wish, in the first place, to show how this corrupt traffic is demoralizing the clergy themselves, impairing their moral sense, enfeebling and degrading their consciences, and so poisoning, I may say, at its source that fountain of religious instruction which is presented to the nation by the State. In the next place, I wish to show how wide is the area which is already covered by clerical patronage, together with the evils which it entails upon the parishes themselves; and, lastly, I wish to remind the House how rampant and flourishing this traffic has become, and how ingenious and unscrupulous are many of the agents and brokers in this peculiar branch of industry. And, first, as to the clerical conscience. The Commission examined Mr. Stark. Mr. Stark, as the House is aware, is one of those agents to whom patrons and clergymen betake themselves who are anxious to carry out these transactions with the minimum of illegality. He has to do, as he tells us, with the cream of the Profession. He is a perfectly credible witness. If he said anything which was not true, the Commission had every opportunity of convicting him of inconsistency or exaggeration. They did nothing of the kind. And yet when we remember who the persons are whom he is describing, and what guarantees they have given for holiness and purity, anything more astounding than his evidence it has never been my misfortune to read.

"2025. (*Chairman.*) Have you any information to give as to the extent to which the existing law of simony is contravened?—The Commissioners are well aware that the sale of advowsons, with the understanding that possession is to be given, is according to the law illegal. Three-fourths of the patrons with whom I have come in contact, and among them clergymen of the highest standing, do not recognize any moral crime in an infraction of the present law of simony, and the consequence is that they freely and unhesitatingly sell and purchase advowsons with the understanding that immediate possession is to be given, nor looking upon it as any sin. When I say clergymen of high standing, I have had business with ex-Colonial Bishops, canons, and other dignataries of the Church, who, of course, would be above suspicion in every way. * * * Three-fourths of my transactions are with immediate possession, and strictly speaking they are nearly all illegal.

"2028. (*Bishop of Peterborough.*) You say that the clergymen to whom you refer who offer their benefices for sale with immediate possession regard the transaction as in no way sinful; they know it nevertheless to be illegal?—Most decidedly.

"2029. Knowing it to be illegal, these clerical patrons ask you to help them to break the law?—Decidedly; and the matter is completed by solicitors of the highest standing in the country. The clerical agent simply introduces the parties. The lawyers draw up the necessary deeds.

"2030. You are, of course, aware that a simoniacal transaction in obtaining possession of a benefice voids the benefice?—Decidedly.

"2031. These clerical patrons are aware that if these transactions became public, and anyone took proceedings upon them, their benefices would be void?—No doubt.

* * * * *

"2042. That is to say, there are clergymen of the highest character who do not recognize any moral wrong in breaking the laws of their country?—You may put it that way. The law is clear and distinct. Only this morning in an interview I had with one of my clients, I pointed out to him that it was an illegal transaction. In all my transactions with my clients I have always stated that they are illegal transactions.

* * * * *

"We have a law as strict as it is possible to make it, short of criminalty, and yet it is evaded; and moreover the clergyman is required to take an oath to the effect that he has not paid or caused to be paid any sum of money in any transaction which to the best of his belief is simony. The clergyman says to himself, 'In my view this is not simony.'

"2062. The clergymen knows what the meaning of 'simony' in that declaration is; he knows that is a legal term which means contrary to the law of simony?—Yes.

"2063. Knowing that, these moral clergymen who first of all ask you to break the law then take an oath that they have not broken the law?—Yes."

Sir, this traffic is so corrupt and so corrupting, that its corrupt influence seems almost to taint the consciences, not only of those who are engaged in it, but of those whose business brings them into the same neighbourhood. A high authority in Ecclesiastical Law, who was one of the Commissioners, has satisfied himself apparently that the law is not broken because he can discern a distinction between a written agreement and a verbal understanding. There is no written agreement in these transactions, only a verbal understanding. And it is through this miserable loophole that these trafficking and lying clergy creep. What should we think of men who crept through such a loophole in the ordinary affairs of life? What should we think of men who thus eluded their mere pecuniary engagements? Should we not think them thorough-paced rascals? And yet these are men who are set over us by the law of the land as our moral and spiritual guides. But Mr. Stark has found a remedy for all this. He would adapt the law to the state of the clerical conscience. He would repeal the Law of Simony, and put something much gentler in its place. Mr. Stark has, I believe, many followerc. Sir, I remember attending Divine Service in a church the interior of which was adorned by an enormous clock. For some reason the officiating clergyman was 10 minutes late, a fact which the clock plainly indicated. At last the rev. gentleman appeared in full canonicals, and at the same moment fingers came forth from behind the clock and pushed the hand back 10 minutes. It struck me that that was the most original way of making a clergyman punctual I ever saw. Mr. Stark's way of making him moral is equally so. The law is strict, and the clerical conscience is not. Do not do anything to the clerical conscience; relax the law! Put the clock back! But, perhaps, someone will say—"These men, after all, are the exceptions. You are framing your indictment against the clerical conscience upon the evidence of an accomplice. Surely Mr. Stark is making the best of his equivocal profession by seeking to show that it has the countenance of clergymen of the highest standing." Sir, I wish I could think so. Unfortunately, Mr. Stark's statements are confirmed by other evidence which is perfectly conclusive. For example, Mr. Lee, who is secretary to I do not know how many Bishops, and who was examined by the Select Committee, states that "evasions of the law are almost universal." Mr. Bridges, examined by the same Committee, and who may be described as a solicitor in the very thick of ecclesiastical business in London, was asked these questions respecting the oath—

"You think it being a legal oath, persons not of a legal mind may not quite undertsand it?—Yes. Such persons may be very much embarrassed, or else they may come to the conclusion that the whole thing is an absurdity, and that they may get through the matter in the best way they can; that I know to be a very common state of mind.

"Have you known instances of that kind?—Yes. There have been instances in which I have been fortunate enough to stop proceedings of this kind; and there have been other cases to which I have not been so fortunate, but in which proceedings have gone on in spite of every remonstrance."

And with regard to a most discreditable transaction he was asked—

"May I ask whether the clergymen who did this was generally regarded as a respectable man?—He was a thorough gentleman by position, he was a man of good family, and there was nothing whatever against his character. He did not belong to any very earnest school in the Church."

Mr. Few, who is known to half the House, was also examined.

> "Practically you have had considerable difficulty in getting clergymen to understand the stringent character of the oath against simony, have you not?—Undoubtedly. Even in the case of men of undoubted piety, and more especially in the case of the oath, it is quite remarkable how dense they were in seeing what its tenor was, and I remember my father constantly dwelling upon the same point, that he had to read it over to them. These were men of undoubted piety, and yet they could not see that what they desired to do was against the oath."

Now, this "density" is the direct consequence of the corrupting influence of the traffic. Surely it is of vital importance to the Church to get rid of that corrupt influence at all costs. How can we respect the teaching of the Church when we find that the teachers themselves, the moment that their selfish interests come into play, are so utterly dense and unscrupulous; and how can we endure that a Church which is unwilling or unable to clear herself from the turpitude of these transactions, should be set up and kept up by Act of Parliament as the only true exponent of what is meant by religion in England? Such being the state of the clerical conscience, it is not re-assuring to find that, thanks to our system of purchase, a very large proportion of the private patronage of the country is already in clerical hands. Not only are the livings which are still with lay patrons besieged by clergymen with their hands, and I fear in many cases with their consciences, in their pockets, but in a vast number of instances the vendors are clergymen also; for the traffic is being carried on by clergymen on both sides. Indeed, the extent of clerical patronage constitutes a very formidable danger. Anything more foreign to the intention of the law, or more mischievous to the interests of the Church, or more disastrous to the parishes themselves, can scarcely be imagined, than that system of clerical patronage, which is the creature of this illicit trade. The law forbids a clergyman to purchase a next presentation for himself; the intention of the law, no doubt, being that the patron should be one person, and the presentee another. It was hoped, doubtless, that by this arrangement the laity would be able to exercise some kind of control over the clergy and all their multitudinous vagaries. But, in defiance of the intention of the law, the clergy are rapidly buying up the fee-simple of the Church. We often hear of the "functions of the laity" in the Church of England. There are a class of clergymen who regard the "functions of the laity" with contempt. They are anticipating the whole movement on behalf of the laity. They are making themselves masters of the situation. They are buying up everything over the heads of the laity with hard cash. Where are the laity in such parishes as these? "That is my pulpit," practically says such a parson. "It cost me so much. I will preach in it just what I please." "This church is my freehold. It cost me so much. I will make it ring, if I like, with denunciations of the impious interference of an Erastian Government with the things of God." "That altar cost me so much. I will deck it out and decorate it exactly as I please." And these gentlemen appear before us clothed in the whole authority of the State, and in goodness knows what amount of supernatural authority, which they say that they derive from the Church—the Church which permits her authority to be scrambled for in the market-place—the State which offers its authority to the highest bidder! Sir, I can conceive nothing more humiliating or more intolerable than the picture of such a congregation—simple, God-fearing men, it may be, and used to the Protestant Service of the Church of England as it was understood in times when the Church of England was at her best, and she was at her best in the rural parishes—I can conceive nothing more revolting than the picture of such a congregation suddenly confronted by one of these sacerdotal and simoniacal upstarts, who changes everything, overturns everything, and tramples upon everybody with all the airs of sovereignty. The parish is helplesss, the Bishop is helpless, the law is helpless. The despot is in an incontestable position; and he is there for life. He is there not through fame or merit, or because he has deserved well of the Church, or because his name is associated in any way with the locality. He has bought himself in, and read himself in. Is the House prepared for the assertion of Mr. Stark, that two-thirds of the private patronage of the Church is in the hands of clerical patrons?

"2098. Can you give us any reliable information as to the number of clerical patrons that there are altogether?—No; the proportion in my gazette referring to the benefices I have now for sale is 73 clerical patrons as against 48 lay patrons. You might take that as representing what the proportion would be generally. Taking the whole number of patrons at 7,000, I fancy the number of clerical patrons would be 4,000 or 5,000."

The Rev. Samuel Slocock, an Essex rector, who appeared before the Commission as a kind of spokesman for the Essex rectors, is more precise. He estimates the value of clerical patronage in the county of Essex alone at £324,250 at 10 years' purchase, representing from 60 to 70 benefices. And Mr. Philip John Budworth, of Greenstead Hall, and late High Sheriff of the county, stated that—

"From the tolerable knowledge which he had of other parts of England besides his own, the conditions of lay and clerical patronage are in many other counties much the same as they are in Essex."

Now, Sir, this constitutes, of itself, a very flagrant abuse. "Just imagine," said Mr. Venables, who was one of the Commissioners—

"Just imagine that most of the advowsons of England were at this moment the sole property of the clergy, where would there be any interest on the part of the laity in Church matters if a man just came and thrust himself into a parish and said, 'This is my property. I shall just come here and do pretty much as I like.'"

Yet, this is the state of things at which we are rapidly arriving. Sometimes it is a donative which is bought. The Rev. Edward Parker Dew told the Commission that he purchased the donative of Braemore, near Salisbury, for £8,500, with a population of 600, and an annual value of £877. The House, of course, is aware that a donative is the absolute property of the purchaser. He can present himself and resign when he pleases, without troubling the Bishop. Sometimes it is a family living which is purchased. And by a family living I do not mean only a living which remains in the family, but which provides for the whole family. The Rev. William Bedford told the Commission of such a living—

"1650. The advowson of the living of Sutton Coldfield was sold by the Crown, by Queen Elizabeth, to a person from whom my ancestor immediately purchased it in the same reign. In the reign of Charles the Second the then patron's daughter married a clergyman who was the first of a series of rectors and patrons who have gone on till the present day. * * * The value of the living is about £1,400 from tithes, and there is about 500 acres of glebe. It is a valuable living. It is near Birmingham, and the glebe is coming in for building. * * * There are three district churches, and they will become rectories after my death. I have carried a scheme through, approved by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and sanctioned by an Order in Council, that the patronage of those rectories should become private patronage, and the incumbents receive the tithes.

"1652. Will they be with your family?—Yes, they will be in my family. My executors will have four advowsons instead of one, and the incumbents of the district churches will be rectors instead of vicars, and take the great tithes of the districts."

A statement which was summed up by Mr. Venables as follows:—

"1667. (*Rev. G. Venables.*) Your view of the case, which is a very clear one, is one that regards the whole matter as property rather than a trust?—No doubt to a certain extent it is so. I have been speaking from the property point of view."

Indeed, this inevitable perversion of sentiment, this disposition to regard the whole matter as property rather than a trust, meets us everywhere throughout the plea of the clerical patrons. Mr. Slocock was asked these home questions—

"781. And if he avails himself of his position as such trustee to enrich himself in any degree to the injury of his trust, he is doing a very wrong thing, is he not?—But he must think of home.

"782. If he considers his home and his family in preference to his trust, he is disregarding his trust, is he not, he is allowing considerations of a personal nature to interfere with his duty to his trust?—Then I think the primary duty of a man is to provide for his own almost before the parishioners. He is bound to think of his family, and how can he provide for his own if this is taken away from him!"

A reply which justifies the quaint and cynical dictum of Mr. Stark that—

"2041. Church property is so mixed up with rights of property that it is difficult to distinguish between rights of property and questions of conscience."

This, I suppose, must be the apology of clergymen like the gentleman mentioned by Dr. Hobhouse, the Bishop Suffragan of Lichfield, who bought the living of P., with a population of about 800, and financed it as follows:—

"1350. He had raised a sum of money amongst the parishioners for the purpose of augmentation, which he carried to Lichfield and got doubled by the Diocesan Church Extension Society, and then he carried the double sum to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and so raised the income of the living from £94 to £130, I think, and then put it in the market."

Now this is frequently done. Augmentations are derived from Queen Anne's Bounty, or the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, or both, and when the pear is round and ripe it is sold and the proceeds pocketed. Now, I do not know what the House thinks of this sort of thing; but to an unsophisticated person like myself it seems very like sacrilege and theft. We cannot wonder that Mr. Meredith, one of the clergymen examined by the Commission, should condemn the system of clerical patronage. He says—

"260. The nature of my duties, some 25 years ago, as assistant Inspector of Church schools, under the Committee of Council, used to bring me in different parts of the country in connection with the clergy, and then I noticed that in every case where there was a clerical patron the parish was badly cared for. I could give instances of parishes in which that has come under my notice individually.

"261. You state that in every case in which the patron was a clergyman the parish was badly cared for; were those cases generally where a clergyman had appointed himself?—Yes.

"262. Were they all such?—Yes, they were all such."

And as a monstrous illustration of the evils which this system inflicts upon the parishes, let me cite the well-known case of St. Giles', Camberwell. Dr. Utterton, the Bishop of Guildford, described this case to the Commissioners. He said that the parish contained before recent divisions 60,000 souls; that in the year 1846 the present vicar bought the advowson for £12,000; that the living was shortly afterwards sequestrated for something like £20,000; that the gross income was £2,300; and that the whole sum which Bishop Sumner was able to apply to the spiritual benefit of the parish was £200 a-year. The case was so outrageous that Lord St. Leonards brought it before the House of Lords; but he complained that there was no Bishop there to support him, and the matter fell through. When Bishop Wilberforce came into the diocese he asked the parishioners to join him in raising a fund of £400 a-year towards employing two additional curates and putting the vicarage into a state of repair. But no sooner had the curate in charge got into the vicarage than the vicar, who had been away for years, presented himself and said—"I demand to come and be my own curate." So he took up his residence, and has been there ever since. Now, do not let the House suppose that this is an isolated illustration of the mischief done by the system to the parishes. Mr. Herford, the Manchester Coroner, a gentleman well-known as a devoted Churchman, and active supporter of several Church societies, gave a detailed description of the state of a group of parishes in East Cheshire, with all of which he was familiar. He said—

"1210. The first that I would mention is Ashton-on-Mersey. In 1877 the living was offered for sale by the rector, who is occupier as well as owner of the living. As such he was able to advertise that immediate legal possession might be had, as he could, of course, vacate it on finding a purchaser. * * * The tithes were immediately sold by the present rector to a London company, whose rigid distraints caused an angry feeling and an 'indignation meeting.' For many years past the living has always been sold in the same way. The cases of individual hardship which are said to have occurred in connection with this purely mercantile mode of raising the clergyman's income are amongst the evil temporal effects of the purchase system. Then I proceed to the case of Stockport, which is a parish adjoining Ashton-on-Mersey, and a very extensive parish, the presentation to which has also for many years been sold. * * * The living was offered for auction, in 1850, at a public-house in Stockport, with other property (the 'Warren Bulkeley Arms Inn,' the 'Vernon Arms,' &c.), which sold well; but the living was withdrawn at the reserve price of £12,000, the then rector being stated to be aged 63. Eight years afterwards it was sold to the father of the present rector, who did not come into possession until 17 years after the purchase. The purchase money was £12,000, which, at compound interest, would now be worth two or three times that sum. One result of this great pecuniary loss was that the rector, whose income is £3,000 a-year, having found out what he was advised to be a flaw in the leases granted by the late rector, now claims from the lessees the land leased to them with the houses they have built upon it. A claim so disastrous to a great number of families has naturally produced great feeling against the Church, nearly a whole ward in the borough being stated to be in rebellion against the rector, and as the title to the leases is what is technically called 'slandered' by this claim, the leaseholders are bringing actions, in their turn, against the rector. Here, again, the evil temporal results of the purchase system are very marked. By the same purchase the rector became entitled to present to St. Thomas's Church, Stockport, and to the churches of Dukinfield, High Lane, Hyde, Marple, and Romiley. In Cheadle, the adjoining parish, the living was bought for the present rector by the lady whom he married. It includes the patronage of another church, which is held by the rector's brother. * * * Adjoining Cheadle

Mr. Edward Leatham

is Wilmslow, Sir Humphrey de Trafford is the owner, and being a Roman Catholic cannot present. For 216 years there has not been a presentation except by purchase. As soon as one appointment is made, the next presentation is sold. About 1824 the sudden illness of the rector (the Rev. Mr. Bradshaw) caused great alarm to the owner because the living had not been sold, and it is illegal to sell a living when vacant, or the rector is *in extremis*, but a purchaser in Manchester was luckily found; the owner, Mr. Trafford, was in the hunting field, and there executed the sale for £6,000. The Bishop refused to accept the clergyman, because the late rector had been *in articulo mortis*, having died very shortly after the sale was made. There were three actions to decide the question; but the House of Lords, 'in the interests of property,' ultimately decided against the Bishop. Constant war has been the normal state of the parish, and numberless pamphlets and papers have been issued by churchwardens and others, in one of which the churchwardens speak of 'this monstrous system of buying and selling the welfare of immortal souls.' And they ask, 'What is the purchasing of a living but spiritual domination on the one side, and spiritual slavery on the other?' The state of the Church and of the parish seems to me just what might have been expected from the existence of the system of purchase so many years. * * * Adjoining the last-mentioned parish is that of Prestbury, the mother church of the town of Macclesfield, which has latterly been sold, in next presentations only, by the Leghs of Adlington. The living was bought for the present vicar by his brother, and includes the patronage of the parishes of Bollington, Bosley, Rainow, Saltisford, and Winkle. These sales of sub-parishes are a most important part of the subject. Adjoining Prestbury is Astbury, the mother church of the town of Congleton, which was sold together with the presentations of Bug-Lawton, Mossley, Odd-Rode, and Smallwood. * * * The living was sold with others by the first Lord Crewe to pay the debts of his son. It is stated that when the living of Astbury was about to become vacant, one of the ladies of the Crewe family was allowed to stake it in a bet with one of the ladies of the Egerton family, the decision being made to depend upon a race between two caterpillars. * * * Adjoining Astbury is the parish of Sandbach. Early in the present century the Rev. J. Armstead bought the living, and in 1828 presented his son, who instituted a suit for vicarial tithes against his parishioners, and by this means raised the value of the living from £200 a-year to £1,600, the whole price for it being £1,500. The immemorial value of the living was shown by the fact that in an old trust deed creating scholarships at St. John's, Cambridge, the vicars of Sandbach were entitled to a prior claim for their sons 'on account of personal poverty,' showing that such claim was never at all anticipated for many generations. The vicar is also *ex-officio* patron of five other parishes, Sandbach, Heath, Goosbrey, Elworth, Church Hulme, and Wheelock, to the first two the brothers of the vicar being appointed."

Now, do not let anyone say that Mr. Herford selected a corner of the country which in these respects was very much worse than any other part. If everybody were as anxious to expose and condemn this system as Mr. Herford is, similar evidence would be forthcoming from every part of the Kingdom. The House may form some estimate of the prodigious volume of this traffic by a reference to the periodical Catalogues of Preferment which are issued by the recognized agents. Mr. Stark handed in three of these instructive works, which are published by himself—namely, *The Church Preferment Gazette*, containing particulars of 110 Advowsons and 22 next Presentations for sale; *The Private Patrons' Gazette*, with the requirements of 160 or 170 *bonâ fide* purchasers; and *The Benefice Exchange Register*, with particulars of about 350 Benefices for Exchange, many of which, however, are described as being also for sale. And, before I go any further, I should like just to remind the House that when we are dealing with spiritual property, exchange is always a prettier word than sale; but in the lips of the agents the terms are nearly convertible. On previous occasions I have proved this point by evidence; and I will now add a statement in confirmation which was made by Mr. Cox, of Belper, a gentleman who has mastered the subject in all its branches, and contributed very largely to its elucidation. He says—

> "23. I should like, if I might be allowed to do so, to state that, although the advertisements in *The Ecclesiastical Gazette* for sale have been stopped, they have not been stopped for exchange, and that the exchange, in many instances, is a mere cloak for the worst transactions that the agents engage in; for I know, of my own knowledge, that in several instances in which clergymen, in order to test the matter, since this alteration in *The Ecclesiastical Gazette*, have written to those agents who are now permitted to advertize exchanges, for particulars of the exchanges, they have received at the same time the lists of sales of advowsons."

But Mr. Stark's list of 132 benefices for sale and 350 for exchange represents only a part and a small part of this traffic. Mr. Cox handed in also Mr. Corbett's General Register of Church Preferment for Exchange, with particulars of 306 livings, 38 of which were for sale or exchange; but though the particulars of 306 only are given, Mr. Corbett states that he has 500 on his books. Mr. Cox handed in also Mr. Bagster's Monthly List of Church Preferment for Sale and Exchange, in which there were 95 benefices for sale, 311 for exchange, and 47 for either. He handed in also Mr. Ancona's List of Church Preferment for Sale, with particulars of 36 advowsons and next presentations, and the statement made by Mr. Ancona that since the last issue he had disposed of 22 livings. Mr. Cox also referred to Mr. James Beck's advertisements, five in number, and Messrs. Andrew and Son's, of which there were four. He stated further that the Oxford Ecclesiastical Society, established in 1872, do a genuine business in advowsons and exchanges, but that he had no list of theirs to produce. Now, if we except the business of the disreputable agents entirely, we arrive at between 1,400 and 1,500 as the aggregate number of livings which are up in the market either for sale or exchange, or both, at one and the same time—not very far from one-fourth of the whole private patronage of the Church—and a careful analysis of the catalogues shows that there are not many duplicate advertisements. Let the House bear in mind that this enormous traffic is moving through hands which are prepared to admit that the bulk of it is illegal, and that it is screened by false declarations taken without compunction. Hitherto we have been speaking of patrons and agents who are punctilious in their disregard of law and in their immorality, and who know how to draw the line somewhere, although not, perhaps, at perjury. Now, let me pass on to describe quite another class of business with which purists like Mr. Stark will not soil their fingers. Mr. Stark keeps a list of "Black Sheep." It is well understood in his office that no "black sheep" need apply. But do not let the House suppose that, therefore, "black sheep" are kept out of preferment. No, Sir; they enter in sable flocks. There are agents who cultivate expressly this particular branch of the Profession. They are men who are themselves branded with crime, and who seem to take quite a fatherly interest in criminals. Mr. Stark was asked these questions—

"2175. There being very disreputable agents, those parties who have been refused by you may go to one of those disreputable agents ?—Yes.

"2176. And those men being disreputable men will do disreputable work ?—Yes.

"2177. Therefore the effect of your caution is this—you send all the black sheep to these disreputable men ?—Unfortunately, very likely that is the result.

"2178. They will do this business which you decline ?—Yes.

"2179. Therefore, practically, your caution is not of much real benefit to the Church, because the dirty work can be done somewhere else ?—Yes."

Mr. Edward Leatham

And now let the House listen once more to Mr. Cox.

"53. Clerical agents are not always persons of perfectly respectable character, I believe ?—No.

"54. Have you any evidence to give to the Commission upon that point ?—In connection with two names I have. I know something of the character of the principals of two firms, both of whom are doing or have done a large business in this matter. Mr. Workman, *alias* Rawlins, has carried on, and still carries on, an extensive business as a clerical agent. He is in Holy Orders. His real name is Rawlins, but he passes under a dozen different aliases. One of his first notorious transactions as a clerical agent was with the Rev. N. K. in connection with a living in the diocese of———. He cheated Mr. N. K. out of £3,000, involved him in simony, and caused him to lose both living and money. Mr. N. K. now works as a day labourer, and is usually in the workhouse in the winter. In 1852 Rawlins, or Workman, was convicted of altering figures on a cheque from £8 to £80, and was sentenced to several years' penal servitude. On coming out of prison he at once set up as a clerical agent (he was a man of some family and private means), and he bought advowsons and next presentations of several livings; two or three of them, I am told, being openly purchased at auction in Tokenhouse Yard. He issued a monthly organ, *The Church and School Gazette*, published for several years at 56, Great Russell Street, Bloomsbury, and often had some young clergyman to assist him in the traffic as secretary. One of his plans was to advertise in *The Ecclesiastical Gazette* and elsewhere. I am quoting this bit of advertisement from *The Ecclesiastical Gazette* of December, 1869, which contains this sentence, which I ought to have mentioned in speaking of N. K.'s case—'Sequestrations, either threatened or enforced, may in many instances be relieved;' and he also inserted advertisements of loans of money to clergymen moving, &c. Thus he became acquainted with embarrassed clergy, and got many into his meshes, and used them as his tools. His frequent bankruptcy illustrates his character. In 1856 he was bankrupt in his true name of Rawlins, and then consigned to the Queen's Bench Prison for three months. In 1864, on the 9th of June, he was bankrupt in the name of 'James Murray Richard Rawlins, known as Richard Workman.' In March, 1875, he again passed through the Bankruptcy Court as 'Murray Richard Workman,' and perjured himself by swearing that he had never before been bankrupt or insolvent. I have referred to the Bankruptcy Court File, No. 71,349, for his last insolvency, and I found that the principal clerical creditors (all unsecured) were the Rev. R. H. Killick, Chadwell, Essex, £3,780;

Rev. G. H. Turner, Cambridge Gardens, Notting Hill, £4,500; the Rev. James Whatman, 26, Bridge Row, E.C., for a small amount; Rev. T. S., £1,200, who says that the money was advanced on a condition which has wholly failed,' and that he has 'received no satisfaction or security.' Among the secured creditors are Messrs. Makrell, Smith, and Hughes for £9,180 5*s*. 5*d*., secured on the advowsons of—1. Tarring Nevill, Essex; 2. South Heighton, Essex: 3. St. Phillips, Liverpool; 4. Newton St. Petrox, Devon; 5. Branksea, Dorset; 6. Upton Snodbury, Worcester; 7. Chadwell, Essex; 8. Patcham, Sussex; 9. Stopsley, near Luton; 10. Dodbrooke, Devon; and 11. Two pieces of land adjoining the Vicarage at Denton. Another creditor was secured for £700 on the advowson of Llanstadwell, Wales. How these advowsons got into his hands may be illustrated by following up one case, most of which information can be got from papers filed at the Bankruptcy Court. In 1871 the Rev. T. S. (then vacating the rectory of E.) paid over to Workman, through his solicitors, £1,200. He had already placed his rectory of E. in Workman's hands for 'exchange,' and the £1,200 was given in trust to Workman in order therewith to complete the purchase of a more valuable living for Mr. T. S. Such a living Mr. T. S. never obtained. He could get no redress; he was like N. K., involved in a simoniacal transaction, and his claim to be scheduled as a creditor on Workman's insolvent estate was disallowed by the Judge on the ground that the transaction was illegal, and hence he lost his rectory and his £1,200, and was comparatively beggared. Thus Workman became possessed of the rectory of E., and presented thereto the Rev. R. Y. Mr. R. Y. has actually allowed Workman to preach in E. church."

A few months ago a suit against him being still pending, there appeared a notice of the death of Rawlins in *The Times*. But I am assured that he has since been seen going about his business as usual, whether in the body I cannot tell, or out of the body I cannot tell.

"The principal (if not the sole proprietor) in another energetic firm is a man of notorious character. The firm under which title he works is a recently established but very energetic one, Messrs. Milward and Co., whom I have referred to already. They advertise largely in other papers besides *The Ecclesiastical Gazette*. At the time of the late Sheffield Church Congress they day by day advertised in the local dailies that they had advowsons for sale from £2,000 to £10,000, and they prominently advertised in the semi-official guide to the Church Congress. Their principal is the Rev. Samuel Shipley, late Vicar of Plungar, Bottesford, near Nottingham. In 1877 he had to leave his benefice on a charge of bigamy, having married a widow lady at St. George's, Hanover Square, when his own wife was living with him at Plungar. He also did business as a common usurer on the most disgraceful terms."

Milward & Co., now, I believe, going under the style of Taylor & Co., advertised 250 livings for exchange. But I have purposely excluded their livings and Workman's livings from my calculation, because I do not consider myself bound to accept in either case their own account of the extent of their business. Now, Sir, in reading the narrative of these gentlemen's exploits, if there be one thing which strikes us next to the rascality of the agent, it is the helplessness of the Bishop. Lord Sydney Godolphin Osborne, in the course of his evidence before the Select Committee, describes how this very Workman put "black sheep" after "black sheep" into benefices, and how the Bishop, though invariably warned of what was going on, was able to offer no resistance. But let us hear the Bishop of Peterborough before the Royal Commission, of which he was an indefatigable Member—

"1784. I should very much like, if the Commission will allow me, to relate to them four cases which occurred in my own diocese, in which the Bishop was compelled to institute persons who were utterly unfit for the parishes. They are four very remarkable cases, and I should like to have them recorded. The first was that of a paralytic, in my judgment incapable personally of performing the duties of the parish. * * * The second was a case of a man who some years previously had been a notorious drunkard; but his drunkenness and the notoriety of it had occurred beyond the limit of the Church Discipline Act two years, and I was advised that I could not refuse him institution. He was instituted to a parish within four miles of the scene of his previous drunkenness, which made him notorious, and which created a great scandal. The third was the case of a man 75 years of age, who obtained the appointment to a parish containing two considerable country towns, a laborious parish, and who, within six months after he was appointed, asked me to give him permanent leave of absence on account of physical infirmity, and that man I was obliged to institute. The last case was the case of a man who was obliged to resign his chaplaincy to a gaol because he dared not face a criminal accusation. * * * I may venture just to state this further to the Commission, that it was under the pressure of these four cases that I introduced my Bill upon the subject into the House of Lords."

Well, Sir, I venture to think that all this constitutes a very strong case against the whole purchase system. It is a case which is not to be met by any half measures, or by any attempt to close one of the avenues to fraud and crime, while you leave the other, and the broader and the more frequented one, wide open. I do not pretend to have exhausted the case. I have given the House a few specimens of the Evidence with which these Blue Books are filled. I have thought it sufficient, in proposing a Motion which is so purely preliminary in character, to give an outline merely of the case, although, perhaps, it is rather a strong outline. There are many phases of the question upon which I have been unable even to touch. I have said nothing of the disgust and horror which these sales produce among Nonconformists, of the shock to religious feeling, and of the contempt which is poured upon the Church. Nor have I touched upon many points upon which I have dwelt on previous occasions. I have said nothing of the shameful auctions which are constantly taking place, and at which the cure of souls is knocked down to the highest bidder like a bale of damaged wool. I have said nothing about the piquant advertisements over which the House has often laughed; the glowing descriptions of the piggeries and shrubberies at the rectory; of the paucity of labour and the plenitude of pay; of the real county society; of the propinquity of admirals and baronets; and the abundance of trout and rooks. I have said nothing of the warming-pan system, and of the old men crawling up into their pulpits to read themselves in by the aid of jelly and negus; or of the poor man of whom I read the other day, who complained

> "That his chances of preferment were gone; when it was supposed that he had a cancer, he was sounded with reference to four livings; but now that it was known that he only had a tumour patrons took no notice of him."

I have said nothing of all these things to-night, because they are only accessories, although very picturesque accessories, of the system. You may sweep them all away by legislation, and yet the question will remain precisely where it is now. You will still have the sale of a public trust. You will still have the clergy, with their disordered conscience, bargaining and huckstering over an office which you have clothed with a peculiar sanctity, and left rotting in the gutter of an illicit trade. But, perhaps, some hon. Member may say—"You have pointed out the disease; but you have not written the prescription." My answer is a very simple one. I am not one of the accredited physicians. I think it disgrace enough for the Church that a question which vitally affects her interests should be left year after year, and Parliament after Parliament, in the hands of an outsider. The Church is full of highly-paid and highly-gifted physicians. If you go into "another place," you may see the whole Faculty ranged upon benches. The Church is full also, as I have shown, of impotent folk, of maimed, halt, and withered morally; and it resembles Bethesda at least in this—that there is no one, except my hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope), to put these cripples into the pool. Sir, I hope that we shall hear something to-night from the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government. The last Government was not a reforming Government. My right hon. Friend the late Home Secretary (Sir R. Assheton Cross) admitted the truth of my case. He said that these transactions were worse than bribery. He was full of a godly indignation, and did nothing. The present Government is a reforming Government. It is in reform that it lives, and moves, and has its being. I think that we have some little right to complain, when we see it pushing its reforming fingers everywhere except into that warm nest of comfortable abuses which we call the Church of England. Perhaps my right hon. Friend at the head of the Government may say that we have had glimpses to-night of something which is more like an Augean stable than a nest; and that he is not Hercules. Yes; but my right hon. Friend knows where the waters of Alpheios are waiting. He knows that if even he, with all his zeal for reform, and all his zeal for the Church, and all his legislative wisdom, be unable to find a means for the removal of the corruption with which the stable reeks, sooner or later the waters will burst in of their own accord and sweep away not only the corruption, but perhaps the stable itself and all the sleek cattle which it contains. The hon. Gentleman concluded by moving his Resolution.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

> "That, in the opinion of this House, the simoniacal evasions of the law, and other scandals connected with the exercise and disposal of private patronage in the Church of England, are such as to call for remedial measures of the most stringent and radical character."—(*Mr. Edward Leatham.*)

MR. STUART-WORTLEY said, he rose to move the Amendment which stood on the Paper in the name of his hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope)—namely, after the word "House," to insert the following words:—

> "The Reports of the Select Committee of the House of Lords on Church Patronage, and of the Royal Commission on the sale, exchange, and resignation of Ecclesiastical Benefices, disclose evils connected with the exercise and disposal of Church Patronage which call for legislation at the earliest possible moment."

In rising to move this Amendment, he thought he had a double claim upon the indulgence of the House, because he was not only representing the position which would have been taken up by his hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lincolnshire if he had not been called away by urgent affairs, but he was also representing the position which he had occupied as Secretary of the Royal Commission, whose Report was now under examination. He was certainly inclined to view with a great deal of distrust the object with which the Motion of his hon. Friend the Member for Huddersfield (Mr. Leatham) had been presented to the House. He was even inclined to look with some suspicion upon the quarter of the House from which this Motion proceeded. There was a good deal that was significant in the way in which the unsavoury details recited by his hon. Friend had been received by hon. Members around him. He (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) wished he could see in the way these details had been received a little more desire for purification and a little less zeal for destruction. He hoped he might credit so good a Churchman in his acts, if not in his professions, as his hon. Friend with a sincere desire to reform the Church of England and to remove the abuses, the existence of which within her pale he (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) would be the last to deny. By the terms of his Motion, his hon. Friend stood committed to the declaration that if the Church could be purified in respect of these matters it would be better for the State that she should continue to exist. As to the scandals touched upon by his hon. Friend, they had been before the House and the country for years. There was nothing in the evidence taken by the Royal Commissioners, as reported in November 1879, that was new to the country or, indeed, to the Commissioners themselves. The same sort of evidence was given before a Select Committee of the House of Lords in 1874. Most of the details on which the hon. Member for Huddersfield had dwelt were contained in the Blue Book, and there was little or nothing that was new in them. The facts relating to the abuses surrounding the traffic in Church livings were only too painfully familiar. Nor was there anything new in the character of the speech of his hon. Friend. The hon. Member, as the House well knew, was a zealous reformer in those matters, and that was not the first time he had pressed his views in respect to them upon the attention of the House. In the same manner, and with the same attractiveness of detail, his hon. Friend had urged upon the last Parliament the pressing need of reform. He could have wished, however, that his hon. Friend, instead of seeking to commit the House to this vaguely declamatory Resolution, had directed his energies into some channel which would have resulted in some definite scheme of practical legislation. To-night if, instead of venting impotently their wrath in Motions more or less hysterically worded, they were engaged in the work of removing abuses which they all admitted to exist, it would be much more satisfactory. It was for that reason that he ventured to submit to the House the Amendment which he invited the House to affirm—namely, that what was needed, at the present moment, was not so much a declaration that remedies were necessary which were surrounded by certain attributes, including that somewhat unpalatable word "radical;" but that something in the nature of specific legislation was necessary. He ventured to ask why it was that the hon. Member for Huddersfield, during all the years he had been so laboriously, and with so much sincerity, investigating the subject, had not presented some specific or remedy, which commended itself to him, for the approval of the House, and had not asked the House to give legislative effect to his particular views? He (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) trusted that this evening he would hear some announcement from Her Majesty's Government, as to the view they took of the question —a question which he certainly did not intend to be behind the hon. Member in estimating as one of the first magnitude. Knowing, perhaps, more than anyone in the House except the hon. Member himself of the evidence in the Blue Book, which had been passed in review to-night, it behoved him to examine some of the statements which had been made in regard to that evidence. It was evident that his hon. Friend had laid hold of all the most important and attractive particulars in that evidence; and if they were to be taken by themselves—if hon. Members were merely to read these extracts from the evidence, which generally formed part of the pamphlet in which the hon. Member subsequently published his speeches, unaccompanied by the entire text, they would by no means be able to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion as to the facts of the case. He had already stated that the evidence given before the Royal Commissioners contained nothing new. All the painful and unpalatable facts discussed by the witnesses who were called before the Royal Commissioners in 1879 practically amounted to nothing that was not known before; indeed, he might inform the House that even before the Commission sat those very facts were all given in evidence before a Select Committee of the House of Lords in 1874; and, as far as the evidence before the Royal Commission was concerned, it was, in a great majority of cases, the evidence of volunteers. He did not believe himself that the recommendations of the Commissioners were in the slightest degree affected by the evidence they heard. The state of the traffic was thoroughly well known to the Commissioners before a single word of the evidence was given. The hon. Member had referred to the fact that a great deal of Mr. Stark's evidence stood uncontradicted. He (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) was certainly not there to contradict Mr. Stark's evidence; but, at the same time, he might say that if every assertion made in the course of Mr. Stark's evidence was taken to be a positive fact because it happened to be uncontradicted, the House would be in danger of falling into a very grave error. Mr. Stark was the last witness called by the Commission. He was called at his own request, in consequence of his belief that his proceedings had been reflected upon by other witnesses, which was undoubtedly the case; and the Commissioners gave him the opportunity of giving such explanations as he thought proper. But it was undesirable that the Commissioners should continue to sit for an indefinite period, and that might have been the case if they had called for explanations from all the persons who were reflected upon by the evidence of Mr. Stark. It was not for the Commissioners to constitute themselves into a judicial tribunal for the trial of issues of a personal character. If such had been the case, the labour of the Royal Commissioners would have been protracted indefinitely, and that was the reason why a great deal of Mr. Stark's evidence stood unexplained and uncontradicted. His hon. Friend the Member for Huddersfield said that Mr. Stark's evidence was in favour, not of further restrictions in the law regarding Church patronage, but of a relaxation of the law itself. That was true; and Mr. Stark avowed himself a free trader, and thought there should be no restriction to prevent the patron from dealing with his own benefice; but it did not follow that the Royal Commissioners adopted any such view; and if the hon. Member would take the trouble to examine the evidence published by the Royal Commissioners, and also the recommendations they made, he would find that some of the dignitaries of the Church to whom his hon. Friend had paid a very doubtful compliment that night were not at all behind the hon. Member in their zeal for the reform of the patronage laws of the Church. Mr. Bedford gave evidence that he held an advowson which had been in his family from the days of Queen Elizabeth; he was a descendant of the original tenant or holder of the benefice, and he might, if he had chosen, been enjoying the whole fruits of the benefice; but, instead of that, he had divided it into four districts, and the income which he personally enjoyed as incumbent was probably divided by four. His hon. Friend, in the charge he preferred against the incumbent in this case, altogether misconceived the nature of the facts. Another witness, Mr. Meredith, was supposed to speak in strong condemnation of the great frequency with which the clergy in Holy Orders acquired patronage and accumulated it in their own hands. He (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) deplored that fact; but he wished to draw attention to this circumstance also, that the witness in question came to complain of the evils of episcopal patronage, and to impress upon the Royal Commission that there was no evil so great as that the patronage should be in the hands of the Bishops, because they exercised it more from favouritism than in the public interest. This witness underwent a severe cross-examination, and it turned out that his motives in attacking a certain Prelate were by no means of a patriotic or public spirited character. It was fallacious to talk of the state of traffic by the mere number of advowsons which appeared in the published lists. It would be just as wise to go round to the books of every house agent in London, and conclude from the total number added up in arithmetical progression that they properly represented the total number of house properties for sale within a given area. It was just the same in regard to Church livings; and, as a proof of this assertion, he would only refer to Question 2,279, in which Mr. Stark admitted that the largest number of sales he had had in any one year was 40, which fell very far below the number given in his published catalogue. The question of the admission of black sheep into the Church on account of the laxity of the laws surrounding the law of patronage was a serious one; but it would be dealt with much better by strengthening the hands of the Bishops as to the refusal of presentees than by altering the law in regard to the sale of patronage, or by any amount of declamation in that House as regarded the practices which were connected with the sale. He confessed that it did seem to him to be irrelevant to the question now at issue before the House to try to make out that those who were outside the pale of the Church of England were the monopolists of morality, and that no ministers of any denomination ever found their way into the dock of a Criminal Court except those of the Church of England. They had been told that the late Government was not a reforming Government. He, for one, heartily wished they had accepted the opportunity which was presented to them of dealing with this subject. In the year 1875, a Bill was brought down from the House of Lords, founded on the Report of a Select Committee of that House, which might, at all events, have afforded an opportunity for an attempt to deal with some part of the subject. He knew that that Bill would not have satisfied his hon. Friend the Member for Huddersfield; but it would have removed some of the principal sources of the evils complained of. Why it was that the subject had been referred to a Royal Commission he (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) did not know; but, having been referred to a Royal Commission, he asked the House to remember what the Report of that Royal Commission was. The Report only appeared in the month of August, 1879, and it was not circulated to the public until the following November. Consequently, in the few months which remained of the late Parliament, there was scarcely any time for the late Government to take up the subject. But why the present Government, with the Report of the Royal Commission ready to their hands, had not thought proper to deal with the subject, was a fitting question for the hon. Member for Huddersfield to inquire into. There were reasons which readily suggested themselves why the Government had not taken up the question. He would not detain the House by speculations upon that matter. He sincerely hoped that, when the subject did come to be dealt with by some more satisfactory mode than a Resolution of that House, the principle would be established and recognized that patronage in the Church of England should be regarded not so much in the nature of property as in the nature of a trust of the very highest and most sacred nature. It was only by affirming these principles, and giving the fullest possible legislative effect to them, that they would succeed in securing that which was the best interest of the Church of England—namely, that she should become essentially national and popular. He begged to move the Amendment which stood on the Paper in the name of his hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lincolnshire.

MR. J. G. TALBOT said, that in rising to second the Amendment of his hon. Friend the Member for Sheffield (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) he must apologize for detaining the House at that late hour. He did so because he thought it was not desirable that the debate should close without one voice being heard on behalf of the English Universities. By an unfortunate series of circumstances, there was no other Member for any of the English Universities present. The recent affliction he had suffered, which was the cause of the absence of his right hon. Friend the Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Beresford Hope), they all deplored, and his right hon. Friend and Colleague in the representation of the University of Oxford (Sir John Mowbray) was detained at home by illness. It was, therefore, only seemly that he should, however imperfectly, second the Amendment of his hon. Friend the Member for Sheffield. The House was to be congratulated on the fact that the tone of the debate differed favourably from that which it had assumed on other and similar occasions. The hon. Member for Huddersfield (Mr. Leatham), who, as they knew, took a strong view of the question, had not regaled them with those spicy and unsavoury anecdotes which had been allowed to encumber the question before; but had brought the subject forward in a more serious tone than upon former occasions, and on that account the hon. Member commanded more sympathy on that (the Opposition) side of the House with the object he had in view. The hon. Gentleman opposite was quite mistaken if he thought that he had a monopoly of indignation on the subject of simoniacal transactions. He could assure the hon. Gentleman that there was not one of those who sat on the opposite side of the House who sympathized with what they believed to be the true interests of the Church of England who did not feel as strongly as he did, at the very least, with regard to those gross and crying evils; but he ventured to put it to the hon. Member and to the House that he had painted in black colours—not too black, he admitted—the special evils which the hon. Gentleman had disclosed; but he (Mr. Leatham) had painted his picture so darkly, and refused to admit anything but the darkness he had disclosed, so that he had rather left upon the House and the country, if they accepted his picture, the unfavourable impression that the cases which he had detailed were fair samples of the ordinary practices of the Church of England. That was what he (Mr. J. G. Talbot) complained of. He did not believe it could be maintained for a single moment that the state of patronage, on the whole, in the Church of England was a discreditable state of things; nor did he think the hon. Member could deny that the conduct of the clergy of the Church of England, as a whole, was of the most praiseworthy description. He believed there was no body of men in this country, or in any other country, who devoted a larger amount of time to better objects for lower remuneration than the clergy of the Church of England. He felt bound, as having the great honour in that House of representing a large number of the clergy, to put that lighter and brighter picture before the House. The hon. Gentleman had used such words as "the state of the clerical conscience," as if the whole of the clerical conscience was involved in the dark sins which he had depicted. Of course, if that was a true picture, there would be nothing more to be said for the Church of England; but the cases cited by the hon. Gentleman were exceptions, and by no means the rule. Then the hon. Member used the phrase "simoniacal upstarts." That was a very strong expression. He did not wish to defend any of those who were engaged in any of those nefarious practices; but he thought the hon. Gentleman a little confused matters when he brought into this subject the most difficult and delicate question of the relation of the clergy with the Bishops and Courts of Law. If his (Mr. J. G. Talbot's) opinion was correct, it was not by any means the clergy who were engaged in these questionable pecuniary transactions who took part in disputes on matters of doctrine and ritual. Those who were engaged in these nefarious practices took very little trouble about doctrinal matters, and were content with the very smallest and dullest round of obligatory duties. Therefore, he did not imagine they were likely to be involved in a collision with the Courts on doctrinal questions. The hon. Gentleman had therefore confused those two very difficult questions; but the most serious complaint he (Mr. J. G. Talbot) had to make against the hon. Member was this. He appeared before the House as a champion of ecclesiastical purity. He went with the hon. Gentleman to a very great extent, and wished to co-operate with him, if the hon. Gentleman would allow him. But the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope), whose absence to-night they all regretted, had also tried to grapple with this question, and had, at least, given some practical exemplification of his views. That Bill was down for second reading on Wednesday, the 6th of April, and against it there appeared on the Order Book a Notice of Opposition in the name of Mr. Edward Leatham. That seemed to show that the hon. Gentleman was not so very anxious to improve and reform the Church; but when a practical scheme was presented for dealing with Church patronage, then the hon. Member proposed to move, "That it be read a second time that day six months." If that was a practical exemplification of the hon. Gentleman's views, he could not say that he cared much for his theories; he hoped that in future they would have the hon. Gentleman for a supporter of the Amendment which the hon. Member for Sheffield had so ably proposed to-night; and that, when they came to any practical remedy for the present unhappy state of things, they would have the hon. Member for Huddersfield assisting, and not thwarting, any measures submitted for that purpose. The hon. Gentleman was not quite fair in implying that nothing had been done, or attempted to be done, in this matter. As long ago as 1870, his right hon. Friend the late Home Secretary (Sir R. Assheton Cross) brought in a Bill for prohibiting the sale of next presentations; and he remembered that in one of his earliest efforts in that House he had the pleasure of supporting his right hon. Friend. He did not know whether the hon. Member for Huddersfield was in his place at that time; but he did not remember that the hon. Gentleman took any part in that attempt to assist the Church in getting rid of one of its abuses. Again, a Bill was brought down from the House of Lords during the last Parliament, which had the support of Members of the Episcopal Bench. The hon. Gentleman had amused the House to-night with a description of the appearance which the Bench of Bishops presented, rather implying that they were beautiful to look at, but useless in their functions. He (Mr. J. G. Talbot) did not know what the fairness of extreme Liberals might be; but it seemed to him that it would have been a little more fair, when the Bishops came forward in such a matter, not to indulge in sarcastic jeers at their expense; but rather to recognize the effort which they made, and to put it down to their credit. The hon. Gentleman would approach the subject in a happier and more hopeful frame of mind if he could for a moment discard ecclesiastical prejudices. If the hon. Gentleman and his Friends really wished to help Churchmen to remove abuses in the Church, let them not cast sneers at those who endeavoured to remove them; but rather heartily co-operate and join hands in the same good work. He hoped that one good result of to-night's short debate would be this—that they would have from Her Majesty's Government some declaration of their views on the question. The Government were in a very strong position in this matter. They were, of course, a very strong Government, with a very strong majority at their back. ["No!"] Well, they had not a very large majority last night; but they had last week. They had another great advantage, which could not be denied, in having at their head a right hon. Friend of his, whom he was proud to call his friend, and who, besides being a very strong supporter of all that was Liberal and progressive, was also a very ardent member of the Church of England; and there was no one who could more easily, if he would give his great energies to the task, carry through a measure of Ecclesiastical Reform of the best kind in this House than the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister. Therefore, the House to-night had an opportunity, which they did not often possess, of eliciting from Her Majesty's Government what he hoped would be a satisfactory solution of the question. He was very sorry that the question had come on at this particular part of the evening; but it could not be helped, because other matters had intervened. Two or three hours had been wasted by the Government in proposing a Private Bill, which was afterwards withdrawn; but he only referred to that circumstance because it would be unfortunate for the House and the country if they went away under the impression that the only thing that could be said on the matter was the speech of the hon. Member for Huddersfield. While giving the hon. Member full credit for the beneficence of his intentions, he thought the matter ought to be more fairly and fully discussed; and, in seconding the Amendment, he would repeat his sincere hope that they would receive from the Government a satisfactory declaration on this important subject.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "House" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "the Reports of the Select Committee of the House of Lords on Church Patronage, and of the Royal Commission on the sale, exchange, and resignation of Ecclesiastical Benefices, disclose evils connected with the exercise and disposal of Church Patronage which call for legislation at the earliest possible moment,"—(*Mr. Stuart Wortley*,)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. GLADSTONE said, his hon. Friend had made a very fair appeal to him; and, indeed, he thought it would be unfortunate if, in the present state of things, this debate should end in a division. For the purposes of the present discussion, he might divide the House into three sections. There was, first, the section to which his hon. Friend the Member for Huddersfield belonged, who described himself as acting in the character of a Nonconformist in this House. It was an eminently satisfactory state of things when they saw a Gentleman in that position, who might fairly say, if he was so disposed—"It is no part of my duty to remove the abuses in the Church, as I can carry on my warfare against it more conveniently and advantageously while those abuses remain in existence." It was a very hopeful thing to see the hon. Member come forward and endeavour, no doubt in perfect good faith, to induce the House to adopt a Resolution in favour of ending these abuses. Of hon. Gentlemen opposite he could only say that they, and many on the Ministerial side also, were of opinion that the Church Establishment ought to be preserved; and from those who held that opinion, and all others, it was to me expected that they should be in earnest in this matter. If his hon. Friend the Member for Huddersfield failed in his object, he could fall back upon his general principles, and say—"I will get rid altogether of the mischief which I have been unable to abate." But they, on the contrary, if their efforts to cure these abuses failed, ought to bear the whole burden and the whole odium and scandal of failure in their endeavours. They, therefore, were in a position of the highest obligation to labour in this cause; and he must say that obligation had been owned on more occasions than one. It had been owned by the right hon. Gentleman the late Home Secretary in a former year, and during the present year by the hon. Member for Sheffield (Mr. Stuart-Wortley), who had addressed the House that night with so much ability, and by those who were his fellow-labourers in the measure they had laid upon the Table. Then there was, thirdly, the Government of the day. It was, undoubtedly, their duty—whether they were Conservative or Liberal, without prejudice to other claims, and even, it might be, in particular instances, to higher claims and other duties with which they were more especially engaged—to assist any intelligent and earnest endeavour to amend any of the institutions of the country; and certainly not least an institution so important as the National Church. The House was, therefore, he thought, in a state of remarkable union as to the Main Question; and it would be a great pity if, upon differences so small as these were, which had to be decided by the aid of the microscope, between the Motion and the Amendment, they were to go into opposite Lobbies for the purpose of emphasizing those differences. His hon. Friend who made the Motion appeared to have rather wickedly introduced into it one or two epithets to give it a flavour. That was, no doubt, perfectly fair on his part; but at the same time, when it came to a question of a solemn form of declaration, he felt quite sure that his hon. Friend would be disposed to rest satisfied with the approval and sympathy that his address had elicited in regard to his general object, and would not push, in effect, his particular attitude to the extent of a division, which might have the result of rejecting the Amendment that had been moved. He must say, in one respect, he preferred the Motion to the Amendment; for the hon. Member for Huddersfield, although he dwelt very much on the condemnation of the clerical conscience, said, with very great truth, that these abuses were abuses of private patronage. That was a very important matter to recollect. In regard to public patronage, no doubt that was open to criticism; but ever since the scandalous case of the Dean of York, it had never been before this country in connection with these gross and foul proceedings.

It was impossible, he admitted, to overstate the demoralizing effect of transactions of this kind upon the clergy connected with them. He did not think that any language, even the language of the hon. Member for Huddersfield, could exaggerate those mischiefs. On the other hand, it was only just to record that that portion of the clergy which was personally condemned in that way was an extremely small proportion; and most certainly one ought to bear testimony that men who were zealous in their own sense on questions of Ritual and doctrine were not men of that stamp at all. The men who engaged in simoniacal transactions were men who were much more conversant with the matters of this world and questions of temporal advantage, than with the decision of questions on which more conscientious persons were divided among themselves. His hon. Friend (Mr. J. G. Talbot) had made a warm appeal to the Government to take up this question. They were in the habit of hearing such appeals from time to time, and, no doubt, it was a proof of the confidence of the House in the Government, when they passed Resolutions that the Government ought to do this, that, and the other. It was a proof, as the hon. Member for Oxford University said, that the Government were strong in the confidence of the House. [“No!” “Hear, hear!” *and laughter.*] His hon. Friend said the Government were weak last night, and that was very true; but the hon. Gentleman forgot that last night they had to face a formidable institution, which might almost be termed a Land League. With regard to their opportunities of dealing with the present question, he would remind his hon. Friend that it was impossible to make two blades of grass grow in the same place; and the Government could not by any possibility take up some new question of legislation without displacing some other project of legislation. He should be very glad indeed if he saw a likelihood that they might approach this question; but that likelihood was, unfortunately, rather remote. What, then, was their practical duty at the present moment? Hon. Members were remarkably united, it appeared, in mind, admitting—whether they approved of the Established Church or not, and probably a very large majority of the House hoped that it might very long exist—admitting that while the Establishment continued to exist, these scandals ought, if possible, to be removed. He must say that he hoped, though it might be desirable that the question should be dealt with by the Government, that the House would not absolutely refuse to look at the Bill which was brought in by the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope), simply on account of the fact that it was not brought in by the Government. He could not undertake to give an opinion on the merits of the Bill, as he had not had time to examine it with the care and attention that would be necessary. But he must say, though, perhaps, it might seem to be beginning at the wrong end, that if the last clause, which aimed at prohibiting the sale of next presentations, apart from the whole advowson—if that clause were passed and nothing else, he ventured to say that the Bill would offer great benefit to the country. He thought that an acknowledgment should be given to his hon. Friend for the Motion he had brought forward; but that they should not be called upon to draw the nice distinction that might be made between the Motion and the Amendment; and that, considering that there was a practical Bill before the House, they might refrain, on this particular occasion, from making any abstract assertion, either in the form of a Motion or an Amendment. They might, he thought, very well dispense themselves from that now; but when they came to the opportunity of considering the Bill which was before the House they would, he hoped, earnestly and heartily examine it, with a view to extracting from it whatever they could of matter which was valuable for the important object it had in view.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: I am very glad to have had an opportunity of hearing what has just fallen from the Prime Minister; and, so far as I am concerned, I would strongly recommend the course he has advised. I can conceive that we are all practically at one on the object we have in view; but I do not think we need go to a division, either on the Motion or the Amendment, and I should advise my hon. Friend behind me to withdraw the Amendment, if the Mover of the Motion is also willing to withdraw. I think the proposal of the Prime Minister is absolutely sound.

We really want to get rid of a great abuse. So long as the Church of England lasts—and I am one who hopes that it will last for generations and generations—we want to get rid of abuses existing in it; and I think the advice of the Prime Minister is sound, when he says we have a Bill before us; let us discuss the question when the Bill comes before us, with the common purpose of doing all that we can to attain the object of the Movers of the Motion and the Amendment. The hon. Member the Mover of the Motion referred to myself as having taken action on this matter. I had long felt that it was one of the greatest abuses in the Church of England; and in 1870 I brought forward a Bill which I succeeded in passing through this House; but it did not become law. I suppose the country, at that time, was not ready to pass the Bill into law, and I received a shower of abuse, which I never received before or since. Now, however, I believe all those who showered that abuse upon me have come to the same opinion as the Prime Minister—namely, one of regret that that Bill was not passed into law. That Bill was aimed solely at one point, to which the Prime Minister has alluded; and I believe that, even if that alone had been carried, we should, at the present moment, hear very little of abuses in the Church of England, so far as advowsons are concerned. That Bill was directed against next presentations, and I do not think that introduced any novel law, but only recurred to the old practice of not allowing next presentations to be sold. I was strengthened in that opinion by the present Lord Coleridge, who said that the Bill was really a return to the old system. I do not believe there was the slightest attack upon property in any form or shape; it showed exactly what the trust in the property was, and how, in the exercise of that trust, persons who possessed it could entirely preserve their rights. There is one point which I also think a great evil, but which has not been alluded to in this debate. I cannot help saying that I think the whole principle of the question of donatives is one which ought to be dealt with. With regard to the result of the Bill of 1870, do not let us think that because it was not passed into law it has not brought forth fruit. I believe that that Bill, having passed this House, worked great effect in the minds of a great number of persons concerned in the matter; and some years afterwards this matter was brought forward in the House of Lords, and that House passed another Bill which they sent to this House, but which this House did not pass. My hon. Friend behind me (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) asks why the Royal Commission was appointed if the House of Lords had dealt with the matter. I will explain how that was, because I had a great deal to do with it. The Bishop of Peterborough, who had taken great interest in the matter, came to the conclusion that the House of Commons, having passed one Bill remedying defects in one way, the House of Lords having passed another Bill remedying the same defects in another way, it was better, instead of fighting the question out in the House, to refer the whole question to a Royal Commission to decide which way was the best. Now, what has been the result of the Royal Commission? The Royal Commission has not put aside either one or the other. The Royal Commissioners said there was great justice in both Bills; and in their Report I find that they strongly recommend all the provisions of the Bill I brought forward in 1870, and also a great number of the provisions of the Bill of the Bishop of Peterborough in the House of Lords. I do not wish at this hour of the night to detain the House further; but I have no doubt that there is a great abuse which ought to be dealt with. I regret very much that the Prime Minister, while I sympathize with the Government in the difficulties they have in hand, would not give the touch of his hand now to settle the slight differences between the several parties, who are practically agreed. I do hope that in the present Session the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope) will have an opportunity of bringing forward his Bill, and that it will be fully discussed. When it is discussed I can promise the Mover of this Motion that I will give all the help I can to facilitate the removal of what I consider one of the greatest abuses of the Church of England. I hope he will give his assistance—with all the research he has bestowed on the subject—so that we may be able to come to some conclusion. But I must still make one appeal to the Government. If the Government find that the House are practically agreed upon this question, but that it does want a magic hand to lift them over that particular bridge, I hope the Prime Minister will not be slow to lend that hand—in order that, before the Session is over, we may arrive at some conclusion. What form that may take I cannot say; but I do hope that we may rely on the Prime Minister to give us that helping hand, and I believe we shall then do the greatest possible service to the Church and to the country at large. With regard to the Mover of the Motion, I may express the pleasure with which I have noticed the change in his tone. I have very often listened to speeches of the hon. Member with which I have been compelled to differ; but I must thank him for the tone in which he has brought the matter before the House; and I look upon that change as a favourable augury for the success of that which we all have in view.

Colonel MAKINS wished to defend the hon. Member (Mr. Leatham) from the strictures of the hon. Member for the University of Oxford (Mr. J. G. Talbot), who had expressed his surprise at seeing the hon. Member's name on the Paper as opposing the Bill of the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope). That he considered a most natural proceeding. He believed the hon. Member wished to see an end to this scandal in the Church; but he would appeal to him not to allow his partiality for the subject to stand in the way of that being effected, and to remove his Notice of Amendment to the Bill of the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire, especially after what the Prime Minister had said, as to giving an opportunity for the discussion of the subject with a view to putting an end this Session, if possible, to a scandal which all agreed was one of the greatest hindrances to the good of the Church.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH said, it seemed to him that as the hon. Member was friendly to the Bill not now before the House dealing with this and other abuses in the Church, he might withdraw his Motion, and allow the House to consider the Bill itself with their hands altogether untied. He would appeal to his hon. Friend to take that course, because it was taken a little too much for granted that Gentlemen who were within the pale of the Church of England had an exclusive right to discuss practical questions of reform in that Church. Many others, however, had the opinion that the abuses under consideration, and many other evils which had not been pointed out, were inherent to a State Establishment; and that if a tithe of the abuses which had been brought to light by the Committee of the House of Lords and the Royal Commission had existed in our civil institutions, Heaven and earth would have been moved that they might be rooted out and not be perpetuated. On the other hand, if it had been the case of a Church not connected with the State, such abuses never could have grown to the magnitude and enormity of the scandal under discussion. It was wholly on account of the hybrid character of the Established Church that these things grew up to such magnitude that it seemed almost impossible to deal with them and prevent the mischief which arose from them.

Mr. J. G. HUBBARD was sure that the speech of the hon. Member for Huddersfield (Mr. Leatham) had been heard with great pleasure and interest by every Member of the House, whether he was a member of the Church of England or not. Many members of the Church might ask what right Nonconformists had to trouble themselves with plans for improving or regulating the Church; but that was not his doctrine at all. He believed that every Member of that House, and every Englishman, had an inherent right and interest in the character and the conduct and the position of the Church of England. As good citizens, they must desire to correct whatever was defective in an institution which had so powerful an influence on the morality and character of the people. The hon. Member who had just spoken assumed that the evils which all deplored were the result of the Church of England being in connection with the State; but he (Mr. J. G. Hubbard) absolutely disbelieved in that view. If that connection had been the cause it would have been found that it was not private patronage that was at fault, but public patronage. It would have been a patronage exercised by the Bishops, by the Prime Minister, by the Lord Chancellor, and by the Crown. The evils complained of resulted from the untruthful and dishonest conduct of persons who pursued a traffic contrary to the law of the land. He went entirely with his hon. Friend in his endeavour to promote some measure to remedy those abuses. As to the character of the abuses, simony, strictly defined, was nothing less than the purchase and sale of spiritual things—that was Holy Orders; but it was impossible to have a real case of simony unless the Bishop concurred in the act. It was an action in which the gift of Holy Orders was purchased with money. Laymen may, at present, legally buy and sell Church patronage—but if the clergy buy presentations or advowsons for their own advantage, they break the law, and their declarations that they have committed no simoniacal act, though they may be literally true, are dishonest, inasmuch as they commit acts, designated and prohibited as simoniacal by the law of the land. After all, the real remedies remained with the Bishops themselves; for, although a man might be a patron by inheritance or by purchase, he could not put a priest into an incumbency; he could only present his nominee to the Bishop, and then the matter rested with the Bishop, whose duty it was to see whether a man was fit or unfit for the post he aspired to. If it was said that hitherto the Bishops had been helpless in the matter, then let Parliament give them more power, and let Churchmen assist them in cases where their authority was resisted. He knew a case in the Midland Counties where the Bishop was urged to appoint a man who had only been nominated for the purpose of making the living saleable. The person nominated was a man of advanced age; the Bishop refused to make the appointment, and was, in consequence, threatened with an action. Fortunately, the Bishop was strong in the confidence of the laity and clergy of his diocese, and they rallied round him with the assurance that they would support him in resisting this aggression upon his functions. The question was never brought to an issue, for the candidate died, and the difficulty ended; but the case showed that the Bishop had the power of resisting in a case of this kind, and that, if necessary, Parliament should strengthen his hands. He would not prolong the discussion now; but if they had to consider the Bill of the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope) by-and-bye, he trusted that it would be with some hope of carrying it to a successful issue, and that the hon. Member for Huddersfield would render assistance in pressing it through into a successful Act of Parliament.

Mr. LYULPH STANLEY said, it was, of course, a matter for the judgment of the hon. Member whether he would withdraw his Motion or not; but he wished to enter a word of not exactly protest, but caution, with regard to what was assumed too much on the other side as to what would be the consequence of the views some hon. Members held on the subject of the sale of livings. They all agreed as to the evil; but they might differ as to the remedy, and it was because they differed as to the remedy that it ought not to be supposed that his hon. Friend should withdraw his blocking Notice for the purpose of giving facilities for making progress with the Bill referred to—a measure which, in his judgment, went the wrong way to work to effect reforms. What he said was this—and it was more particularly in consequence of the last speech they had heard that he wished to make the observation—that hon. Members on the other side of the House looked too much to the episcopal authority for checking the evil; whereas, on the other hand, many hon. Members would like to see them got rid of by proper parochial or congregational control. These hon. Members did not want it to be supposed that they were ready to give facilities for legislation to increase the power of the Bishops whilst they were looking in the opposite direction for reform.

Mr. LEATHAM said, that he found it very difficult to resist the appeal which had been made to him by his right hon. Friend at the head of the Government, by his hon. Friend behind him (Mr. Illingworth), and, indeed, from all sides of the House. He thought, however, that in responding to that appeal he had some right to hope that the Government would give facilities to his hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lincolnshire in order that they might have a full discussion of the whole question. If this were done he would withdraw his Motion, with the conviction that it had not been inoperative.

Mr. GLADSTONE: With the indulgence of the House, I should like to make a reference to an appeal which has been made by several hon. Members. We have every disposition to accede to it if we could do so with justice to our other duties; but its practicability must depend on the question whether or not the Bill is to go into Committee containing a great deal of disputable matter—matter on which there will be a serious difference of opinion. If the Bill contains a great number of clauses, and there is much difference of opinion with regard to them, it would not, I am sure, be possible for us to give facilities for the discussion; but if the measure is brought before us in a simple form, which will be generally acceptable to the House and will not lead to much discussion, I must say, considering the importance of the matter, it will be our duty to give the necessary facilities.

Amendment and Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

CHESHIRE SALT DISTRICTS COMPENSATION BILL.

Viscount EMLYN, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. LYULPH STANLEY, and Sir HENRY TYLER, nominated Members of the Committee:—And Three to be added by the Committee of Selection.—(*Lord Richard Grosvenor.*)

House adjourned at a quarter after One o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 30*th March,* 1881.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*Second Reading*—Inclosure Provisional Order (Thurstaston Common)* [122]; Metropolitan Open Spaces Act (1877) Amendment [9]; Infectious Diseases Notification (Ireland) [40]; Elections (Closing of Public Houses) [58], *debate adjourned;* Municipal Corporation Act (1859) Amendment [25].

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

METROPOLITAN OPEN SPACES ACT (1877) AMENDMENT BILL.—[BILL 9.]

(*Mr. W. H. James, Mr. Bryce.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. W. H. JAMES, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that the Metropolis was not so well provided with open spaces as many of our Provincial towns, and his Bill was an endeavour to remedy that defect. Anyone who looked at a map of the Metropolis would see that open spaces abounded most where they were least needed. At the West End there were many squares which would be affected by the Bill; but in the North and East, where the population was densest, and they were most required, hardly any spaces were to be found for the recreation and health of the people. London compared unfavourably in that respect, not only with some of our Provincial towns, but with Paris, which no one could see without being struck by the arrangements made for the adornment of its central portion. The Bill itself consisted of three general provisions. The first affected squares which were regulated by Acts of Parliament; the next related to squares which, for the purposes of the Bill, might be called "private squares," which belonged to the owner of the soil or the ground landlord, but in which the neighbouring lessees had rights; and, thirdly, the disused burial-grounds in the Metropolis, of which there was a great number since the Act relating to the closing of graveyards became law. Roughly speaking, the area which would be affected by the Bill was about a seven-mile radius from St. Paul's Churchyard as the centre. He had been unable to find out how many squares the Bill would affect within that radius; but within a radius of four miles from St. Paul's the squares affected would be five, regulated by Act of Parliament, 188 other squares, and 78 disused burial-grounds. In that Metropolis there were 1,114 persons for each acre of open space available for recreation, and as many as 23 acres of house property to each acre of park or open space. And yet there were nearly 100 acres of clear garden space within a four-mile radius of Charing Cross inaccessible to the public. With regard to mortality in the Metropolis, Dr. Farr had stated, in a letter addressed to the Registrar General in 1877, that the denser the population the greater the mortality. Hence the desirability of providing more open spaces in the midst of such populations. As regarded that, London was a peculiar case, because its circumference was larger and its population more numerous than those of any city the world had ever had. The portion of the Bill upon which, from some quarters, animadversion was likely to be made was that which would give to a certain majority of the lessees, with the consent of the owners, the power to dispose of proprietary rights as to the opening of particular squares. The Bill was only permissive in its character; but if it were passed and acted upon, it would put a stop to what in some of the squares might be called a considerable nuisance. One scarcely ever walked round any of our squares without seeing a number of poor children outside gazing at the flowers and longing to get in. Many connected with the squares would be quite willing to give them admission; and he would be sorry to think that any persons should be animated by a dog-in-the-manger spirit and would wish to keep them out. He was often surprised when, in summer, the inhabitants of the squares were at the seaside, that the garden space was not thrown open. The 3rd clause of the Bill proposed that, with the consent of the owner and a majority of two-thirds of the lessees, either the Vestry or the Metropolitan Board of Works might take possession of a square, adorn and beautify it, and devote it to the public use. It was for the benefit of the whole community that the squares should be used as he now proposed. There were Acts of Parliament furnishing precedents which, if not absolutely, were nearly analogous to the provision of the Bill relating to private squares. Those Acts included the Lands Clauses Consolidation Act and the General Enclosure Act, which gave the majority power to bind the minority in what approached nearly to common rights. As instances of the kind, he would refer hon. Members to some provisions embodied in an Act passed last year relating to a railway in Norfolk, and others, which had been passed under the Acts he had referred to; and he would contend that, so far from the property being depreciated by the gardens being thrown open, its value would be enhanced. He now passed to the squares regulated by Act of Parliament—namely, Trinity Square, Tower Hill; St. James's Square, Lincoln's Inn Fields, Red Lion Square, and Finsbury Square. He had looked through the Act by which St. James's Square was placed under trustees, and he did not see anything in it to authorize its inclosure at present. Various efforts had been made by the Kyrle Society to obtain, both from the trustees of the square and the Metropolitan Board of Works, permission to beautify the square at their own expense; but the negotiations had fallen through, because there was no enactment under which the trustees could make such arrangements with the Kyrle Society. If, however, the Bill passed, it would enable the Metropolitan Board of Works or the District Vestry to enter into negotiations of that kind. Efforts had also been made within the last 12 months to throw open Lincoln's Inn Fields, the immediate neighbourhood of which was one of the most densely populous portions of the Metropolis, and there was much discussion in the Press on the subject. A number of charitable persons were willing to maintain it, if the consent of the trustees could be obtained. The Metropolitan Board of Works also opened negotiations with the trustees, and proposed that its maintenance should be made a charge upon the rates. But none of these efforts had been attended with success, because no power existed under any Act of Parliament which would enable the trustees to enter into such arrangements. Although the majority of the trustees would be glad to throw open the square, they found, acting on legal opinion, that they could not divest themselves of their powers; but, if this Bill passed into law, it would be competent to the Metropolitan Board to enter into negotiations with them in order to obtain the great advantage which the public desired. With reference to the Amendment of which Notice had been given by the noble Earl opposite (Earl Percy), he (Mr. W. H. James) would only say that if the Bill were read a second time he should not object at a subsequent stage, with the approval of the Government, to insert a clause by which, in certain cases, compensation might be given where it was considered that the rights of private persons were interfered with. With regard to the other squares mentioned—Red Lion Square, Finsbury Square, and Great Tower Hill—the observations he had made as to Lincoln's Inn Fields would also apply to them. With regard to the disused burial-grounds in the Metropolis, he did not hesitate to say that many of them were a disgrace and a scandal, and it was impossible to conceive anything more wretched than their appearance. Any movement to improve them, which would, at the same time, have the effect of providing open spaces for the recreation of the people, would therefore be a great public benefit. Anybody at night scampered over them. It was possible to obtain lead from the coffins, and to break the tombstones. Some of them, he was glad to say, had been converted into gardens and thrown open to the public, and he urged that power should be given to have more of them beautified in that way. Measures were being taken for this purpose with regard to St. Margaret's Churchyard, which would, no doubt, meet the approval both of hon. Members and the Government. Parochial Vestries either had no funds, or objected to apply them in taking care of these grounds, and they were now scenes of nightly desecrations and depredation. He would ask hon. Members to look at a correspondence in *The Times*, which showed it to be most desirable that something should be done, both in a sanitary and a social point of view, by throwing open and planting these grounds with trees and shrubs and flowers. The hon. Member concluded by moving the second reading.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. W. H. James.*)

EARL PERCY, in rising to move, that the Bill be read a second time that day six months, said, he agreed with much that had been said by the hon. Member for Gateshead (Mr. W. H. James) as to the desirability of an increased number of open spaces in the Metropolis; but the Bill did not propose to add one single open space to the Metropolis. They heard a great deal now-a-days, both in the House and outside, about the superior and advanced spirit of the people of the towns; but he (Earl Percy) could not help expressing his opinion that for England the country was better, both physically and morally, than the crowded cities. Therefore, he was prepared to go further in the direction of the Bill than its proposer went. He believed in the old proverb that "God made the country and man the town." He would, therefore, bring the country more within the reach of those in large towns; but he did not see how the Bill would do so. Neither could he see how, with all deference to Dr. Farr, ozone, nitrogen, and oxygen would be created by pulling down the railings of squares, or by giving access to them to those who were now excluded. The hon. Member for Gateshead had not once named the Act of Parliament which he proposed by the Bill to amend. That Act enabled the Metropolitan Board of Works to purchase the rights of those who were owners of any open spaces, which might then be used as places of recreation or exercise. That measure was a most admirable one, which had received the support of all sides of the House. But this Bill was really a measure of confiscation, and what he chiefly objected to was the power the Bill gave to confiscate the indefeasible rights of a minority. He was unwilling to deprive the poor of any of the open spaces to which they had a right of entry; but, at the same time, he was equally averse to deprive the rich of what was their undoubted right. Another strong argument against the Bill was that if these squares were thrown open many persons would be deprived of that solitude and quietude which they now had. The hon. Member said that such enjoyment was a matter of little moment, and might be easily given up, if compensation were provided for the owners and lessees of the property; and he also mentioned that the throwing open of these spaces would be no detriment to the houses in the locality; but it should be remembered that in London great advantage was taken of the squares by those who inhabited them for the exercise of their children, and it was saying too much to assert that the letting value of the houses in such localities would not be deteriorated. If the squares were thrown open rents would certainly fall. He further objected to the Bill because it proposed to override all Acts of Parliament. It also gave a majority of two-thirds of trustees, or others present at a particular meeting, power to control the other third. In fact, it gave power to a two-thirds majority to hand the property over, no matter what the views of the one-third minority were. No such compensation as that indicated could be adequate in such a case. Not content with giving such powers to the Metropolitan Board, it would also enable Vestries and smaller district bodies to increase the rates by planting and decorating the opened spaces. To all that he objected. He thought that there would be a great increase in the rates in consequence; and it might be well to throw the cost upon the Consolidated Fund, if it were true, as alleged last night, that that fund was got chiefly out of the labour of the country. With regard to the state of the disused burying grounds in the Metropolis, it might be quite right that measures of improvement should be adopted; but if the malpractices referred to had taken place in some churchyards, it was rather a matter for police regulation than for changing the ancient churchyards of the country into places of amusement and recreation. It was all very well that St. Margaret's should be improved, because there was a road through it; but that was no reason why a road should be driven through every other disused burying ground in the Metropolis. He looked upon them as sacred and consecrated ground, and he did not see why they should be secularized in the manner proposed by the Bill. He trusted that the House would pause before they passed the Bill, because, although he understood the hon. Member for Gateshead to be willing to accept the principle of compensation, he (Earl Percy) did not think that adequate compensation could be given, since the value of the houses surrounding the square would certainly be deteriorated. It would be far better that the position of each square should be considered and dealt with separately by the Board of Works. He had hoped that the hon. Mover would have been more explicit in his statements as to many points, and he should most like to know how the Act now in force had failed in its object. Finally, he objected to having a Bill of that character introduced and pushed through the House on a Wednesday afternoon; and, therefore, he moved its rejection.

Viscount FOLKESTONE, in seconding the Amendment, said, his objection to the Bill was that the Act of 1877 conferred on the Metropolitan Board of Works sufficient powers with respect to the open spaces referred to in the Bill, as that Board could take such open spaces for the benefit of the public, with the consent of all the owners and occupiers affected. The power proposed now to be conferred upon Vestries and district Boards would be objectionable, looking at the way in which those bodies conducted their business. It should be remembered that the occupiers of houses in the squares had paid for the privileges which they possessed in having these open spaces, because they paid a higher rent than others in the locality. But that was not his chief objection to the Bill. He objected to two-thirds overriding the minority of one-third. The Bill was permissive as to two-thirds, and compulsory as to one-third of the owners and occupiers; and nothing would be easier than for some crotchety person to call a meeting when most of the occupiers were out of town, and thus to secure the throwing open of a square in the absence of those immediately interested. Great injustice would thus be done. Again, many houses which looked into squares behind would become uninhabitable, their privacy being invaded by allowing the public to wander about at will. He strongly objected to this, which was certainly not the first attempt this Session to override the voice of minorities.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Earl Percy.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Mr. ARTHUR PEEL hoped that the House would affirm the principle of the Bill, as nothing less than an Act of Parliament would enable the trustees of Lincoln's Inn Fields and other places to negotiate with the Metropolitan Board of Works for throwing them open to the public. There was a vast difference between being on the outside of a square in the dusty street, and being inside a square, as it might be made by the conservators. In supporting the Bill, he could not, however, but remember that in Inclosure Acts the rights of a minority were provided for in the arrangements made. The Bill was all the more appropriate as coming from his hon. Friend the Member for Gateshead (Mr. W. H. James), who had taken the lead last year in the endeavours to throw open Lincoln's Inn Fields to the public. His hon. Friend had quoted a number of precedents in favour of the Bill; but he (Mr. Peel) did not wish to cite as precedents cases which were not strictly in point. It was said that by the Bill the House was asked to allow a majority of two-thirds of the occupiers to override the rights of the minority of one-third; but did not hon. Members believe that, in the case of a West End square, where there was such identity of associations and feelings among the inhabitants, the consent of two-thirds of the occupiers would practically amount to a unanimous consent? The noble Earl (Earl Percy), in asking that the consent of every person interested should be obtained before the space was thrown open to the public, was asking for that which it was impossible to obtain, because there were always sure to be some few persons who would reject any proposal of the kind. He (Mr. Peel) would urge the House to confer this enormous boon upon the poorer classes, subject, of course, to such restrictions and regulations as it might be deemed expedient to adopt. On the question of the depreciation of property, he might say that some ground landlords were contemplating a change of the kind proposed by this Bill; while as to the other point he had referred to, there might be such careful regulations as to the time of day and year during which the public would be allowed to make use of these squares, that the upper classes, as some of their Representatives feared, would not suffer any inconvenience from allowing the privileges granted by the Bill to be legalized. He had not any apprehension that there would be the least clashing of interests by the throwing open of the squares referred to in the Bill, while it was absolutely certain it would be a great benefit to the poorer classes; and, therefore, he trusted that the Bill would be read a second time, on the understanding that the necessary provisions with regard to compensation were introduced into the Bill in Committee.

Mr. WARTON said, he could not understand how it could be contended that, by throwing open these open spaces, either they or the surrounding property would be increased in value. It had been urged by some hon. Members that these open spaces, and particularly the disused graveyards, if thrown open, would become the play-grounds of the children of the poor, and that the provisions of the Bill would thus be conducive to their health. The air surrounding graveyards, however, was far from wholesome. In fact, no places could be worse for children to play about in than disused burial-grounds. He must protest against this proposed invasion of the rights of the minority, especially at a time when they were trembling on the brink of a democracy.

Mr. WHITLEY said, that, as representing a large urban constituency, he felt bound to testify to the importance of preserving these open spaces for the benefit of the public generally. A Bill of the sort under Notice ought to commend itself to all who were interested in the health and well-being of the poorer classes. He hoped, therefore, that after the assurance given by the promoter, that persons injuriously affected should receive compensation, the noble Earl (Earl Percy) would not persist in his Amendment, but would allow the Bill to go into Committee.

Dr. KINNEAR thought that, if the Bill became law, it would show that Parliament was anxious for the welfare and the health of the poorer classes. Having travelled abroad, he had often heard comments to the effect that the state of the cemeteries and the spaces inclosed from the general public was disgraceful to this great city and people. He hoped the selfishness of a few would not be allowed to prevail against the good of the many.

Mr. COURTNEY said, he must congratulate the hon. Member for Gateshead (Mr. W. H. James) upon the success his Bill had met with. Even the noble Earl opposite (Earl Percy), who had objected to the measure in no very strenuous manner, did not appear to regard its principle with very strong disapproval. He (Mr. Courtney) himself rose to express on behalf of the Government their approval of that principle, subject to the understanding that provision for the compensation of those whose interests were injuriously affected by the Bill was to be introduced in Committee. If such an understanding was not come to, it would be impossible for the Government to assent to the Bill; but the introduction of such a provision into it in Committee would entirely transform its character, and in the event of that course being adopted Her Majesty's Government would be prepared not only to assent to the Bill, but to assist in it passing. He did not share the views of the noble Earl opposite that graveyards would be desecrated by throwing them open to the public. They would not be converted under the operation of this Bill into places of amusement, but into places for walking and for quiet recreation. He trusted that upon the hon. Member for Gateshead entering into the proposed undertaking, that a provision for the compensation of those whose interests were injuriously affected by this Bill should be introduced into the measure in Committee, the noble Earl opposite would withdraw his Amendment, and would permit the Bill to be read a second time.

Sir EARDLEY WILMOT said, he had heard with great satisfaction what had fallen from the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department, and was himself prepared to give his most cordial support to the Bill. In no other country, so far as his observations extended, were the labourers called upon to perform such hard work as in England. The House was bound, therefore, to promote in every way it could the recreation of the humbler classes. There was nothing so exhilarating after fatigue as exercise in the open air; and if that could be provided the working classes would not require that stimulus which they now often found in the public-house.

Earl PERCY said, that although he objected to the Bill, yet the clauses providing for compensation somewhat reconciled him to it. He therefore proposed, with the permission of the House, to withdraw his Amendment for the time, reserving his right to oppose the measure at any future stage.

Mr. W. H. JAMES said, he most willingly gave his undertaking not to move for the committal of the Bill until the Amendments suggested by the Government had been placed upon the Paper.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Tuesday* 26th April.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES NOTIFICATION (IRELAND) BILL.—[Bill 40.]

(*Mr. Edmond Gray, Mr. Brooks, Mr. Dawson.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. GRAY, in rising to move that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that he had not heard the slightest objection taken by any individual to its principle. In Committee there might be certain details open to discussion; but the principle involved was one which met with such general approval that he did not feel called upon to say very much in support of it. The Bill simply provided that the existence of certain infectious diseases, named within it, should, under certain conditions, be notified to the sanitary authorities in Ireland. It proposed to give no new power whatever, and it would be construed with the Public Health Act, which conferred certain powers on the sanitary authorities for the prevention of infectious disease. The main difficulty experienced by the sanitary authorities hitherto had been that information did not reach them in sufficient time to enable them to take steps in order to check the spread of infectious disease. He need not say that, in such a case, time was the very essence of the business. If they had immediate knowledge of the existence of such diseases as those dealt with in the Bill, it was possible to check them effectively; but once let them make way, and it was almost impossible to overtake them. His attention had been directed to the subject by the fact that last year, when he occupied the Dublin Mansion House, a very influential deputation waited on him, consisting of the whole Medical Profession of Dublin, asking that the Corporation of Dublin should see that steps were taken to secure the notification of infectious disease, when it occurred within their sanitary district. It was pointed out that at the time 14 or 15 towns in England and Scotland—and he believed that five or six more had since been added to the number—had by Local Acts obtained that power to get information of the existence of infectious disease, and the principle was also approved by the whole Medical Faculty of England. From the Reports of the medical officers in the places where those Acts were in force, there was no doubt that they had a material effect in reducing the mortality from the diseases with which they were concerned. It struck him, however, that the English system was a very undesirable one, in allowing every town to go to Parliament to obtain separate powers, differing in more or less important points from those existing in the neighbouring towns;

and he thought it would be better to base the Irish legislation on some general principle. The proposal the Bill contained was that the authorities of every sanitary district might apply to the Local Government Board to declare the Act in force within its district. It required the sanitary authority to take the initiative, not the Local Government Board; and then it would be in force in such district, or in whatever portion of it, as that sanitary authority might decide; but the identical provisions would obtain in every district in which it might be put into operation. If the Bill turned out effective, and did result in checking infectious disease, it would be open to Parliament to act in regard to it in the same manner as it had done in the case of previous Sanitary Acts, and make it compulsory, after it had first been tried as a permissive enactment. He had a large body of evidence to urge in favour of the Bill; but he would not weary the House by going into it. In Edinburgh, a Local Act of this character had been introduced two years since, and it was shown that it had largely checked the number of deaths from zymotic diseases. In Burton-on-Trent, an Act had also been in force; and by its help an epidemic of small-pox, which threatened to be of a very virulent character, had been so effectually checked as to reduce the mortality to very trifling proportions. In Dublin, unfortunately, they had had very bitter experience of the way in which small-pox could make its home in a district. For the past four or five years, a state of things existed which would be rendered impossible, if the sanitary authorities possessed the power conferred on them by the Bill now before the House. With such power, it would be possible for them to reduce the mortality very largely, if not to stamp out the disease altogether. It should be understood that the Bill did not interfere with the interests or convenience of any section of the public; it did not harass the poor at all. The poor, however the wretched tenements in which they dwelt favoured the spread of disease, were, when they were dealt with properly, generally tolerably ready to do whatever might be right. If they did not take proper care to isolate as much as possible cases of contagious disease, it was generally found that they were ready enough to go to an hospital, without any compulsion when it was urged upon them. The difficulty was their ignorance, and their permitting disease to spread through the members of their families before they were rightly aware of the risk they ran by so doing. No additional powers were sought under the Bill; it asked for no compulsory powers, nor did it interfere with individuals; it simply provided that notification should be given to the sanitary authorities to take whatever steps for the checking of disease they were already empowered to take by existing Acts. It could not be doubted for a moment that if that were a case of foot-and-mouth disease or rinderpest, the powers sought for in the Bill would have long ago been granted, and would have been in force; but it was not usual to place the same value on human life as on those of sheep or cattle. In Dublin, for the past year, the number of deaths from zymotic diseases alone had been 2,700, and there could be no doubt that that enormous mortality could be reduced, if a Bill such as the present were in force in the City. With regard to the details of the Bill, he could only say that whatever views the House was disposed to take with regard to them he was quite prepared to accept. In conclusion, he would just mention that recently a conjoint Committee of the Royal College of Surgeons and the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland was appointed to inquire into the causes of the high death-rate of Dublin; and, in their Report, the very first remedy they suggested was the notification and registration of infectious disease by the sanitary authority. He believed that, but for the amount of work on his hands, the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland would have introduced such a measure as the present himself; and as he did not anticipate any objection to it, but, on the contrary, hoped the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland would tell them that the Government approved of its principle, and would be prepared to facilitate its passage through the House, he would content himself with moving the second reading without detaining the House further.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Gray.*)

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson) said, that the Government entirely approved the principle of the measure, the object of which was, by the early notification of the outbreak of infectious diseases in Ireland to the sanitary authorities, to preserve the public health. Probably there was no place in the United Kingdom where something of the kind was so necessary as the City of Dublin. They, therefore, would not oppose the Bill going into Committee, but would facilitate its passing as far as they could conveniently do so. It was necessary, however, that the Government should reserve to themselves the right of proposing Amendments, or even, if necessary, of opposing the Bill in Committee, simply on the ground that a large and influential medical body in Dublin—the physicians of the King's and Queen's Colleges—were of opinion that some of the details of the Bill required to be altered. The hon. Member for Carlow Borough (Mr. Gray) would agree that it was desirable to obtain all the assistance they could from the Medical Profession to alter and extend the scope of the Bill. At any rate, however, the Government would not oppose the second reading of the Bill.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Monday* 25th April.

ELECTIONS (CLOSING OF PUBLIC HOUSES) BILL.—[Bill 58.]

(*Mr. Carbutt, Mr. Hussey Vivian, Mr. Hugh Mason, Mr. Caine.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. CARBUTT, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that it provided for the closing of public-houses during the hours of polling at Parliamentary Elections. His object was to render all elections as pure as possible by providing that they should be conducted without riot or tumult. He had no doubt that hon. Members occupying the Opposition Benches were all as anxious as he could be that the elections should eventuate in the return of Gentlemen who represented the feeling of the whole country, without prejudice to any particular interest; and, therefore, be reckoned on receiving their support. Of course, he did not count on receiving any support from any of the Gentlemen opposite who were connected with the brewing, the distilling, and kindred trades; but as regarded the publicans, he was confident the better class of them would be in favour of the Bill rather than against it. It was because of the non-existence of such a measure that several hon. Members, who had been returned to the House at the last General Election, were now no longer Members of it; and he believed that he (Mr. Carbutt) himself was the only Member who had been returned to the House by a poll taken in a town where all the public-houses were closed; and when he explained the circumstances of that election, and how they got over the difficulty of having open houses, hon. Members would, he thought, share with him the opinion that there should be some general rule on the subject. As a rule, the inhabitants of South Wales were a law-abiding people; but, at times of excitement, when political feeling ran high, the people of Newport used to be hurried on to acts of violence, so that the military had to be called out to put down the riot and the tumult. Indeed, at preceding elections several people had been killed. Under those circumstances, on the eve of the last Election, the Mayor consulted the magistrates whether something might not be done to prevent a recurrence of such disgraceful scenes, and they came to the conclusion that the best thing they could do was to shut up all the public-houses in the town during the day. That being so, they resolved to avail themselves of the provision of the Licensing Act, Section 23, Sale of Intoxicating Liquors Acts, 35 & 36 *Vict.*, cap. 94, which enacted that two Justices of the Peace might order all public-houses to be closed during a Parliamentary election, if there was any ground to suppose that breaches of the peace might be expected, and that under a penalty of £50. Accordingly, all the public-houses were closed from 2 o'clock on the day of polling until the following morning; and the result was that the Election was conducted without tumult or disturbance. In 1868, when Sir John Ramsden contested the borough, the military had to be called out, and one or more persons were killed. In 1874, a sum of £400 had to be paid for the damage done by drunken rioters; whereas, at the last Election, there was not a penny spent in that way, there having been only a few windows broken. It was a curious sight heretofore to see all the windows in the main street of the town boarded up in anticipation of a riot. It had the appearance of a besieged city. He might be asked why the single example on which he relied was to rule the country. Well, he believed if hon. Members would read the Reports of the Election Commissioners recently published, they would come to the conclusion that they contained more than sufficient evidence to justify the passing of the Bill. It might be objected that the Bill included not only boroughs, but also counties. It did so, because the Bill of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General on the subject of corrupt practices at elections contained a provision that the polling places in counties should not be more than three miles apart; and he did not think that a man who had only three miles at the utmost to walk to the polling place needed to have the public-houses kept open for his convenience. The Oxford Election Commissioners reported that the evidence showed that on the polling day there was considerable drunkenness, and many breaches of the peace; and, further, that the least thing would have brought about a riot which would have been beyond the control of the civic authorities. Further evidence proved that large numbers of voters received beer before and after they had voted, that most of the public-houses were the property of one gentleman, and were used as agencies to secure his return, and that at nearly every public-house in Oxford drink was freely given away on the day of the Election. The Sandwich Commissioners reported that 71 public-houses had been engaged for the purposes of the Election, at a cost of £5 or £10 each; and the evidence showed that quantities of drink were supplied "to keep the mob quiet." In Knaresborough, where the voters numbered only 770, there were no fewer than 47 public-houses, and these were kept open for the purpose of supplying drink to the electors on the polling day. It might be said, too—"Why do you close public-houses during the hours of polling for Parliamentary Representatives, and not close them during the election of town councillors?" For his own part, he did not see the force of that objection, for there was nothing like the same excitement at a municipal election as there was at a Parliamentary one. He had had large experience of municipal elections, both as a town councillor and as the returning officer when Mayor of Leeds. Again, he might be asked if he had any precedent for the proposal, and his reply was that he had. In Canada, all the public-houses were closed from 7 o'clock in the morning until the close of the poll on election days; and in New York, on the day of the State Elections, the public-houses had to be kept closed all day. The Mayor of Oxford described the last Election in that city as a scene of drunkenness, noise, and shouting. The excitement was great, and the people hurried to the polling places before 8 o'clock, without their breakfasts; but when they got hungry they slipped into the public-houses unawares, drank beer or spirits on an empty stomach, and so got drunk. His object in bringing in the Bill was to take away temptation from the people. With respect to Chester, the Commissioners reported that the great weapon of Parliamentary warfare there was beer; that the Party who secured the most public-houses usually secured a majority of votes; that beer was lavishly given away on the polling day; that most of the voters refused to poll except they were treated, adding that there was in Chester a class of "professional treaters," who exercised their function as such very busily on polling day. One man supplied drink without stint all day to everyone who called at his house; and when he was asked to explain how he made up the amount which he charged to the candidate, he said he took stock in the morning before the poll commenced, and took it again when the poll was over, and charged for the quantity consumed, including all he had sold in the way of regular trade, which, in the case referred to, was a considerable fraud upon the candidates. He had no doubt the more respectable licensed victuallers would like to see everything of that kind done away with, as they did not wish to be held responsible for the malpractices of those who were engaged in the same trade with themselves. He hoped the House would come to the conclusion that he had given sufficient reasons why they should read the Bill a second time. He had endeavoured to make it as mild as possible. Some advised that he should go in for a strong Bill, and then give way, so as to secure as much as he really required; but he was not in favour of asking for more than was really wanted. He had endeavoured not to interfere with the private convenience of anyone; but some sacrifice should be made, and it would be a small one, as, on an average, a General Election only occurred every five years, and he did not see how keeping a man from drink on one day in that period of time could be described as robbing a poor man of his beer. He believed the closing of public-houses would have a very material effect in the direction desired. He had exempted railway refreshment bars and steamboats from the operation of the Bill; and, much against his will, he had also exempted the City of London, because London was a great commercial centre, where business men spent the whole day, and did not return home till the evening. Besides, it was generally believed that people in London took less interest in elections, and showed less excitement on those occasions, than they did in the country. If, however, it was the wish of the House that London should be included, he would be glad to do so. Referring to the Wigan Election, he said he understood that the colliers on strike had been supplied with free drink during the Election. ["Oh, oh!"] He would not go further into the matter, and was sorry if he had inadvertently offended. He begged to move the second reading of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Carbutt.*)

Mr. LITTON said, he highly approved of the Bill, for when people drank too much beer they had a tendency to riot. [Mr. Warton: Oh, oh!] Well, he (Mr. Litton) could not estimate the extent of the hon. and learned Gentleman's capacity; but he thought the Reports of the Election Commissioners, to which his hon. Friend (Mr. Carbutt) had alluded, afforded ample proof of the fact that, at times of a General Election, when Party spirit ran high, an indulgence in drink had a tendency to stir up strife; and he considered the provisions in the Licensing Act, under which the public-houses could be closed on such occasions, was an argument in favour of that principle being adopted as the basis of a general Act. The fact that the magistrates had a right, when apprehensive of disturbance or riot, to close the public-houses was in itself sufficient to show that a general law was required on the subject. Indeed, it seemed to him that the tendency of modern legislation justified the Bill of his hon. Friend. The only thing of which he was afraid was that sufficient opportunity had not been afforded the licensed victuallers to express their opinion upon the Bill. He was not at all sure that, as a body, they would be opposed to the Bill, for the compulsory closing of their houses on election day would free them from the risk and danger of certain pains and penalties arising from excessive drinking on their premises, and they would get rid of that liability by the surrender of the privilege to sell intoxicating drink on one day every four or five years. Another consideration was, the House would have another and a much better opportunity of discussing the question when they came to deal with the Corrupt Practices Bill of the hon. and learned Attorney General than they could have in discussing a measures brought in by a private Member. He would, therefore, move the adjournment of the debate, in order to give time to the trade to consider the Bill.

Baron DE FERRIERES, in seconding the Motion for adjournment, admitted the desirability of closing public-houses during polling hours; but thought the matter was too important to be dealt with by a private Member. He also wished to point out that while he was in favour of the principle of the Bill as stated in the Preamble, the exemption of certain interests from the operation of the Bill by the 3rd clause greatly interfered with and nullified its principle. If a publican were to be allowed to keep his house open for the sale of non-intoxicants during polling hours, every facility would be afforded for the sale of intoxicants, which it was the object of the Bill to prevent. Again, the exemption of river steamers from the scope of the measure was likely to be abused, for many great towns had large rivers on which steamers plied; and the result of the exemption might be that on election days 20 steamers might be moored along the shore, and that drinking on a large scale might be carried on, while the public-houses were compulsorily closed.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Litton.*)

Mr. MORGAN LLOYD said, he could scarcely understand the motive of the Motion to adjourn the debate. He could have understood the proposal if it had come from someone who was favourable to the Bill, and would in that case have assented to it; but he could not accept it in the present circumstances, because he feared it was made in order to prevent any decision on the subject with which the Bill was intended to deal. He knew that there was a strong feeling in its favour in many parts of the country, and could speak from personal knowledge to the existence of such a feeling to a very large extent in Wales; and he was asked by his hon. Friend the Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward Reed) to say that that feeling also largely prevailed in Cardiff. That he (Mr. Morgan Lloyd) took as a test case. If a place like that, with a large and mixed population, was in favour of the proposal, it showed how desirable it was that the Bill should receive the assent of the House. He thought, however, the Bill was far from perfect, and required many alterations and Amendments. One obvious defect was the provision requiring all public-houses within any parish containing a polling place to be closed; whereas the polling place might be on the borders of one parish, and the public-houses in an adjoining parish—a few yards, it might be, from the polling place—were allowed to be open. On the other hand, there was no sufficient reason for closing public-houses which might be situate many miles away from a polling place simply because they were in the same parish. He also agreed with some other hon. Members that there were other objections to some of the details of the Bill; but he wished to see the principle of the measure, which was undoubtedly good as far as it went, affirmed by the House, after which it would be easy to cure any defects of detail in Committee.

Mr. GREGORY supported the Motion for adjournment, on the ground that it would give an opportunity for the careful consideration of the details of the measure not only by hon. Members of the House, but by the general public, who would be largely affected by the Bill. As far as those details were concerned, he could only say that many of them were of a most unjust character, and could not possibly be accepted in their present form, especially the provision which closed the houses in a municipal borough in which a county polling place was situated. Thus, in his own county (Sussex), the houses in Brighton, a town containing 80,000 inhabitants, and having a polling booth in it, would all have to be closed, if there was a county election proceeding. A more monstrous proposal than that he never heard. The polling hours were now extended to 8 o'clock, so that poor people who had not a supply of beer upon their premises would be deprived of a generous enjoyment during the whole of the day, while any amount of drink might be sold on board steamers and at the railway stations. The Bill would, moreover, give scope for the most flagrant violations. He objected also to the exemption of the Metropolitan area. He could conceive no logical reason for excluding London, and yet including places like Manchester, Liverpool, or Leeds. It could only have been done to stave off opposition, in the hope of gaining the support of the Metropolitan Members for the Bill. He hoped the proposals of the Bill would be fully considered, if the debate was adjourned; but he desired that the Government should keep their minds open. It was also because he thought that the matter required further consideration in the interest of the publicans that he supported the Motion for the adjournment of the debate.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, he thought he need hardly say that the subject proposed to be dealt with in the Bill was one to which the Government, who were not behind any other section of the House in wishing to put a stop to it, had had to give very careful consideration. The only question was how to attain that object; and he was sure every hon. Member of the House would agree that there was necessity for considering the subject which would be affected by the Bill. All would agree that the practice of corrupt treating which existed in

Parliamentary Elections, and municipal elections too, was one that had pressed itself lately upon the attention of the public, and that no one could regard that practice but as an evil, and as a growing evil. He was not saying that as a censure on any particular class. The fault rested not only on the person in the trade who supplied the means of treating, but on those who provided the money for the treating, and on those who encouraged the treating. It would, he thought, be a great evil if they were, while attempting to check the practice of corrupt treating, to proceed in a spirit of hostility to a trade, and inflict punishment upon them alone in order to put a stop to this Bill. It being the desire of all to stop corrupt treating, as injurious to the representation of the country and as evil in every way, it would be wise not to take any hasty, ill-considered action, which public opinion would not support. He did not believe for one moment that the promoters had any such object, but simply to remove corrupt treating, which was injurious. Those who had to deal with the question felt it was a matter which ought to be dealt with with great caution. Any prohibition that was contrary to public opinion was generally an evil, and was certainly not a successful remedy for what was desired to be corrected. In the case of this prohibition, it would affect not only the interests of the publicans, but also the convenience of the community. If this was to be carried out so as to be beneficial to elections and electors, the remedy must be in accordance to public opinion rather than against it. Without saying anything as to the provisions of the Bill before the House, if a measure severe in its consequences as affecting a portion of the community was to be passed, the responsibility ought to be borne by the majority of the House, above all, supported by the public opinion of the country. He believed that a right method of prohibition would meet with considerable support from those persons who were principally affected by it. He meant the licensed victuallers. Only a few hours ago he had an opportunity of meeting a representative deputation from that body; and he must say he never heard more reasonable views expressed by any persons than by those licensed victuallers, and that a majority of them would be prepared to acquiesce in any proposal that met with the approval of a majority in Parliament and in the country. The House would be greatly strengthened in its action if there was to be a decided public opinion expressed in the matter. When it had to deal with the question of all corrupt practices, amongst them corrupt treating, he expected there would be great difference of opinion as to the mode in which the evil was to be dealt with; but he was certain that that difference of opinion could only be solved by what was known to be the opinion outside. In these circumstances, he had to make an appeal to the hon. Member who had introduced the Bill (Mr. Carbutt). He expected that great advantage would result from the discussion; but he hoped his hon. Friend would not, while feeling he had done a good service, push this matter to a final vote that day. The views of the hon. Gentleman would not be furthered by taking a vote. His hon. Friend had also an Amendment on the Paper in regard to the Corrupt Practices Bill bearing on this subject. What he (the Attorney General) had to say, not speaking for his Colleagues, was that when that Bill came on they would have the best opportunity for all practical discussion of the matter. Whatever they voted to-day, there must be a re-consideration of the question when the Bill for Corrupt Practices was before the House. When that Bill was under consideration, there would be the fullest opportunity for discussing and voting upon the subject; and their discussion and votes would be guided, to a great extent, by public opinion. He therefore hoped that his hon. Friend would agree to the Motion for the adjournment of the debate.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he had heard with great pleasure the advice of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General. He thought it was a wise advice, and he hoped those in charge of the Bill would follow it, and they would not suffer by it in the long run, inasmuch as there were important and varying interests to be considered in dealing with a matter of this kind. There were, in the present instance, three sets of persons who were very closely affected. There were, in the first place, the publicans. As far as the publicans were concerned, all he would say, at the present moment, was that if, for the general benefit of the country, the closing of public-houses on the day of polling was proved to be necessary, although it might affect the trade, the trade must give way to the general public opinion. But then it must be proved to their satisfaction that such a step was absolutely necessary. The second class affected were the general public. In a case of this kind, it was a great mistake to think that they were only dealing with the electors of a particular town on a particular day. It might be quite right that they should take every means to prevent corruption and treating so far as the voters were concerned; but there were many people who would be in the town in which the election was taking place who had no connection with the election, but whose business took them to large towns; and those persons would think elections a positive nuisance if they found, when they went there, they interfered with them in their ordinary business and trade. The Bill would do harm, therefore, to those who had nothing to do with elections. There was a third body of persons to consider, and that was the candidates; for he knew of no more miserable position than that of a man who went down to a constituency resolved to take every precaution not to offend the law, and who found, through no fault of his own, but of some agent, that his election was invalidated. All these were questions which must be taken into account, and they could not discuss the question without discussing it in all its bearings. He hoped that no attempt would be made to support the measure by certain hon. Gentlemen who held advanced views, simply on the ground that it was a step in the further direction they wanted to take, because to do so would, in his opinion, weaken their influence in both ways, and also cost them support, as far as the present proposal was concerned. There were many points of detail in which the present Bill was defective; and he hoped it would be determined to deal with the whole question of corrupt practices at the time when the Government proposals were fully before the House. He, for his part, would do his part in his place in Parliament to put down corrupt practices and treating. He thought that what had been revealed in connection with the last Election of corrupt practices in boroughs was a disgrace to the country, and the sooner such a matter was put a stop to the better for all parties. On a matter of that kind it would, however, be unwise for any Government to attempt to carry legislation beyond a point up to which they had the support of a majority of public opinion; and he, therefore, strongly urged the importance of using great caution in dealing with the matter. In that view he hoped the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Carbutt) would consent to the adjournment of the debate. He believed that when the Bill of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General became law, as he hoped it would with certain modifications, there would have been constructed a machinery sufficient to secure much greater purity of election than now existed.

MR. DICK-PEDDIE said, he entirely concurred in the suggestion which had been made by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General, and supported by the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir R. Assheton Cross), as to the adjournment of the discussion, in order that the matter might be better discussed on the general Bill. At the same time, it was very desirable that the opportunity should be taken just now to ascertain the mind of the House on the question; and when hon. Gentlemen had already given the opinion of England, Wales, and Ireland, he thought a Scotch Member should express the opinions of Scotland. He had no doubt that he was quite correct in saying that, in a matter of this kind, they would have the very general support of Scotland. Not that Scotland suffered more from the evils of drinking on election days than England did; but he thought that there opinion was more advanced on the subject than in England. There were two evils which required to be remedied by a Bill of this kind. There was not only corruption by treating at the time of an election, but there were evils which followed the election. In connection with this latter point, his only complaint was that the Bill did not go far enough. It proposed that the closing of the public-houses should cease after the hours of closing the polling. His opinion was that public-houses should be closed during the whole of the day on which an election took place. On those days the population was, to a large extent, in an unsettled state, and they resorted in large numbers to the public-houses after the voting was over, and scenes of disorder ensued. In America the public-houses were closed throughout the entire Union on an election day, and he had trustworthy testimony to show that the proceedings there were of an orderly description. In this matter he was not actuated, nor were his Friends actuated, by feelings of hostility to the trade. Their object was to secure the public good. He hoped his hon. Friend would agree to the adjournment of the debate; and he could assure the Government that if they proposed similar measures to those which had been suggested they would have the almost unanimous aid of Scotch opinion.

MR. CAINE hoped his hon. Friend (Mr. Carbutt) would accept the advice given from the Government Bench, and not insist upon a division. He (Mr. Caine) was glad they had had an opportunity of discussing that important question so early in the Session, without having to wait two or three months for the hon. and learned Attorney General's Bill. As for the unfortunate and unhappy candidates referred to by the right hon. Gentleman the late Secretary of State for the Home Department as being defeated, there were others who had seen cause since the Election to regret their haste in self-congratulation, because they had been unseated as a consequence of public-houses being open. They had to look forward to a time—and he (Mr. Caine) hoped it would be five years hence—when they would be placed in the same position; and, therefore, he thought they should support a good measure for purifying elections without causing serious inconvenience to the public at large, or interfering harshly with the trade concerned. There could be no doubt that such a law as was here proposed would cause a certain amount of inconvenience in boroughs during an election; but the inconvenience caused to a few people for having once in six or seven years to take their meals without beer or spirits would be little as compared with that often suffered by many boroughs under the present system. The borough he represented (Scarborough) was, as a rule, as peaceable and orderly as any to be found in the United Kingdom; but at the last General Election, in consequence of the public-houses being open on the polling-day, all his windows were broken by a disorderly mob, and it cost him £14 10*s*. to have them repaired. Many other hon. Members could remember similar occurrences. He should never forget the picture presented by his right hon. Colleague (Mr. Dodson) on returning on his election day from meeting a drunken mob, for the right hon. Gentleman looked more like an ancient Briton than a Cabinet Minister, in consequence of being covered from head to foot with blue dye. On election days much greater inconvenience was suffered by the general public now than what would result from the passing of that Bill into law. With reference to the trade which was to be taken care of, he did not wish to be hostile to it; but they must not forget that it was an exceptional trade, existing under licence for the convenience of the public, enforced by restrictions, and placed under police supervision. If Parliament should think public-houses ought to be closed at particular times, no great injustice would be done to such a trade. Having had great electioneering experience as President of the Liverpool Liberal Association, he had, as a matter of electioneering policy, refused to engage public-houses as part of the machinery of an election. He was satisfied, from his own experience, and close study of the Reports of the Election Commissions, that treating was of very little use indeed unless public-houses were open on the day of election, because the whole system culminated upon that day. Upon one occasion, a ward in Liverpool was contested by a brewer and a teetotaller, and the latter sent watchmen wearing his colours into the public-houses to take down the names of those who were brought in to be treated by the other side. As the result of this expedient, he won the ward from the party which had held it nine years. If the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General would inquire in various parts of the country, he would find that all who were experienced in electioneering thought it would be a good thing to close public-houses on the polling-day. He trusted that the Bill would be postponed, because no harm would result from delay; but, on the contrary, when the Government Bill came under consideration, a great deal of evidence in favour of this proposal would be forthcoming.

MAJOR NOLAN said, he did not think that such a Bill was necessary at all, at least, not in Ireland, where heavy blows had been struck at the trade of late, in particular, by depriving publicans of Sunday profits. He would not say whether that had been done rightly or wrongly; but, at all events, he felt inclined to object to the Bill being applied to Ireland. He did not see, as long as elections were legitimately conducted in Ireland, why the licensed victuallers should be deprived of the profit they would ordinarily receive on the day of election too. He believed it was a fact that it had not been proved that there was any drinking in any county election in Ireland except one; and, even in that, it was not proved that the electors had been treated, and it seemed that what they drank, they drank at their own expense. Therefore, he did not see why Irish electors, having come from long distances, should be precluded from having their glass of spirits or their glass of beer, because people in other countries had abused that privilege. He believed the elections in Ireland would be found to be very pure in a general sense, and he thought it would be injudicious to have a special remedy as far as counties were concerned. He should feel inclined to vote against the Bill, unless a more specific case was made out for it, in the way of extending it to Ireland.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON said, he did not know what course would be taken, and did not think anything he could say would have influence with the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir R. Assheton Cross). He had been looked at and referred to as a man of extreme views, and rightly so, for his views were extremely right; and if he had his way, the Bill would go much further, and would extend not only to election time, but to all the time between one election and another. Hon. Members had great difficulty in bringing in any measure in that House. There were two ways in which a reforming Member was treated. When a Member brought in a measure of reform, he was sure to be told there was no use in bit-by-bit legislation; and if he brought in a large Bill, he was asked—"What business have you, an audacious private Member, to deal with a question like this, as to which some comprehensive measure ought to be brought in by the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department?" He did not think his hon. Friend who introduced the Bill (Mr. Carbutt) had suffered much in the debate that had taken place. Notwithstanding the efforts to persuade his hon. Friend to adjourn the debate, he did not see that that should be done, because the arguments which had been used had gone pretty much in the line that the Bill ought to be withdrawn, on the ground that it was not stringent enough. He (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) was very much inclined to think that his hon. Friend should go on with the Bill, and the ingenious appeal of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General did not alter his opinion much; but when the late Secretary of State for the Home Department backed up the Attorney General, he felt no doubt at all, for was it not an axiom with all right-minded politicians that when the two Front Benches agreed there was something wrong? When the hon. and learned Attorney General said—"Don't do anything until you get public opinion on your side," it might have been thought that he was speaking of the Permissive Bill, which could come into operation only with the assent of public opinion. This was a national matter; how were they to get at public opinion? Fancy the hon. and learned Attorney General insinuating that the House of Commons did not represent the public opinion of the country; it was a most extraordinary thing. Why, the Ministers were the products of public opinion, and the House of Commons was the result of public opinion. He (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) would say to the hon. and learned Attorney General that public opinion was to be got at, not by going into the Conference Room and talking to the most reasonable licensed victualler he ever met with, but by coming to that House on a quiet Wednesday afternoon, when they were all sober. What more did they want? Let them not withdraw the Bill, but let a division be taken, so that the opinion of the House might be known on the subject. There could not be a better time to settle the matter. It was either right or wrong that public-houses should be closed on the polling day. They were not going into Committee at once; all that they decided by the second reading was whether the principle was right or not. The hon. and learned Attorney General said he had a good Bill on the stocks; so he had, almost too good a Bill to be carried; and when they came to discuss it he would be fortified if the House had assented to the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. WARTON said, that the real evil they had to deal with was having an exaggerated view of possible purity at elections. As a matter of fact, they had now a standard of impossible purity, and they would not get what they required if they set up too high a standard. If they allowed a moderate amount of beer to be drunk, public opinion would go further in repressing worse forms of electoral corruption. Public opinion was in favour of some beer; and it was of more importance that the beer should be pure than that the elections should be pure. The public had a right to their beer, and it was wrong to deprive them of it. Put up with a moderate amount of beer; call it corruption, call it cheating, but let beer be given, by both sides if they liked, provided worse practices were not resorted to, and then they could punish with greater severity the giving of money; but there was greater difficulty in dealing with electoral corruption if they puritanically deprived people of what they had a right to expect, and what public opinion did not think it was a very horrible thing they should have.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson) desired, on his own part, to say that he did not think the Bill was required in Ireland.

Mr. CARBUTT, in reply, said, he believed that if he went to a division he would have a good majority, and if he had consulted his own feelings he should have gone to a vote. He believed public opinion was on his side, and he trusted the provisions of the Bill might be incorporated into the hon. and learned Attorney General's Bill. After the debate that had taken place, and which had amply justified him in introducing the measure, he felt he had not made it stringent enough; but he did not desire to interfere unduly with business or social arrangements. Trusting, however, that hon. Members would support him when they got into Committee on the Bill of the hon. and learned Gentleman, he would agree to the adjournment of the debate.

Sir Wilfrid Lawson

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Debate *adjourned* till *Monday* 25th April.

MUNICIPAL CORPORATION ACT (1859) AMENDMENT BILL.—[Bill 25.]

(*Mr. William Fowler, Mr. Rylands, Mr. Walter James, Mr. Henry H. Fowler.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. W. FOWLER, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that it was identically the same as a measure which was carried through that House with the support of a Liberal Government in 1872. Its object was to equalize the municipal representation of boroughs by taking representatives from districts which had greatly decreased since the Municipal Corporation Act passed, and allowing them to be given to the districts which had increased in population. Under the present law, however great the change in a borough might be with regard to the wards, no alteration could be made unless two-thirds of the Council applied to the Privy Council for inquiry and re-arrangement of the wards. This, which the provisions of the Bill would reduce to one-third, sometimes could not be done, and boroughs had then to come to Parliament for Private Bills at great expense; and that, he thought—especially in the case of small boroughs—was a cause of unnecessary trouble and expense. In Cambridge, Leeds, Bradford, Liverpool, and other places, there were great anomalies in ward representation which would be redressed if the Bill were passed, to the second reading of which he hoped the House would now agree.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. William Fowler.*)

Mr. COURTNEY agreed with the hon. Member for Cambridge (Mr. W. Fowler) that the Bill was similar to that approved of by the Government in 1872. The present Government approved entirely of the objects of the measure; and, on their part, he had pleasure in assenting to the Motion of his hon. Friend.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Friday.*

House adjourned at a quarter after Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 31*st March,* 1881.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILL—*Second Reading*—Local Courts of Bankruptcy (Ireland) (56).

LOCAL COURTS OF BANKRUPTCY (IRELAND) BILL.—(No. 56.)

(*The Lord O'Hagan.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

LORD O'HAGAN, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, the main object of the measure was to extend jurisdiction in bankruptcy to County Courts in Ireland. The Bill had already passed through their Lordships' House twice, and on each occasion its provisions had been explained. In the House of Commons the measure had been unfortunate. He would not trouble their Lordships by explaining the principles of the measure a third time, and would simply move the second reading.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord O'Hagan.*)

EARL CAIRNS expressed gratification that the noble and learned Lord had introduced his Bill again, and hoped that it would be more successful in the other House on its third introduction.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2ª accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House *To-morrow.*

SOUTH AFRICA — THE TRANSVAAL (NEGOTIATIONS)—THE PEACE ARRANGEMENTS.—OBSERVATIONS.

EARL CAIRNS, in rising to call the attention of the House to the arrangements recently made by Her Majesty's Government with the Boers, as appearing in the communications (telegraphic) respecting South Africa, and to ask for explanations, said: My Lords, it is now nearly three months since Parliament met. During that time, owing probably to the pressure of other Business, very little has been said of a subject which has, nevertheless, greatly occupied the public mind—the state of affairs in South Africa, and especially in the Transvaal. We were informed at the beginning of the Session, in the Most Gracious Speech from the Throne, that there had been a rising in the Transvaal, and that military operations were in progress for the purpose of suppressing that rising, and vindicating the authority of the Crown. After that we heard of successive disasters to the British Forces. There had been, before the end of the year, an attack upon the 94th Regiment at Madder's Spruit; then in January the reverse at Lang's Nek; and in February, first the battle at Ingogo, and subsequently the defeat at Majuba. We then heard that reinforcements had been rapidly and energetically prepared and sent forward to retrieve these disasters, and that a General, who had won his laurels in the East, had been sent out to command the reinforcements, and to co-operate with another General, hardly less trusted, who had already arrived on the scene. In these circumstances, the spirit of the country was sustained. They put trust in the exertions which were being made, and they relied upon the assurance they had received from the Government that the authority of the Crown would be vindicated. We then heard that there were arrangements and negotiations in progress. The Government naturally had a right to decline to enter upon any discussion of those negotiations while they still were in progress; and, on the other hand, it would have been wrong to press the Government for any information at that stage of the proceedings. But still the public relied on the assurance they had received, and in this House we had obtained a still further assurance. The noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies (the Earl of Kimberley), when the subject was mentioned on the 21st of February, told us that—

> "Her Majesty's Government have taken such steps as seemed to them best calculated to promote a satisfactory settlement, and to spare the effusion of blood, consistently with the honour of the British Crown."—[3 *Hansard,* cclviii. 1345-6.]

As the Speech from the Throne had announced that the authority of the Crown would be vindicated, so we understood that the Secretary of State for the Colonies desired to assure us that the honour of the Crown was involved in vindicating that authority. Then we received the information that the arrangements were concluded and that a peace had been made. The idea of peace and of a cessation of hostilities is always so welcome that we were disposed to hail with satisfaction the news of this arrangement, and of this peace; and we naturally imagined that, although the terms were not known, yet when they came to be known it would be found that they fully redeemed the promises which had been made by the Crown. Her Majesty's Government have now laid upon the Table the telegraphic Papers connected with this arrangement. I do not know how much of the satisfaction which first was felt any longer remains. Some details there are which still are wanting; and with regard to those details my object is to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies to favour us with some information on matters on which we are left in doubt by the Papers before us. But the leading features of the arrangement are clear, and although it may not be the time, until every detail has been supplied, for your Lordships to pronounce any formal opinion upon the peace that has been concluded; still, I think Her Majesty's Government have a right to know, when the Papers have been, as far as they have been, laid before us, what is the opinion which may be entertained by us with regard to this arrangement; and they would be entitled to say they naturally concluded, when so much information was laid before us, that we were satisfied with that which had been done when we expressed no dissatisfaction.

I will ask your Lordships to remember what the state of affairs was at the commencement of the Session. It was on the 20th of December that the affair which some people called, and not incorrectly, a massacre at Madder's Spruit took place. A portion of the 94th Regiment was on its march under the command of Colonel Anstruther. I do not stop, however, to consider at this moment the precise nature of the occurrence which took place; but your Lordships remember that in the result some 70 or 80 out of a force of 157 were killed, and that several, if not all, of the officers were among the number. After this an appeal was made to the Secretary of State for the Colonies from the Colony of Natal. Your Lordships will find in the Blue Book which was presented to Parliament in February a communication which was made to the Secretary of State on the 29th of December through Sir George Strahan. A deputation of the Legislature of Natal and others requested Sir George to send to the Secretary of State a resolution by telegraph. It was in these terms—

> "A deputation, composed of 15 Members of the Legislature and others, Mr. Merriman spokesman, request me to send the following resolution by telegraph:—'That this deputation, in common with the rest of South Africa, deplores the unhappy state of affairs now existing across the Vaal River, and ventures to urge upon Her Majesty's Government that, in order to effect a settlement of the differences which have arisen and to establish tranquillity, it is desirable that some person acquainted with the feelings and opinions of the inhabitants of South Africa should be appointed as a Special Commissioner to the Transvaal territory to inquire into and report upon the exact position of affairs, the feelings and wishes of those interested, and what arrangements would be most advantageous to the country and most likely to reconcile the inhabitants to the Government of the Queen; and the deputation would further respectfully suggest that the Chief Justice of the Cape Colony, Sir John H. De Villiers, possesses in an eminent degree the qualifications required for such an office.'"

That was a proposal which at that time, I think, was not unnatural. It was one which might well have been entertained; and if this eminent person, who is said to possess the confidence of all the parties there, and who, indeed, is one of the three Commissioners recently selected, had been appointed at that time, it is possible that we might have been spared much of what has occurred. But the view of the Secretary of State for the Colonies at the time was different. He replied, by telegraph, on the 30th of December, to Sir George Strahan as follows:—

> "Inform the deputation that, while fully appreciating their motives, we do not think the present moment will be opportune for sending a Special Commissioner to the Transvaal."

That was the opinion of the Secretary of State at that time. I think we shall find the ground of that opinion appearing again in the Most Gracious Speech from the Throne. The same motives which led the noble Earl to conceive that December was not the proper time to meet the proposal which had been made probably influenced Her Majesty's Government in putting into the mouth of Her Majesty the words of the Speech from the Throne. Parliament met on the 6th of January; and I will ask your attention to these words, which were then addressed from the Throne to your Lordships—

> "A rising in the Transvaal has recently imposed upon me the duty of taking military measures with a view to the prompt vindication of my authority; and has of necessity set aside for the time any plan for securing to the European settlers that full control over their own local affairs, without prejudice to the interests of the natives, which I had been desirous to confer."

In the Address presented by your Lordships in answer to that Most Gracious Speech you thanked Her Majesty for the information we had received, that the authority of the Crown would be promptly vindicated, and that not until that was done could the time arrive for conferring the boon upon the European settlers that was indicated in the latter part of the sentence which I have just read. "Rising in the Transvaal," of course, means a rebellion or insurrection; and I now wish to ask the Secretary of State whether the authority of the Crown has been promptly vindicated in the Transvaal? Has the action at Lang's Nek promptly vindicated the authority of the Crown? Has the reverse at Ingogo? Has the disaster at the Majuba? I wish to ask the Secretary of State whether he conceives that after these occurrences the authority of the Crown stood in a higher and better position than on the 6th of January last; and if it did not, what has become of your prompt vindication of the authority of the Crown? But I wish to call your Lordships' attention to the second part of the sentence. The duty of vindicating the authority of the Crown has, it is stated—

> "Set aside for the time any plan for securing to the European settlers that full control over their own local affairs, without prejudice to the interests of the natives, which I had been desirous to confer."

Do these words, I ask, in the mouth of the Sovereign, point to a cession of territory? Do they point to an abandonment of territory? Do they point to a dismemberment of the Empire? When the Government, through the mouth of the Sovereign upon the Throne, speak of conferring free institutions upon a portion of the British Dominions, it is understood that the Sovereignty of Her Majesty over that portion of the Empire is retained; that while there may be an alteration in the form of government, the Sovereignty remains where it stood before. I challenge Her Majesty's Government to produce any instance in any State Paper in existence where words of this kind in a Speech from the Throne were used to indicate or denote the dismemberment of the Empire—that is to say, abandon the country, and leave it free to establish a Republic or any form of government they pleased. Upon those words in Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech I have a few questions to put to the Secretary of State for the Colonies. Is the arrangement spoken of in the Speech from the Throne, and which was at that time contemplated by the Government, the same as that which has now actually been made with regard to the Transvaal? If it is not—if it is a different arrangement—will the Secretary of State allow me further to ask him, when did the change in the opinions of the Government take place, and why? If, on the other hand, the Secretary of State says it is the same arrangement which was contemplated by the Government at the time of Her Majesty's Gracious Speech, I wish to know why was that arrangement misdescribed in the words I have read? Why was Parliament, I will not say left in ignorance, but misled as to what was intended by the Government? Why were words put into the mouth of our Most Gracious Sovereign which, according to every interpretation of words coming from such a source, meant that the Sovereignty of the Transvaal was to be retained. But I have a further question to ask. If the arrangement which has actually been made is that contemplated at the time of Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech, and if the authority of the Crown has not been vindicated, I want to know what we have been fighting about in the interval? If this arrangement is what was intended, why did you not give it at once? Why did you spend the treasure of the country, and, still more, why did you shed the blood of the country like water, only to give at the end what you had intended to give at the beginning? We know that there are those who have lost in the Transvaal that which was dearer to them than the light of their eyes. They have been consoled with the reflection that the brave men who died, died fighting for their Queen and their country. Are the mourners now to be told that those men were fighting only for a country which the Government had determined to abandon, and that they were fighting for a Queen who was no longer to be the Sovereign of that country?

But let us go a little further into the history of this matter. I wish to know when it was that the idea in the mind of the Government of vindicating the authority of the Crown was abandoned? There is a very remarkable passage in one of the Orders issued by the Secretary of State for the Colonies to Sir George Colley. On the 5th of February the Secretary of State telegraphed Sir George Colley in these words—

> "I think it right to intimate to you, as you have instructions to assume the functions of Governor when you are able to enter the Transvaal, that whenever you may succeed in re-establishing the Queen's authority there, all questions affecting the future administration and settlement of the country, as well as questions as to dealing with those who have taken part against the Government, should be reserved by you for the consideration of Her Majesty's Government."

That is a very instructive telegram. It shows at once the construction put at that time by the Government upon the Most Gracious Speech from the Throne; and that construction is, I think, exactly that which ought to be put upon it. The re-establishment of the Queen's authority in the Transvaal was the task which the Government put before Sir George Colley, and the re-establishment of the Queen's authority was the vindication of that authority. But what becomes of these instructions? The next thing we have is a communication from the President of the Orange Free State—Mr. Brand. How Mr. Brand came to be set in motion I do not know, and it is not my business to conjecture. There are various theories on this subject; but I take what I find in these Papers. On the 5th of February, the day on which the Secretary of State telegraphed to Sir George Colley, a proposal came from Mr. Brand through Sir George Colley that the Boers should not be treated as rebels "if they submitted." How was that received by the Secretary of State? We are here on the first step of a descending scale, which is of an interesting character. The Secretary of State adopts the expression of "submission." He telegraphs to Sir George Colley—

Earl Cairns

> "I have received your telegram of the 5th. Inform Mr. Brand that Her Majesty's Government will be ready to give all reasonable guarantees as to the treatment of the Boers after submission."

The question, consequently, now comes to be, What was meant by the submission of the Boers? Well, the submission of rebels means, I apprehend, that they should lay down their arms, and that they should give up the strong places which they occupy in opposition to the Queen. Unless these things are done, there is no submission at all. But to continue the history of the matter, which is very curious. On the same day—that is to say, the 5th of February—took place the battle of the Ingogo, and from that day the word "submission" disappears from the telegrams. It never occurs again. On the 16th of February I find a telegram from the Secretary of State to Sir Evelyn Wood, in these terms—

> "Inform Kruger that if Boers will desist from armed opposition" (there is no reference to submission now) "we shall be quite ready to appoint Commissioners with extensive powers, who may develop the scheme referred to in my telegram to you of the 8th inst. Add that if this proposal is accepted, you are authorized to agree to suspension of hostilities on our part."

Submission is now removed out of the question. The proposal now is that the Boers should cease from armed opposition. Now, I want to know, what is the meaning of the Boers ceasing from armed opposition? What were the Boers doing? The Boers were in the Transvaal. Our garrisons were beleaguered there. Our forces were marching up to relieve our garrisons, and to re-establish our authority in the Transvaal. The Boers were opposing the advance of our troops. That was the position of things. We were moving; they were opposing. "If the Boers would desist from armed opposition." The meaning of that is that our troops were no longer to be interfered with, that they were to continue their march, that the garrisons were to be relieved, and that our troops were to establish authority in the Transvaal. But nothing of the kind was intended, and nothing of the kind was done. That was what embarrassed Sir George Colley, and he said—"I understand what this means if we are to go on and the Boers are to cease; but do you mean that we are to cease, and that that is to be the way in which opposition is to come to an end?" Sir George Colley asks very naturally the question—"Am I to leave our garrisons isolated? Is that what you mean by the Boers ceasing from armed opposition?" These are his words—

> "Latter part of your telegram to Wood not understood. There can be no hostilities if no resistance is made; but am I to leave Lang's Nek, in Natal territory, in Boer occupation, and our garrisons isolated and short of provisions, or occupy former and relieve latter?"

The Secretary of State answers that the garrisons should be free to provision themselves, and peaceful intercourse with them allowed; but he adds—

> "We do not mean that you should march to the relief of the garrisons, or occupy Lang's Nek, if the arrangement proceeds."

What was the consequence? Did opposition cease? Opposition, my Lords, triumphed; it was we who ceased. "Opposition" had nothing to go on for; it got everything it wanted. We now come to the battle of Majuba on the 26th of February. What was the advice of Sir Evelyn Wood under the circumstances? Did he say—"Cease from opposition; let nothing more be done?" Would that be very like Sir Evelyn Wood? He gave some very striking and pointed advice to Her Majesty's Government. That advice your Lordships will find at page 21 of the White Book which I hold in my hand. He says—

> "Reflecting on similar struggles in history, I do not attach much importance to punishing leaders, as did Sir George Colley, though I would not recommend allowing them to remain in Transvaal, nor would I accept them as representatives of people. In discussing settlement of country my constant endeavour shall be to carry out the spirit of your orders; but, considering the disasters we have sustained, I think the happiest result will be that, after accelerating successful action which I hope to fight in about 14 days, the Boers should disperse without any guarantee, and then many now undoubtedly coerced will readily settle down."

Sir Evelyn Wood knew that re-inforcements were at hand, the strength of the position he was occupying, and he spoke as anyone, humanly speaking, would have spoken under the circumstances, with the perfect certainty of the success of the exertions which he was ready to make. I think it cannot be doubted by any person that when our re-inforcements came up there would have been no bloodshed, and that the matter would have been settled with, probably, hardly any exchange of hostilities. But, at all events, that was the opinion of Sir Evelyn Wood; but no notice seems to have been taken of it by the Government at home. The phrase about ceasing from armed opposition was repeated and repeated in every telegram from that time from Downing Street, and nothing else. The first variation of the phrase, so far as I can find, came not from Downing Street, but from Mr. Kruger. The Boers are very shrewd men. They are not misled by captivating phrases; and what did Mr. Kruger think of this phrase—"Cease from armed opposition?" He put a construction on it which your Lordships will find at page 28. He said—

> "We are very grateful for the declaration in the name of Her Majesty's Government that, under certain conditions, *they* are inclined to cease hostilities."

It is not the Boers, you will observe, it is the Government who are inclined to cease from hostilities. Mr. Kruger quite understood the telegram; he read between the lines; he is a clever man, and he does not talk about the Boers ceasing opposition, but of the disposition of the English Government to take that course. But what, let me ask, was the final basis on which Mr. Kruger came into this arrangement? There was no repudiation of the construction which he put on the offer of the Government. As your Lordships will find at page 25, he would have nothing whatever to do with the telegram of the Secretary of State of February 8; and the reason he gives is that if he accepted it, it would be like admitting that the Boers were in the wrong. He speaks of holding to Sir George Colley's telegram of the 16th of February, a letter of the 21st of February, another telegram of the 12th of February, and a letter of the 29th of January. These are four documents which Mr. Kruger puts forward, and he says that it is upon the footing of these four documents that he is prepared to enter into negotiations. Here I may say that I have a question to put to the Secretary of State which is of some importance.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: It may be well to inform the noble and learned Earl at once that I have never been put in possession of the telegram of the 16th of February, nor the letter of the 21st.

That of the 29th of January I only saw in the newspapers.

Earl CAIRNS: Nothing can be further from my intention than to suggest that the Secretary of State is in possession of those documents. I know his candour too well to doubt that if they were in his possession he would have laid them on the Table. But there is something more important. This telegram was brought to the notice of the Secretary of State, in which Mr. Kruger says—"Now, understand, I am going to enter into negotiations with you on the footing of these four documents." The Secretary of State says he has not got the documents; but without them how could he know how the negotiations were to be conducted, or what Mr. Kruger meant? Why did not the noble Earl say, the moment he got this telegram—"I do not know what you refer to; you speak of documents which ought to be in the possession of the Government, but which are not." But I pass to something still more important. What is the final statement of Mr. Kruger in his telegram? It is this, that the only basis on which he will enter into negotiations is the restoration of the Republic. Short of that he says he will not treat; and with that document before them the Government, if they entered into negotiations, of course did so on the terms of Mr. Kruger, which embraced the restoration of the Republic. That is the common sense of the matter, whether you are dealing with Boers or Englishmen. So much for the history of the transaction. These then, my Lords, are the six stages of the "Surrender's Progress;" they are almost worthy of the pencil of a Hogarth. There is, first, a patriotic and almost passionate determination to vindicate and restore the authority of the Crown. In the second place, comes a lower offer —let there be at least submission on the part of the Boers. Thirdly, we reach, by this ladder of degradation, a still lower platform—no longer vindication of the authority of the Crown, no longer submission, but cessation from armed opposition with a strong intimation that there would be nothing to oppose. What comes next? The advice of your General to settle the country by acting on your military power, and that advice disregarded. Mr. Kruger then comes upon the scene, and his view is—"It is you, and not we, who are to cease from hostilities." And what is the last? Mr. Kruger again says—"Cease from hostilities; go into negotiation, but only on the terms of our having everything we ever asked for, including the restoration of the Republic."

Well, now I come to the terms of this surrender. In the first place, I have a question to ask as to the authority of the persons with whom you are treating. Have you thought who they are who were negotiating with you and with whom you have made your agreement? What are we told about this in the Papers before us? The first intimation we have is the view of Sir Evelyn Wood, who, as I said just now, stated that he would not treat with Mr. Joubert or Mr. Kruger. He did not accept them as the representatives of the people. That was his view. What was the view of the Secretary of State for the Colonies? He did not agree with the view of Sir Evelyn Wood, and answered him in these words —"We should make no exception as to the persons with whom we will negotiate, requiring only that they should be duly authorized representatives of the Boers, with power to act on their behalf." How were they duly authorized? Will the Secretary of State inform us? I am bound to say, on behalf of Messrs. Kruger and Joubert, that they seem to have very great doubt about their own authority. They at every turn tell you that they are shaking in their shoes for fear their acts will be repudiated by the Boers. And what, finally, did they say to Sir Evelyn Wood? Sir Evelyn Wood said—

> "They asked had I the power to recognize him (Kruger) as representing the Boer Government, and did I represent the English? I replied 'Yes.'"

Well, it was quite true that Sir Evelyn Wood represented the English; but had he the power to accept Kruger as representing the Boer Government? The Secretary of State required that the persons with whom we should negotiate should be duly authorized. I find no authority whatever. This is not a mere technicality; I should think very little of the point if it were. It is a matter of very considerable importance. Mr. Kruger is undoubtedly very apprehensive as to whether his acts will not be repudiated. We see every day in the ordinary channels of information that the opinion commonly entertained in the neighbourhood is that it is likely there will be a civil war, and that there are two parties, if not more, in the country. Well, if there should be a civil war, which side are we going to take? Are we going to side with the loyal Boers against the Triumvirate, or with the Triumvirate against the loyal Boers? Suppose that everything that Kruger has done should be disavowed, what is to happen? If this were a matter that would be finished and done with when done, I could understand our being ready to run some risk. But this is an arrangement which is to run on for six months. There are all sorts of things to be done under it, and if these things are not done the arrangement will not be of the slightest value to us. If it comes to pass that the acts of those who made this arrangement are repudiated, we shall have no power to insist upon the performance of any of the things to be done under it. Is it consistent with the dignity or with the interest of this country to accept the words of a Triumvirate who have with considerable violence seized upon the government, and to assume that they have authority to bind all the inhabitants of that country?

Now, let me come to the terms. The first is—"The right of the Transvaal people to complete self-government." I want, in the first place, to know how it came to pass that this term, conceding at once complete self-government—as it is called—was made by Sir Evelyn Wood? I think something has dropped out here—some Paper is missing. Of course, I do not mean to say that the Secretary of State has it; but it must be somewhere. But how does the matter stand according to the evidence of the Book before us? The Secretary of State, on March 12, said—"The Commission would be authorized to consider the following points;" and the first is "complete self-government under British suzerainty." The Commission would be authorized to do that—that is to say, that when the Commission was appointed it would take the matter into consideration, and determine whether there should be self-government, and in what form. I suppose that is the meaning of the words. Well, what happened next? Your Lordships will remember Mr. Kruger's communication, in which he says—"I am going into the conference upon the basis of the restoration of the Republic, and upon no other basis." I find on the part of the Secretary of State neither any acceptance of what Mr. Kruger said nor any repudiation of it—nothing about it. The next step is the stipulation by Sir Evelyn Wood that there should be complete self-government. Now, when did the Secretary of State authorize that stipulation to be made? What he did authorize was that the Commission should consider it. What is done is that the stipulation is, without any reference to the Commission, actually made and agreed to. I know Sir Evelyn Wood pretty well, and I am satisfied that he never went an inch beyond the authority given him. What I want to know is the way in which the authority was given him. Will the Secretary of State give us the information? Is the Secretary of State, or is he not, the head of the Colonial Office? Is somebody else conducting these negotiations? I trust we may have an explanation of this matter for the sake of Sir Evelyn Wood, if for no other reason. My next observation is this. We have got here the term "complete self-government to be given to the Boers." Those are not Sir Evelyn Wood's words. He is a soldier who does not use jargon of that kind. He talks plain English, and never called the abandonment of the territory of the Crown and the setting up of a Republic complete self-government. That is not what a soldier would call it. I think it is impossible not to see what these terms were inserted for. Their insertion is an effort—a feeble effort—to square what was done with the words of the Most Gracious Speech from the Throne. If you had said what was true—I mean what was accurate—you would have said—"The Transvaal is ceded to the Boers; the annexation is cancelled; the Republic is restored, and the Queen has no longer anything to say to the territory." That is the English of what is being done. Who can doubt that that is the real effect of these transactions? The Transvaal at this moment is the property of the Crown. When this Treaty is carried out, the Transvaal will cease to be the property of the Crown. Is that not dismemberment of the Empire? Is that not cession of territory? Is that not abandonment of the Dominions of the Queen? And, forsooth, you call this, as if you were giving free institutions to a Colony, local self-government! My Lords, you are giving Ireland a pretty lesson as to what you mean by local self-government. Our fellow-subjects across the Channel are very fond of using that term. Take care that you do not teach them it has a meaning which will make them still fonder of it.

But, now, I have something more to say upon the subject of this cession of territory. I do not desire to raise any legal question at this moment; but I wish to enter my protest against this straining and stretching of the Prerogative of the Crown. We have heard a good deal of late years in the way of charge against straining the Prerogative of the Crown. Take care, lest you strain it as it has never been strained before. I want to know what right the Crown has to abandon territory? It is a very difficult question, about which a good deal could be said. I recollect what was done in the case of the Orange Free State. There was much doubt entertained as to how that State was to be given up, and in great doubt the Secretary of State at the time determined, under the peculiar circumstances of the case, to repeal Letters Patent by an Order in Council and not to ask for an Act of Parliament. But in the case of the Orange Free State there had been no war, and the Imperial Parliament had never legislated upon the subject. In the case of the Transvaal the subjects of the Queen were in rebellion, and the English Parliament had stepped in and had voted money and legislated in a form which embraced the Transvaal. But, my Lords, do you recollect what was done 100 years ago in the case of the American States? Did the Crown cede those States by its Prerogative? Look back at the Statutes. You will find there an Act of Parliament which authorized the Crown to cede those States; and until that Act was passed the Crown was not authorized to treat with the rebels and to cede that territory. My Lords, I do not wish to encumber the case with any further argument upon the point; but I desire to express my grave doubts as to the course which the Government are pursuing. If they are right by the letter—which I doubt—they are certainly grievously straining the spirit of the Prerogative.

Well, now I come to the next term—"Protection for the Natives of the Transvaal." Protection for the Natives of the Transvaal! That is indeed something to provide for. The Commission, we are told, at page 7, will have to consider what securities shall be taken as to the future treatment of the Natives. What "securities?" Now, my Lords, let me say a few words upon this question. What are "the Natives of the Transvaal?" There seems to be some doubt about their number. Nobody says they are less than 400,000; some say 500,000.

The Earl of KIMBERLEY: About 700,000.

Earl CAIRNS: I believe the number is nearer 700,000; but I wished to be under the mark. These 400,000, or 500,000, or 600,000, or 700,000 are now subjects of the Crown of England, and, beyond all doubt, so far as they are concerned they desire to remain subjects of the Crown. The Commission, you say, is to consider how they are to be protected. But what are they to be protected against? There is one thing they have to be protected from, which we find described in a despatch of the Administrator, Sir Owen Lanyon. The way in which he describes their state is this—your Lordships will find it on page 6 of his Letters—

> "The unfortunate natives have suffered most from this outbreak because of their loyalty to Her Majesty. Numerous instances have been reported in which they have been wantonly shot down. They have been forced to work in the camps, and their property and cattle taken to supply the commissariat of men who had large flocks and herds of their own to draw upon. Were anything needed to show the necessity of Her Majesty's rule over the Transvaal it would be found in the reign of terror which exists and the sufferings which have been imposed upon these unfortunate natives."

But that is not by any mean all. What is the history of these Boers? In the years 1833-4-5, after Great Britain had abolished slavery, the Boers fretted against the restraints of our law of freedom, and they left the Cape Colony, in which they had been living, and "trekked," as it is called, over the border and went up beyond the Vaal. In the year 1852 a Treaty was made. We knew what their habits were; that they were slave-owners; that it was agreeable to their notion of right. The Sand River Convention was made in 1852. One of the terms was that there was to be no slavery north of a certain limit. My Lords, you know that that term of the Convention has been continuously and systematically disregarded. The Boers have practised slavery. My Lords, they practise it now in a way which is extremely formidable to deal with, because it is not as if the moral sentiment of the people were against slavery, and only certain wrong-doers were violating the law. But the Boers have not brought the mild and beneficent influence of Christianity to bear upon their understanding of Holy Writ. They go back to the Old Testament, and they find in it—or they think they find in it—a justification for these practices; and they hold that if slavery is not a Divine institution it is at least permitted. What is the practice of these people? I take one authority—I might adduce 50 from the Blue Books, but I select one authority from one of the Blue Books, which is a statement given by an unprejudiced witness—it is from a Colonial newspaper, *The Cape Argus*—

> "The whole world may know it, for it is true, and investigation will only bring out the horrible details, that through the whole course of this Republic's existence, it has acted in contravention of the Sand River Convention; and slavery has occurred, not only here and there in isolated cases, but, as an unbroken practice, has been one of the peculiar institutions of the country, mixed up with all its social and political life. It has been at the root of most of its wars; it has been carried on regularly even in the times of peace."

That description seems to me to be of great and grave importance. But, my Lords, even in the legislation of this people you will find sanctioned that which is, under a thin disguise, actual slavery. The disguise is the guardianship of orphans. In the Transvaal it would appear, as someone has said, as if all the Black children were orphans. Every child which they can get hold of is subjected to that which, in their views, is perfectly legitimate. We heard in this House only three weeks ago, from the lips of the Secretary of State himself, the story of the Boer Chief who brought home over the border, or from some other quarter, 32 Kaffir girls, whom he sold for 10*s.* apiece in his own neighbourhood. Now, my Lords, this is the nation you have to deal with. These are the 400,000, 500,000, 600,000, or 700,000 people whom you have to protect. This is the system against which you have to protect them. My Lords, this country has made great sacrifices, great exertions for the purpose of suppressing or extirpating slavery. I shall be surprised, indeed, if this country tolerates the handing back into that which is really a liability to slavery a nation of hundreds of thousands of people who, at this moment, are free British subjects. If this thing is to be done, at all events, it shall not be done in a corner. It shall be done in the light of day; and, as far as my feeble voice can reach, I will endeavour to explain and expose the real character of the act which is to be done. Well, but you say, the Commission is to consider the question of the treatment of the Natives. What can the Commission do? What is the protection which these people require? Recollect what the Transvaal is. It is a country larger than France. Homesteads are scattered over the country 20 or 30 miles, or much more, apart from each other. And what you have to watch over and superintend is what goes on in each of these homesteads. My Lords, how is that to be done? Are you going to occupy the country with an armed occupation? What less are you going to do? There is one protection, and one only, which can avail for the protection of the Coloured people. That is the protection of Courts of Justice, deriving their authority from the British Crown, and supported by the power of the British Crown. Unless every Native of the Transvaal can come before an British Court of Justice and say, "I am a free man, or a free boy, or a free girl, and I demand the protection of the British Crown as a British subject"—until that can be done, day after day, there can be no protection for the Native inhabitants of the country. My Lords, I read just now from the Gracious Speech from the Throne some words which I did not think at the time had the meaning which it now appears they bear. It is the passage which speaks of securing the rights of European settlers "without prejudice to the interests of the Natives." Without prejudice! It ends like a lawyer's letter. My Lords, is it possible that the annihilation of the rights of 700,000 British subjects in the matter of freedom is to be spoken of as an arrangement which is not to prejudice the rights of the

Natives? My Lords, I recollect when this country was greatly moved at certain instructions from the Admiralty, which were supposed to imply that a slave who took refuge in an English ship might be surrendered to his owner. Has this country so altered its views with regard to slavery that it will permit hundreds of thousands of British subjects to be handed back to a system which really is slavery as much any slavery that ever prevailed in the world?

What comes next? "The control of foreign relations is to be reserved." What, my Lords, is the meaning of that term? I know what this term means in the Congress Halls of Vienna, or Berlin, or Paris, or London. What I want to know is the meaning of the term as applied to a half-civilized race like the Boers. What are the foreign relations of the Boers? Do you mean their relations with Portugal? We do not want them reserved, because Portugal is our ally. What are the foreign relations of the Boers? I will tell your Lordships what they are. The foreign relations of the Boers are with the Zulus, the Swazis, the Pondos, and, if there be any, other Native border tribes—and the foreign relations of the Boers consist of stealing cattle across the border of the Zulus, and the Zulus stealing cattle across the border of the Boers, and Zulus and Boers grazing cattle by trespass on each other's grounds, and the Boers ill-treating the Zulus when they come into the Transvaal, and the Zulus ill-treating the Boers when they come into Zululand. These are the relations which are grandiloquently termed the foreign relations of the Boers, and which we have reserved. Are we really going to reserve this treasure? Are we really going to reserve squabbles about cattle stealing and grazing over limits, and complaints of ill-treatment on one side of the border or the other? I want to know from the Secretary of State, is that his view of the foreign relations which he is so anxious to keep for us? But, if so, how are we to deal with them? Suppose that a Boer is ill-treated by the Zulus in their country, and the Boers want redress, must they ask our leave before they seek it? Or suppose the Boers are attacked by the Swazis, are we going to defend the Boers, or to forbid them defending themselves? Are you going to make military provision for maintaining these foreign relations; or, on the other hand, are you going to say to the Boers that they shall do this, or that, or the other, and yet refuse to defend them for following your advice, which brings them into trouble? That brings me to another question. Are we going to be protectors of the Boers or are we not? Now, I will deal frankly with your Lordships on this subject. When I read over this Book, I did not find in it one word implying that we were to protect the Boer Republic, and I said to myself—"A very foolish thing to reserve the foreign relations of the Boers; but, at all events, we are not saddled with the duty of protecting this people in their foreign relations." But my illusion was broken by a document, which I find, not in this Book, but in other channels of information. It is in a communication from Sir Evelyn Wood. It is dated Durban, March 24, and is published in the newspapers—

> "The Colonial Secretary to-night issued the following communication from Sir Evelyn Wood:—'Terms of peace have been signed. The Boers have gone away. Free trade intercourse permitted throughout the Transvaal. A Royal Commission is to assemble at once to consider all points left in abeyance and recommend to the Imperial Government what, speaking generally, shall be the Eastern boundaries of a self-governing republic, which is to have a British Resident and to be under a British protectorate.'"

Is that an authentic document or not? The Secretary of State shakes his head.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I do not know.

EARL CAIRNS: The noble Earl does not know whether the Boer Republic is to be protected by us or not.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I beg the noble Earl's pardon. I did not say that. I said I did not know whether the document quoted is or is not authentic.

EARL CAIRNS: Then, I suppose, the noble Earl can tell us whether this statement in the document is correct or not. It is issued by Sir Evelyn Wood. It is a very serious thing, and I should be very glad to hear that there is some mistake about it. I have no wish to press the document if it is unauthorized. Bad as other things are here, I shall be glad to hear that there is not to be a protectorate. But the document is issued on the spot. You may not know of it; but it has been issued in the country, and the people of the country will believe it.

Well, now I come to the next point. The Transvaal will be under the suzerainty of the Queen. I hope your Lordships will not suppose that I am going to give a learned or antiquarian explanation of what the word suzerainty means. I have no intention of doing anything of the kind. I am content to take the word upon the negative and affirmative meanings which we have received from the Government. The negative meaning we have received from the Prime Minister. He says that suzerainty does not mean sovereignty. Well, I know very well that it does not; and, what is more, if it did the Boers would not have accepted it. It is just because it does not mean sovereignty that they have submitted to it. What does it mean? What it means is described by Sir Evelyn Wood, and his glossary—his interpretation—may be found at page 29 of the Papers. He defines suzerainty to mean this—

> "That the country is to have entire self-government as regards its own interior affairs; but that it cannot take action against or with an outside Power without permission of the Suzerain."

That is to say, the foreign relations of the Boers are reserved. Now, my objection to that is this. I object to your taking a word and coupling it with the name of the Sovereign of this country, and putting a meaning on the word which is not the real meaning—which is a conventional meaning—because it is perfectly clear that whatever may be the real meaning of the word, what it does not mean is that foreign relations are reserved. It is quite clear that it does not mean that.

The Earl of KIMBERLEY: Why?

Earl CAIRNS: Why? Will the noble Earl produce any book, any State Paper—any instance in history—in which a Power which had no connection with another Power except through the one circumstance of foreign relations being reserved was called the Suzerain of that other Power? If this is the meaning of suzerainty, that wherever the foreign relations are reserved you have a case of suzerainty, the consequence is that the Sovereign of this country is the Suzerain of Afghanistan. Because the Sovereign of this country, according to your Treaty, has control of the foreign relations of Afghanistan.

The Earl of KIMBERLEY: What Treaty?

Earl CAIRNS: I am willing to be corrected; but we have understood that the arrangement with Abdurrahman is that the foreign relations are reserved. But that is of very little importance. What I do care about is this. I object to your coining a meaning for a word—a word which has another meaning. I object to your taking possession of a word and giving it a special meaning for a particular purpose, and then connecting it with the Sovereign of this country. Why, you might as well take the word Archimandrite, and say that by that term you mean that foreign relations are reserved, and then say that the Queen is the Archimandrite of the Transvaal. You have no right to take a word and give it a meaning which is your meaning, and not the meaning of the word. And I object to your coining by the Prerogative a style for the British Sovereign hitherto unknown. But I will tell you why the word is taken. It is quite palpable what the reason is. The word is selected for this reason. It is selected in order that you may go on the one hand to the Boers and tell them—and tell them truly—"Suzerain does not mean Sovereign; suzerainty does not mean sovereignty; you may be quite satisfied," and then that you may come home here and jingle in the ears of the unthinking people of the country the word suzerainty, and leave them to think that it has the sound and semblance of, and some connection with, sovereignty.

Now I come to the Commission, and I want to know what is the authority that this Commission is to have and how is it to be supported? I know what has happened with regard to the Boers. The Boers, when the Commission was talked of, proposed, not unnaturally, that they should be represented upon that Commission. They asked that they should have two members, and they would have agreed to be bound by its decision, perhaps, had they been represented. But that was declined. It was decided that there must be no Boers on the Commission at all. I do not find one word in these Papers showing that the Boers have consented to be bound by what this Commission will do. I cannot find a word binding even the Triumvirate. We hear from various quarters that there is very great indignation as to what this

Commission is to do, and we hear mutterings both loud and deep that the Boers will not be bound by anything the Commission does. What we may naturally ask is—Suppose the Boers refuse to be bound, how are you going to support the authority of the Commission? What authority have you at this moment in the Transvaal to support it? You have the same authority that you have in Abyssinia. You may invade Abyssinia, and you may invade the Transvaal; but until you invade the Transvaal you have no authority there. Your garrisons are cooped up, and you can exercise no authority by compulsion. Suppose you mean to enforce it by invasion, what is your position with regard to invasion? Your re-inforcements, where are they? Three or four regiments have been ordered home. Your General is coming home in the packet ship—that is to say, if he can find room among the numbers who are doubtless hurrying away from a land which you are making uninhabitable for Englishmen. The spirit of your troops is lowered, the authority of the Crown is discredited; and what about the loyal Boers? I do not know how many of them there are. I know that various opinions are entertained on that subject. Some say they are the majority; a great many people think so. It is quite clear that Mr. Kruger and Mr. Joubert think they are in great numbers, for they are much afraid of them. Well, but if you had entered the Transvaal in the present state of affairs, these loyal Boers would have been your friends and supporters. Will they be so hereafter? You have betrayed them once; do you suppose they will ever let you betray them again? They will know much too well for that. Those loyal men will for the future be arrayed against you along with the rest of the nation. That is the way in which you are going to support your Commission.

But, my Lords, I find as regards this Commission a very remarkable statement, as to which we must have some information from the Secretary of State. It appears, among other things, that the Commission is to consider whether there shall not be taken off the Transvaal a portion of territory to the east of the 30th parallel of longitude. There is about as much land there, by the look of it, as England and Scotland together. Therefore, the portion in question may be a tolerably large slice. I see that it is said in the Papers that the Boers will not consent to have anything taken off the Transvaal; but I know not how that may be. But for what purpose do the Government wish to separate the piece of land to the east of the 30th parallel from the rest of the Transvaal? The idea appears to be that it is to be some "buffer," as it is called, between the land of the Boers of the Transvaal and the countries to the east of that territory. I do not suppose that you want a "buffer" between the Boers and the Portuguese. Remember that to the east of the 30th parallel you have first the Portuguese, then Amatonga, and then the Zulus. You want to separate the Boers from the Natives of Amatonga and of Zululand. The intervening piece of land I take it for granted you do not mean to leave as "no man's land," without any owner. If you do, either the Boers will take it again, or the Swazis or the Zulus will do so. Are we, then, to keep that land and to interpose between the Boers, the Swazis, and the Zulus? We have some right to know what the Government intend to do. We are not to be hood-winked as to a matter which is all-important in regard to the policy to be pursued in South Africa. You know very well that that intervening piece of land will be of no use to you as an interval between the Transvaal and the Native tribes unless you garrison it with British troops. Are you going to garrison it with British troops? Is that the policy of the Government? Let us know it if it is, because nothing more disastrous could occur to us than that, after giving up the Transvaal and exciting all the loyal Natives and the loyal Boers against us, we are to end by having a chain of garrisons along the eastern part of the Transvaal, which is most isolated from support.

I come next to the provision that until the completion of the arrangements with the Boers our garrisons are to remain, are to have food, but are to have no ammunition. No ammunition is to be brought by us into the country of the Transvaal. What does this mean? I own that I am ashamed to be the person to explain it. Do your Lordships remember what has happened? What were our Transvaal garrisons at the commencement of the war? Our soldiers were cooped up in them; they were surrounded; our troops were marching from Natal to relieve them.

In substance, though not in form, the garrisons were prisoners; they could not move out. Our troops were marching to relieve them. You are going to leave these garrisons there. What will their position be? I see calculations made as to whether they have ammunition for a week, for two weeks, or for three. It does not matter in the least whether they have ammunition for one week, for two, or for three weeks; if you have not the right to supply fresh ammunition their ammunition is limited, and they are at the mercy of the Boers around them. And while you, in form, leave this country to imagine that you are doing something in their favour by arranging that these garrisons are to remain in the Transvaal, the truth and the English of it is that these garrisons are hostages in the hands of the Boers. That is where the Government leaves them—those English troops are hostages in the hands of the Boers. This reminds us of the painful occurrences at Potchefstroom. There was a time when this country would have expressed a stronger opinion about what has happened at Potchefstroom than it has yet done. What has happened? There was an armistice agreed upon between Sir Evelyn Wood and the leaders of the Boers. What were the terms of that armistice? I will read it to your Lordships. At page 22, it is said that the third term of the armistice is that "Mr. Joubert undertakes to send notice of the armistice and its conditions to the respective garrisons." Remember, it was for the Boer Commander, Mr. Joubert, to do this, and not for us. The armistice was made on the 7th, and the garrison had to surrender 14 days after. I hear that there was a convoy of mules going on from Sir Evelyn Wood with provisions for this garrison, and that this convoy of mules did not, could not, make the distance of 200 miles in 14 days. Very possibly; but that has nothing to do with the matter. Mr. Joubert was not to send his notice by a convoy of our mules. He personally undertook to send notice to the garrison; and does anybody say that messengers could not traverse in the Transvaal a space of 200 miles in less than 14 days? I heard with surprise the noble Earl say that he and the Secretary of State for War were conferring on this matter, and that they had not received sufficient information. My Lords, I should have thought that 10 minutes, or even 10 seconds, would have been sufficient for any English Minister to know what ought to be done under the circumstances, and that in 10 seconds after the receipt of the news there would have been flashed from Downing Street, with the lightning speed of the electric wire, a message to the Boer Triumvirate, not that any life that had been lost should be restored—that, alas! could not be done—but that every arm that had been taken must be restored, the ammunition must be given back, full indemnity must be made for every loss, and that every word written with regard to the surrender of Potchefstroom must be absolutely and completely cancelled and obliterated. And, my Lords, if that has not been done, I do maintain that never before in the history of England has such an act occurred and such an act been allowed to be so long unredressed.

And now I come to the stipulation as to Lang's Nek. What is the provision with regard to it? As the Boers, we read, have agreed to withdraw from Lang's Nek and to disperse to their homes, Sir Evelyn Wood promises not to take possession of that position, nor to follow them up with troops, nor to send ammunition into the Transvaal. Lang's Nek is in the Colony of Natal. The Transvaal is our country, too, but Lang's Nek is in Natal. The Boers retire from Lang's Nek, and we in Natal are bound hand-and-foot; our troops are not to occupy Lang's Nek. My Lords, can we speak patiently of this? Not to occupy Lang's Nek! What is the explanation of the Prime Minister about this? He says these words only mean that the Boers were dispersing, and there was not to be a pursuit of the Boers. Well, if that was what was intended, a very few words would have been sufficient—not to occupy Lang's Nek for 24 hours, or for a day, or for a week. But an absolute provision not to occupy Lang's Nek! My Lords, was ever such an insult offered as this, even according to the explanation of the Prime Minister? I can hardly trust myself to state it. Are we, are this great and spirited nation, gentlemen and men of honour I trust, making peace with the Boers, telling them that we do make peace with them, that they are to disperse—as one of its terms—to their own homes, and are they to turn round and tell us—"That is all very well for you, but we do not trust you; we believe that at the moment of our dispersing, notwithstanding the peace, you would turn round and follow us, and pursue us; and we, therefore, bind you not merely to make peace with us, but not to occupy positions in your own country from which you could pursue us?" Was ever such an insult offered in private life, and is our nation so lost to all sense of honour that it can sit down under such an insult as that which the Prime Minister offers by way of explanation?

I come now to the next point. There is to be a Resident at the capital of the Boers, but there is to be no interference in the internal affairs of the country. Now, how is the Resident to be supported—I do not mean by money, but by force? The Boers are a rough sort of people, and even in our short intercourse with them during the last two months some rough things have been done. I do not suppose that this Resident will be very popular; and I wish to know, without anticipating the use of any extreme violence, how he is to be supported in the event of his being insulted? Or are you going to send him into the country without any support? If so, I need only remind the Members of Her Majesty's Government that that was precisely what they denounced when it was done in Afghanistan. I trust we shall have an explanation on this point.

Then I come to the amnesty, the terms of which are very remarkable. The amnesty extends to all, including the leaders, and excepts only persons directly responsible for acts contrary to the rules of civilized warfare. And in Sir Evelyn Wood's final agreement, we find that the Boer leaders said they would gladly co-operate with Her Majesty's Government in bringing to justice those who were directly responsible for acts contrary to the rules of civilized warfare. Now, who are these men? We know very well to whom these words ought to apply—namely, to the murderers of Captain Eliot, and to the authors of the massacre at Madder's Spruit. The Boers are to co-operate with us in bringing them to justice; but what does this mean? The murderers of Captain Eliot are Boers in the Transvaal; they are nine in number, and are perfectly well known to everyone there. The murder was committed in broad daylight, and in the midst of the homesteads, so that everyone knew what had happened. The leaders of the Boers are able to hand them over to us; and to tell us that they will co-operate with us is to invert the real position of affairs, for they are in possession of the Transvaal, and we can do nothing. It is for us to require them to hand over to us those persons who are outside the pale of civilized warfare, instead of promising to co-operate with us. But who are the others? You remember the affair of Madder's Spruit, and the account of it that had been communicated to us by the Government. The circumstances of the attack I will read to your Lordships from the Official Report of Sir Owen Lanyon. He says—

> "The circumstances of the attack upon Colonel Anstruther's men—a force consisting of 268 men, women, and children—are told in a few words. Having selected their spot for the attack, the mounted force of the rebels surrounded the straggling wagon-train while on the line of march, and sent in a flag of truce to the officer commanding, and while he was reading the letter from the Triumvirate, and replying verbally that his instructions were to proceed to Pretoria, and that he must obey those instructions, the attacking force of rebels was, under cover of the flag of truce, advancing upon and surrounding the soldiers; and immediately the answer was given the rebels opened a deadly fire, picked off the officers, and killed and wounded 157 of the small English force. The number of the dead now amounts to 70."

And, further on, he adds—

> "The surrounding and gradual hemming in under a flag of truce of a force, and the selection of spots from which to direct their fire, as in the case of the unprovoked attack by the rebels upon Colonel Anstruther's force, is a proceeding of which very few like incidents can be mentioned in the annals of civilized warfare."

My Lords, did I hear aright the other night a reply given that the Government had received no information to lead them to think that this massacre was not inside the rules of civilized warfare? Did your Lordships hear that in this House? I trust there is some mistake, and that the noble Earl will rise and tell us that that is not what he meant to convey, and that the idea will not go forth that a transaction such as I have described is, according to the view of an English Government, within the pale of civilized warfare.

And now as to the position of the English and the loyal Boers. I see in this Paper some suggestion that somebody or other is to look after their interests. These loyal Boers number many thousands, of whom many are refugees in neighbouring countries, but many still remain in the Transvaal. I do not know whether it is true, as we read the other day, that Mr. Kruger said he would rather kill' 20 of them than one English soldier; but if there is any truth in these words, they show the temper in which the loyal Boers will be regarded by those who are now in the ascendant. And what have they to rely upon? I remember that Sir Garnet Wolseley told them—I trust to my memory for the words—that the rivers might run back to their sources, or the sun rise in the West, before the Transvaal ceased to form part of the British Dominion. They relied on that assurance; but was the word of Sir Garnet Wolseley of less avail than that of Sir Evelyn Wood? And if Sir Evelyn Wood's word is now to be relied on, was Sir Garnet Wolseley's word not to be taken before. Can you suppose that anything that this Commission can recommend, any promise that can be extracted, will prevent these Boers, when they return home, from regretting bitterly the day that they believed the word of an English General?

I cannot weary your Lordships by going into a further examination of the details of this arrangement, though there is still much that might be said. I have risen, my Lords, from the perusal of these Papers with feelings which I find it difficult to describe. It is not easy, in the midst of the events which pass around us, to realize the character of the history we are creating for future ages; but we can understand and look back upon the history of past times, and infer from this the manner in which we shall be regarded by those who come after us. It is just 100 years since a page was written in the annals of England, darkened by the surrenders of Burgoyne and Cornwallis. Those were surrenders made by Generals at a distance from, and without communication with, home—on their own responsibility—in great emergency—and without the possibility of any alternative. They were events, however, which both at the time, and long afterwards, deeply touched our national pride. But it will be recorded hereafter that it was reserved for the 19th century, and for the days of telegrams, to find a surrender, with reinforcements at hand, and every means for restoring the power and vindicating the authority of the Crown, dictated, word for word, by the Government at home. I observe that this arrangement is somewhere styled the Peace of Mount Prospect. My Lords, I much doubt whether it will not go down to posterity as the Capitulation of Downing Street. You have given a bitter cup to drink to Englishmen abroad and Englishmen at home, and you have made the draught unduly and unnecessarily bitter. Surely some of the ingredients might have been spared. I wish you could have chosen for the conclusion of such a capitulation some other agent than one of the bravest, the most intrepid, the most promising Generals in the service of the Queen. I wish you could have spared our troops the intense mortification of being paraded to see a half-civilized enemy marching off in triumph with arms and accoutrements captured from British soldiers. I wish that while still the Transvaal remains, as you say it does, under our control, the British Flag had not been first reversed and then trailed in insult through the mud. I wish that the moment when you are weakening our Empire in the East had not been selected for dismembering our Empire in South Africa. These are the aggravations of the transaction. You have used no pains to conceal what was humbling, and a shame that was real, you have also made burning. But the transaction, without the aggravations, is bad enough. It has already touched, and will every day touch more deeply, the heart of the nation. Other reverses we have had; other disasters. But a reverse is not dishonour, and a disaster does not necessarily imply disgrace. To Her Majesty's Government we owe a sensation which to this country of ours is new, and which certainly is not agreeable.

> "In all the ills we ever bore
> "We grieved, we sighed, we wept; we never blushed before."

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: My Lords, while I listened to the confident and unsparing denunciations of the noble and learned Earl, I confess I was somewhat surprised. I thought that his memory was somewhat better, and that he might chance to have recollected that the embarrassments and difficulties connected with the question concerning which he has addressed the House for over two hours, were due, and due entirely, in their origin, to the action of the Government of which the noble and learned Earl was a distinguished Member. ["No!"] Those noble Lords who say "No!" must be very ignorant indeed of the history of these transactions. I have never attributed to the late Government any motives which were wrong in reference to the action they took; but I said that if they had correctly judged the circumstances of the case, and that if they were right in their opinion that the people of the Transvaal would willingly acquiesce in being placed under the British dominion, there was much to be urged in favour of the measures that were taken. But, in reality, they erred in judgment, and the event has proved that a greater blunder was hardly ever committed; and yet they now blame the Government which, with painful steps, I admit, is endeavouring to extricate the country from the difficulties in which it is placed. I think the noble and learned Earl might have displayed a little more modesty in his statement and a little less legal ingenuity, and have taken a more statesmanlike view of the subject. It is always disagreeable to be connected with a failure. To be connected with a failure is now the unfortunate lot of this country, and noble Lords opposite are connected with the failure as well as we. The whole origin of this difficulty was the annexation of the Transvaal. The noble and learned Earl began, I think, from last December; but I hope I shall be allowed to carry the subject a little further back. When we came into Office we found that we had this question to deal with. It might, perhaps, have been better to reverse at once the whole policy of the late Government. If our information at that time had not led us to believe that it might be possible to avoid that reversal, we should have adopted that measure. But in South Africa there has been, unfortunately, more than one change of policy; and changes of policy, even when they are inevitable, are always attended with considerable evils, and we thought it our duty to endeavour to carry on the government of the Transvaal, and to see whether we could not bring the people of that country to such a state of contentment that they might acquiesce in our rule and be willing to enjoy the blessings of self-government under the sovereignty of the Queen. The first position we took was that they might have this self-government within the Confederation. The question was brought before the Cape Parliament; but they declined to take the first step, and the proposal for a Conference fell to the ground. I confess that I had not sufficient insight to see behind all the information I received. I could show your Lordships, step by step, how Sir Owen Lanyon, who governed the country, and Sir George Colley, who went through the whole of the country in August, informed me up to the last moment before the rebellion broke out that things were quieting down, and that all our difficulties would disappear. Then came the news of the outbreak of the insurrection on the 19th of December. The only previous information I had received that looked at all alarming was contained in a telegram of the 5th of December, which said it had been thought desirable to send back a few companies of a regiment to the Transvaal, as there had been some difficulty with the Boers. But considering that the authorities in the Transvaal were of opinion that the forces might even have been further reduced shortly before that time, I could not suppose such a complete change had come over the whole circumstances of the case, or that there was any real ground for serious apprehension. I now come to the period with which the noble and learned Earl deals. The first document to which the noble and learned Earl referred was Her Majesty's Gracious Speech from the Throne. In order to explain clearly the point of view the Government then held, I will refer to the instructions to Sir Hercules Robinson, issued a few days before the assembling of Parliament. Those instructions stated that Her Majesty's Government anxiously looked forward to the time when it might be possible to confer institutions for local government on the Transvaal; but that the recent attempt to overthrow the authority of the Queen by armed force rendered that impracticable until the authority of the Queen had been vindicated. As I understand it, the accusation against us is this—"If you had formed the scheme of relinquishing the sovereignty of the Crown, why did you not act upon it, and why did you speak of vindicating the authority of the Crown, and why did you spend unnecessary blood and treasure?" That is, I think, a very fair statement of the argument; but you must consider what was the precise situation when my despatch to Sir Hercules Robinson was written. The insurrection had then broken out about 10 days, the garrisons in the Transvaal were beleaguered, and our force was a very small one. Was that a moment, even if we had formed the intention, to announce that we were to leave the Transvaal, without making any effort, without sending any re-inforcements, without having any military power, and simply to say that, an insurrection having broken out, we would withdraw our garrisons, and leave the Boers their independence? Under no circumstances, I undertake to say, would any Government have taken a course other than we did. The noble and learned Earl wrongly assumes that all the concessions have been on our side. He quite overlooks one important stipulation—namely, that the armed Boers should disperse. It seems to me that if the armed Boers are to disperse, if tranquillity is to be restored, if the British garrisons in the Transvaal are to be relieved, and British administration carried on until other arrangements are made by Commissioners appointed by the Queen, there is a vindication of the Queen's authority in the Transvaal. The noble and learned Earl proceeded to a minute criticism of the various telegrams contained in the published Papers, treating them, if I may say so, as if they were documents in a Chancery suit, and, by dint of great legal ingenuity, placing upon them interpretations which, I freely admit, are exceedingly new to me. Let me briefly refer to one or two of the points referred to by the noble and learned Earl, which appear to me the most important. He made a great deal of the word "submission" employed in the telegram of the 8th of February, and left your Lordships to infer that it afterwards disappeared from the Papers on account of the unsuccessful engagement on the Ingogo. Unfortunately for that argument, the communications with President Brand were commenced a considerable time before the date of the telegram referred to, the first being made so long ago as January 10. On that date I wrote to President Brand's Representative in this country—

> "I request that you will inform President Brand that, provided the Boers desist from their armed opposition to the Queen's authority, Her Majesty's Government do not despair of making a satisfactory arrangement."

The word "submission" was used subsequently in a reply to a communication from Mr. Brand, in which he asked what would be done on a certain point if the Boers "submitted;" and the word "submission" was merely a re-echo of the word used by him. Therefore, the whole of the noble and learned Earl's ingenious argument as to the omission of the word from the telegrams after our defeat on the Ingogo falls to the ground. Again, the noble and learned Earl overlooked altogether this important point—that the arrangements made after the unfortunate engagement on the Majuba Hill had their origin in communications made some days before that engagement. The original source, if I may say so, of those communications, putting aside my telegram to Mr. Brand, which may have suggested, though this I do not know, to Mr. Kruger the communication he addressed to Sir George Colley, was the telegram of the 13th of February. The absence of the document to which the noble and learned Earl referred can only be explained by the death of Sir George Colley, in whose possession they were. I have never received them. But by inference I am aware what they must have been. The letter of the 21st of February was, no doubt, written by Sir George Colley to Kruger in pursuance of my telegram, and repeating its terms. That to Mr. Brand of the same date could not have been of vital importance, inasmuch as it was addressed to a third party. The letter of the Triumvirate of the 29th of January, strangely enough, does not seem to have reached the British authorities at all; but, from what I have seen respecting it in the newspaper telegrams, I do not think it could have much affected the situation. To return to Mr. Kruger. The position of matters was this. We received from Mr. Kruger a communication which we thought afforded an opportunity of entering into further negotiations with the Boers which might have a satisfactory result. If the noble and learned Earl will turn to that document, he will find that Mr. Kruger refers to the possibility of a Royal Commission being issued. In answer to Mr. Kruger's communication I sent a telegram to Sir George Colley, informing him that if the Boers desisted from armed opposition we should be quite ready to appoint Commissioners. The question of dates in these matters is one of importance; and the noble and learned Earl will observe that Sir George Colley's answer to Mr. Kruger was sent on the 21st of February, and that not till the 26th of February did the affair of the Majuba Hill occur. Now, could we, because we had been unfortunate in that engagement, draw back from the undertaking we had previously entered into with Mr. Kruger? Such a proceeding would have been most undefensible—I had almost said an act of bad faith. We did not consider that it was possible for us as honourable men to change our plans because of the unsuccessful result of an engagement in which we, and not the Boers, had been the aggressors; and the consequence was that the negotiations went on. Here it may be well I should go back upon the cause of those negotiations, and explain the reasons which induced Her Majesty's Government to engage in them. They did not originate with Her Majesty's Government at all, but were started by President Brand, who was very anxious —which did him credit—to put an end to the war. Now, what was the course which it was my duty in these circumstances to take? Was I to tell President Brand that we could not listen to any terms of peace, or to any suggestion of peace from him? The circumstances were such that I could not conceive a greater breach of duty or a more imprudent course than that would have been. We knew that the action of the Free State trembled in the balance—that at any moment it might enrol itself among the number of our enemies; and, considering the comparative weakness of our forces in the field, an attack upon their flank by the Free State might have proved most disastrous. It was my duty to intimate to President Brand that we were not prepared to push matters to extremities if an honourable settlement of the difficulty could be arrived at. Up to that point the noble and learned Earl, I take it, would not complain of the action of Her Majesty's Government. After those communications with President Brand had been carried on for some time, during which we pursued a perfectly consistent course, uninfluenced by the misfortunes which occurred from time to time to our arms, we received a direct overture from the Boers. They asked for terms we could not accept. They called upon us to withdraw our garrisons from the Transvaal, and to acknowledge the independence of the Republic. The noble and learned Earl says that we agreed at once to all that the Boers demanded. We, however, did nothing of the kind. We, on the contrary, did not assent to any of the terms proposed except the suggestion of a Royal Commission, which we thought might afford a means of settlement. Then came the unfortunate affair at Majuba Hill; and before I come to the conditions of peace which were subsequently agreed upon, I would point out that your Lordships' attention ought not to be concentrated on a certain number of telegrams or upon each successive step which the Government may have taken. You ought, I think, to look from a somewhat broader point of view on the whole subject. You should regard it from the point of view of the interests of South Africa generally and of those of the Empire itself. The origin of these difficulties should not be lost sight of, nor the temper in which the question at issue was looked upon at home, abroad, and in our Colonies. In referring to the origin of the war, I am not going to say anything about the policy which led to the annexation of the Transvaal. That is a *fait accompli*. But when the noble and learned Earl talks of the dismemberment of the Empire, one would suppose that he was speaking of the surrender of a limb which had been united to the Empire for at least the last 100 years. He would almost seem to have forgotten that the people of the Transvaal are only subjects of the Queen of three years' date, and that a large number of them—the majority, as it now turns out—have protested against being considered in that light. I am ashamed, therefore, to find this matter dealt with as if we were giving up an integral part of the United Kingdom, and in a way that shows there is no consideration with the great questions of general policy involved. There is no desire to look at them in a broad spirit, but rather to snatch a Party triumph. When the Transvaal was taken over we on this side believed, and I am sure noble Lords opposite, who were at the time in Office, honestly believed also, that the people acquiesced in the annexation of their country; and, indeed, it was that only which led us to regard it as a justifiable measure. But, as matters have turned out, it appears that, so far from acquiescing in the annexation, they were so violently opposed to it as to break out into a most dangerous rebellion. Were we then, I would ask, to treat these men as if they had been united to this country for generations? That would, in my opinion, have been a wrong spirit in which to approach the subject. But the position in which we found ourselves was not one in which we could say to the Boers, "We will retire because you attack us." That would be impossible. It was absolutely necessary to take steps to relieve our garrisons. More than that. Before we could be in a position to negotiate with the Boer leaders it was necessary to have a force on the spot, so that we might be able to enforce our demands. What chance, I would ask, would there have been otherwise of a successful arrangement? Here I may observe that when the noble and learned Earl speaks of the conditions of peace, and what he calls our humiliating position, as reminding him of the capitulations of Burgoyne and Cornwallis, who, he says, yielded to superior numbers, I was somewhat astonished. The argument of the noble and learned Earl, I think, has much more force the other way. When a person is able to insist on his own terms he is, I maintain, in a far better position to make concessions than those who have no alternative but to capitulate and give up their arms. Such, then, as I have stated, was our position with regard to the Transvaal. But was the Transvaal the only settlement we had to take into account? There are other settlements in South Africa, and those who have studied the subject know that their interests are so closely connected that nothing occurs in one part of that wide territory by which the rest is not more or less affected. There is not a shot fired throughout South Africa in anger which does not re-echo throughout every portion of that dominion. But there is still something further to be considered. Who are those rebels of the Transvaal? With whom are they connected? They are men of Dutch origin. They are connected by the closest ties with the inhabitants of the Orange Free State and with the subjects of the Queen at the Cape. So intimate is their connection by marriage and every possible tie that a war carried on in South Africa brings into play forces and rouses passions which might well make a bold man hesitate before he rejected any mode of preserving peace which would be likely to succeed. The connection between the Orange Free State and the Transvaal is such that it is scarcely possible, had the war continued long, that the former would have been able to refrain from joining our enemies. The state of feeling throughout the Colony was also becoming of a very alarming character. The sympathy felt by the Dutch population with the people of the Transvaal was such as could not be overlooked by the Government. Such being the state of things in South Africa, what, I would ask, was the temper of the people at home? The noble and learned Earl spoke of the late war, as if it was one which enlisted all the patriotic feelings of the country, as one in which every man of honour would desire not to sheathe his sword until it had become dyed with the blood of the greatest possible number of Boers. We have been treated to a kind of declamation which might well be resorted to if some enemy were invading our shores; but the feeling of the English nation on the subject is, I am convinced, somewhat different from that which the speech of the noble and learned Earl would lead one to suppose. The conscience of the people of England was not easy as to the war in the Transvaal. It told them that it was a war which had been undertaken to subdue men who were never willing to be our subjects—a war from which no glory was to be obtained, and which, if it could be done consistently with sound policy, it was an absolute duty to bring to an early conclusion. These were the inducements which weighed with the Government; they were, it seems to me, strong inducements; and the policy which we have pursued is one which I do not think the country will condemn. It is a most disagreeable task to a Minister to have to recommend, especially when our arms happen not to have attained success, a course which has been represented in the light in which that which we deemed it our duty to adopt has been represented to-night. Speaking for myself, however, I may say I believe there is no higher or more imperative duty in the case of a Minister charged with the responsibility of an Empire such as ours than to resist the vain desire of mere military glory when he can obtain a settlement which he regards as conducive to the real interests of the country. I remember having heard an anecdote of a man who, I think, noble Lords opposite will allow was not disposed to take a low view of military honour. Someone speaking in the presence of the Duke of Wellington said something about the point of honour, and his answer was—"I used to hear a good deal when in Spain about the point of honour, but in my opinion the true point of honour is to do your duty." I would now make a few remarks as to what the noble and learned Earl said about the conditions of peace. The noble and learned Earl said he supposed the terms "complete local self-government" were used in order to square what we have done with the words of the Gracious Speech from the Throne. If the noble and learned Earl will believe me, these words were chosen simply because they expressed more clearly than others could the kind of position which we intended the Transvaal State should occupy. The whole matter is for the consideration of the Commissioners, who will take this general statement as a guide to their deliberations and communications with the Boer leaders——

EARL CAIRNS: Why does not that appear?

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: The noble and learned Earl will take it from me that it is so.

EARL CAIRNS: Where are the documents?

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: The documents say so; the Commission is to consider these points.

EARL CAIRNS: It does not say so.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: Then the noble and learned Earl may take it from me that I say so, and when he sees the instructions I have sent to the Commission he will see that it is so. The noble and learned Earl will find, perhaps, in the course of his career, that every point cannot be as clearly explained by telegraph as it can in a legal case. Well, the Commissioners will consider the whole subject, and it will undoubtedly be open to them to consider whether this agreement may not be varied, and whether the final settlement should take some other form. We shall adhere with perfect honesty to what we have agreed to; but if the Commissioners think that there are arrangements which would more suitably carry out our intentions, it will will be open to them to report those arrangements to us with a view, if we should see fit, to their adoption. It is suggested that we have been very perversely ingenious in discovering the word Suzerain, and that we have given it some special meaning evolved out of our own consciousness; but, in the opinion of many persons well qualified to understand the meaning of words, it is the most appropriate term that could be used. I believe the word expresses very correctly the relation which we intend shall exist between this country and the Transvaal. Our intention is that the Transvaal shall have independent power as regards its internal government, and we shall only reserve certain powers to be exercised by the Queen. Let us consider what the limitations are to be. The noble and learned Earl assumes that there is only the limitation of control over foreign relations. But there are other limitations. For instance, there is one dealing with arrangements for the protection of the Natives in the interior of the Transvaal. Now, with regard to our control over the relations of the Transvaal with foreign Powers. The noble and learned Earl thought it curious that we should have reserved a control of that kind, thinking, no doubt, that the relations of the Transvaal with foreign countries were very limited. But before the Transvaal was annexed the Republic had concluded Treaties with a large number of European Powers, and those Treaties existed at the time of the annexation. Therefore, the control which we propose to assume is not an altogether unimportant matter. It is quite clear that there ought to be, as regards foreign relations, only one Government in South Africa; that there ought to be no communication with foreign Powers upon any subject except through the Representative of the Queen. I come next to Frontier affairs, and I admit at once that the dealing with these Frontier affairs is, perhaps, the greatest difficulty of the whole subject. The late

Government were actuated by their apprehensions of Native disputes on the Transvaal Frontier to take the step of annexation. It was because of the embarrassment caused by the relations of the Transvaal to the Natives upon the Frontier that the Earl of Carnarvon advised the annexation of the territory. There may be some force in the argument that it is a dangerous thing to entangle ourselves with these Frontier difficulties. My answer is, that at no time have we been able to disentangle ourselves in South Africa from these Frontier questions. Long before the annexation we were continually remonstrating with the Transvaal Republic, and interfering between it and the Natives; and, in short, doing the very thing without authority which it is now proposed we should have the right to do. It is of vital importance that Frontier wars should not be undertaken in South Africa without our having an opportunity of expressing our views and using our influence for the purpose of preventing them. I do not see any insuperable difficulty in the way of a Resident in the capital of the new Transvaal State exercising a very salutary influence over the Government of the State; and, under the agreement which we may make with it, we may expect to be in a position to mediate between it and the Frontier Natives with far greater effect than if the matter were left untouched. The object of this settlement is to preserve all that was valuable in our position when we annexed the country. There would be no advantage to England in her having to manage the ordinary local affairs of the Transvaal. We have, in fact, been trying to carry out the spirit of the arrangement which the late Government made when the Transvaal was annexed. The next subject to which I shall advert is one of very great importance; I refer to the position of the Natives within the Transvaal itself. Upon this the noble and learned Earl will, I hope, forgive me for saying that he fell into a very natural mistake. He gave us a tremendous denunciation of slavery. I think, for my part, I have never been backward in expressing my hatred of slavery; and I thought I had shown, by the way in which I have spoken upon that subject, that I had paid some attention to the subject of slavery in the Transvaal. Anyone who took the trouble to listen to me when I last spoke on the subject will remember that I said that in earlier days there was slavery in the Transvaal; but that of late years slavery no longer existed. I am fully persuaded that during the last few years, though it may be possible there may have been cases of slavery in some homesteads, there has been no general system of slavery. It existed far longer in the two smaller Republics than in the South African Republic in which they were finally absorbed. The whole, therefore, of the terrific denunciation of slavery which the noble and learned Earl addressed to us was simply a creation of his own imagination. It may be some satisfaction to the noble and learned Earl to know that the stipulation which was made at the Sand River Convention will be renewed.

EARL CAIRNS: That stipulation has always been disregarded.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I beg to differ from the noble and learned Earl. I am absolutely convinced that for some years past there has practically been no slavery in the Transvaal. To say, as the noble and learned Earl said, that we are handing over hundreds of thousands of Natives to a condition of slavery is purely, utterly, and entirely a figment. There are, I think, three other points referred to by the noble and learned Earl. First, there are the Royal Commissioners and the instructions to be given to them. The noble and learned Earl used extremely strong language when he was speaking of the position of our troops in the Transvaal. But the noble and learned Earl is mistaken in what he says upon this subject. The absolute condition of the whole of these arrangements —the condition on which we have insisted throughout, is that the armed force of the Boers was to disperse. I would just ask the noble and learned Earl what he understands the position of the troops in South Africa to be at this moment. He spoke of the recall of all the troops.

EARL CAIRNS: It was announced by authority that the troops were to be recalled.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: Then the noble and learned Earl is misinformed. No troops have been recalled. No doubt, the noble and learned Earl refers to the four regiments which were ordered not to proceed, and to the fact that General Roberts is to return home. That is so far true. But I hope it will be some satisfaction to the noble and learned Earl to know that there is still a very strong force in the country, amounting to 12,000 men, including those actually in the Transvaal. I would ask the noble and learned Earl to reflect in what position the Boers will be. They are now relying on our good faith. They have dispersed to their own homes. Is that a position on our part of utter weakness; is it altogether disgraceful to us that the enemy has dispersed? I should be sorry to intimate that we mean to take advantage of this to depart from the arrangements which we have entered into. Nothing could be further from our intention. But that is the position in which the Boers are left. The Commissioners are to visit the Transvaal. Sir Evelyn Wood himself is about to proceed to the capital of the Transvaal to make such arrangements as may be necessary to carry on the administration. Is that a humiliating position? It appears to me to be a considerable surrender to us, and leaves us in a position where we can deal with the matter. So much for the position of the troops. Then with respect to the surrender of Potchefstroom. In this matter there is no doubt that it may be necessary to take steps to assert our rights. But the noble and learned Earl is far more fiery. He wonders why 10 seconds were allowed to elapse without our revenging this insult. I am glad the noble and learned Earl did not occupy my situation or command our troops. I cannot imagine anything more calamitous than to flash forth orders to revenge what might turn out hereafter to have been only imaginary bad faith. Sir Evelyn Wood has not taken the same views as those of the noble and learned Earl. He has written, saying—"Pray suspend judgment until I send you all the facts." Sir Evelyn Wood is a prudent and responsible man—too prudent to give the advice which the noble and learned Earl has tendered to us to-night. I have explained, to a certain extent, the course which will be followed. It will be my duty to address instructions to the Commissioners, in which a far fuller explanation will be given than has been possible in telegrams, and in which the whole course of our policy will be dealt with. I have, I believe, dealt with every point of the noble and learned Earl's speech. My Lords, I am far from saying that there is much to boast of. I am not one of those who fall into ecstacies at the peace as if a great success had been obtained. But when we come to talk of humiliation, I think that the real humiliation would have been if for a mere point of honour, when we know that we cannot hold this country, that it is impossible to hold it with any proper regard for the interests of our Colonies in South Africa or of the whole Empire, that even if we had conquered the country we could not hold it, and when practical terms could be made which would, in our opinion, secure all that is valuable to retain, we had stood in the way of the acceptance of such terms. That would have been a humiliation to which I, for one, would never have been a party.

VISCOUNT CRANBROOK: The noble Earl who has just spoken has invited attention to topics which were left out of consideration by my noble and learned Friend. The noble Earl has gone back to the question of annexation, and upon that point I am perfectly willing to meet him. The fact is that there is a great deal which might be said upon that subject, and which has been said, not by the late Government alone, but by those who supported the late Government in the House of Commons, who vindicated the annexation of the Transvaal. Among these I might recall to the noble Earl's attention a distinguished Member of the present Cabinet, Mr. Forster. I might call attention to a speech by the noble Lord opposite (Lord Brabourne), who went fully into this question, and showed that the country was not annexed from any greed of power. I suppose the noble Earl would consider himself responsible for what has been said upon the subject by Members of his Government since it came into Office. I will, therefore, refer to a speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, on the 31st of August last. Subsequent to the failure of the Confederation there was a debate in the House of Commons, in which Mr. Chamberlain spoke—Mr. Chamberlain, who is a Colleague of the noble Earl, and he thoroughly repudiated the notion that it was taken over hastily by the present Government. He said—"When the present Government came into Office it considered this question most carefully."

Therefore, there can be no doubt on this point. What said the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, who was put up to answer Mr. Courtney on that occasion? Speaking in August last year, he said—

> "I firmly believe that if Sir Theophilus Shepstone had held his hand, and had not annexed the Transvaal, before very long the South African Republic would have fallen like a ripe fruit; and however much any of us—and, certainly, I have been one of them—dislike the idea of having to take charge of the South African Republic, I do believe that within a few months the cry for protection from the people of the Transvaal would have become so strong that it could not have been resisted by a civilized Government. . . . . . If ever there was an occasion on which it was right to complete the legal maxim and say *Fieri non debuit* (that is as to time) *factum valet*, this is the occasion. Not only has the annexation of the Transvaal been accepted by three different Secretaries of State, of very different characters and political tendencies, but it has been accepted and ratified by two Cabinets, which are so diverse that they may be said to represent almost every element which exists in British political life. . . . . In the existing state of affairs, no one who wishes well to that country—the Transvaal—as a portion of Her Majesty's Dominions will desire any Constitutional changes to be made."—[3 *Hansard*, cclvi. 874-5-6-9.]

Therefore, the Government of the day—the present Government—when it came in gave careful consideration to the question of annexation, and in spite of the speeches which the chief of that Government made in Mid Lothian, and to which I attribute mainly the rising which has taken place—I do not hesitate to say of those speeches, the language used, and the application made of it by the leaders of the Boers, that it might be shown that through those speeches, and not through annexation, has the rising taken place—in spite of those speeches, and notwithstanding the way in which the chief of the Government pledged himself, yet when the Government came carefully to consider the whole subject, they came to the conclusion that the Transvaal was to be maintained as part of Her Majesty's Dominions—that she was to retain her sovereignty over it. The noble Earl has read one portion of the extract with regard to the instructions given to Sir Hercules Robinson. He read the portion which declared that when the authority of the Crown had been vindicated, and the maintenance of tranquillity was firmly assured, terms would be discussed; and then the despatch goes on—

> "When this has been effected, consider the best means of assuring the Dutch settlers such full control of their local affairs as may be consistent with the general interests of Her Majesty's dominions in South Africa, and with the obligations which have been incurred by this country to the very large Native population in the Transvaal."

The noble Earl cannot deny that the Dutch Boers of the Transvaal treated the Natives, whether by slavery or not, in a manner wholly alien to British rule, and which has not taken place since the annexation of the Transvaal in 1877. Since that time the Natives have been under British dominion and under British justice, and they have had means of appealing to British Courts and defending themselves against wrong. The noble Earl gives no answer to the passage from Sir Owen Lanyon's despatch to show what is the spirit in which the Boers deal with the Natives. Is it or is it not true that they are wantonly shot down? At the beginning of this rising their property was taken from them, and they were made to supply the commissariat of the Boers, who abound in flocks and herds. The interests of 700,000 Natives had been set aside, and the Boers had been allowed to bear down the scale against them in the most disgraceful manner. I say you are lowering the British name, you are lowering the British standard of right and wrong, you are taking away the protection you are bound to give to these people. And do not tell me that, by having a Resident at Pretoria, and by controlling the foreign relations of the Transvaal, you will protect the Natives when you withdraw your garrisons from the country. There is no law that can be exercised unless it is backed by force in the ultimate result, and when you withdraw force you withdraw British law. When the noble Earl told us the position in which we stand in consequence of the arrangements made, he did not say that we occupy a very proud position, he says our position is not a very humiliating one. It is not a pleasant position—it is a disagreeable position; but it is not one which may affect the honour of the British nation. Now, what is it? The Boers were encamped at Laing's Nek—not in the Transvaal, but in the Colony of Natal. They have thrice, indeed, if we count the massacre which took place of Colonel Anstruther's troops, they have four times inflicted defeats on British forces, and they were in possession of Laing's Nek, not part of the Transvaal. You say they have dispersed. You know they have left Laing's Nek; but you do not know that they have dispersed.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: They have left Laing's Nek.

VISCOUNT CRANBROOK: Is that "a real dispersion," to quote the words used in one of the telegrams? What is a real dispersion? You have no means of knowing. You have no force in the Transvaal. The Boers have retired from Laing's Nek. They may be within five miles of it, and they may be called together at the sound of a trumpet at any moment. You, on the other hand, have agreed that even in Natal your forces are not to move in the direction of Laing's Nek. That being so, you are tied and they are free. You have never entered the Transvaal; you have never tested its loyalty, and I say one of the greatest wrongs you are doing is that you are surrendering your friends to your enemies without making the slightest pretence to defend those who have been loyal to you. You do not know what the real feelings of the people of the Transvaal are, because they have not had an opportunity of asserting them. Your garrisons are small, and they are hemmed in by superior forces; and, therefore, it is perfectly clear that there are at the present moment in the Transvaal many persons attached to British rule whom you are going to leave behind you; I will not say leave behind you, for you have left there; but there are many persons in the country who look to you for protection. They are shut up in the towns with the garrisons. We find one of the garrisons has been called upon to surrender, even during the Armistice, and that at a time when provisions were near at hand. It is a remarkable fact that Sir Evelyn Wood appears to be by no means sanguine of peace. At present there is a shadowy outline drawn, and this has to be filled in by the Commission, and then sent home for the assent of the Government here. And all this was done with regard to three gentlemen who had taken upon themselves to represent the Transvaal. Sir Evelyn Wood objected to their being representatives; but the noble Earl said they were to be accepted. Sir Evelyn Wood would have compelled certain persons not to reside within the Transvaal; but the noble Earl said—"You must give an amnesty to everybody, unless it is something contrary to the laws of civilized warfare." Therefore, you are dealing with the matter in a way contrary to that recommended by the officer on the spot. A telegram dated the 17th of March states what was passing through his mind as to the negotiations. It is stated in a subsequent telegram that the Commissioners are to consider the question of Native affairs. But what is the use of considering the question of Native affairs when the people whom you admit to be at the head of the Boer conspiracy mean to have the entire control of their interior affairs, including Native affairs? When you have nothing but a Resident in Pretoria, with a country as large as France, do you suppose that he can protect the Natives or exercise any effective control on behalf of the Natives? With regard to the term suzerainty, no doubt, as it has been explained by the noble Earl, it is sovereignty a good deal watered down, and probably it will gradually fade away in a dissolving mist. What is the length of the duration of the Transvaal Republic of which the noble Earl spoke? Why, 19 years of miserable government, or, as Sir Garnet Wolseley called it, of mischievous and indolent government. The Transvaal Republic dragged on until it was unable to raise taxes, punish crime, or perform any other function of government; it ultimately had only 12*s.* 6*d.* in its Treasury, and it had become a nuisance to all its neighbours. This country, under these circumstances, saved it from a Zulu invasion, and also from Secocoeni, who had defeated it before; and the men who had been protected by us in every way have turned against the British, not having been ashamed to take British money and become servants under Her Majesty. I am puzzled, my Lords, to know when and how it was that Her Majesty's Government arrived at a conclusion so totally different from that to which they came when they wrote to Sir Hercules Robinson, and when the Speech from the Throne declared that the Queen's authority over the Transvaal would be vindicated. It is impossible for anyone not to connect in his mind what has taken place on this subject with opinions of certain Members of the Government.

We know that at least one Member of the Government has generally been considered to belong to the school which advocates peace at any price, or, at all events, advocates peace so strongly that there is hardly any humiliation to which he would not subject his country rather than break it. We have seen letters which show what the tone of mind of certain Members of the Government was. I should be glad, therefore, to know what were the reasons which induced the noble Earl opposite to depart from the policy worthy of this country which was put forth in the Queen's Speech? And I must say that of all the extraordinary charges ever made by a statesman the charge made by the noble Earl to-night was the most extraordinary—namely, that we on this side are, from Party spirit, taking the course we now pursue. Why is it to be said that we are guilty of Party spirit in urging the policy which was declared in the Queen's Speech, but which Her Majesty's Government now appear to have repudiated without any reason, except that the arms of this country have sustained humiliating defeats? At all events, it cannot be doubted that the change of policy came after those defeats. One of the most remarkable things connected with the negotiations is that the word "submission" was suggested by President Brand; because he, being a statesman of some note, and a patriot of even greater note than a statesman, felt that no country placed in the position in which England was could consent to give everything to the Boers unless they tendered their submission first. The noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies was afraid of those Colonists of the Cape who are of Dutch blood taking the side of the Boers of the Transvaal. Now, it is a curious fact that, while the negotiations were going on, and after almost the worst thing which had happened to us had occurred, a Member of the Legislative Council of the Cape, Mr. Hofmeyer, telegraphed to Mr. Joubert, hearing of the peace that was likely to ensue, and then telling the Boer leaders what they ought to do. Mr. Hofmeyer said that—

> "In any case, before the Commission could be appointed, either the British arms must have conquered, or the Boers must have given a tangible proof of submission in the eyes of the world."

What does that show? That two patriotic men of the Dutch race are in favour of the policy expressed in the Queen's Speech, and which, I think, has been abandoned—I will not say so disgracefully, but in so humiliating a manner. Those men feel that a great country cannot afford to be dealt with in the way in which the Boers have dealt with us. I say that the course which you have pursued in South Africa, viewed as it must be in relation to the events which have taken place, will be attributed throughout the world not to your magnanimity, but to your fear of disaster and defeat. The noble Earl opposite has himself urged that our force, instead of being overwhelming, was wholly inadequate, because, if the struggle had gone on, the whole Dutch race in South Africa might have turned against us. After arguing in that way the noble Earl can hardly claim credit for a great display of magnanimity.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I did not say I thought we had been magnanimous.

VISCOUNT CRANBROOK: I am glad, at all events, that the noble Earl gives up the claim to magnanimity; but I have seen that character assigned to the transaction. The noble Earl dwelt on the importance of having one foreign policy for all the White population in South Africa. I think, however, that the course which Her Majesty's Government have adopted is calculated to frustrate a union of the White race in that part of the world. English supremacy has been admitted for a good many years in South Africa, and any bad feeling in regard to it on the part of the Dutch Settlers may, however numerically large, be supposed to have long vanished. But it will be a very different thing if the Dutch flag is now to take the place of the English flag in the Transvaal. The humiliation attending these transactions will not be confined to the particular spot, but will extend to all the British Dominions throughout the globe. And when the noble Earl tells us that this policy will be for the benefit of the South African Colonies, let him look at the Colonial papers and see how the matter is viewed by all the Colonies. The people of Natal, many of whom went to the Transvaal, complain that you have betrayed the confidence which they placed in you when the annexation was effected. To be British subjects was a pride to many persons in the Transvaal, who, if they are to be abandoned, will have a right to complain; and much the same thing may be said of the Natives. I am very anxious not to repeat points on which my noble and learned Friend has spoken; and, indeed, it seems to me that the question is a very simple one. It is this—Is it for the advantage of the country and the Colonies that we should, at a time when, according to Sir Evelyn Wood, the Boers admitted the certainty of our victory, withdraw from a dominion we have undertaken, not for our own aggrandisement, but for the benefit of the people of South Africa? I say most distinctly that we have no right—no moral right—to withdraw, and to recede from the engagements to which we are pledged. I will give an instance of what happened in former times. We were defeated by Pretorius in Natal; but he saw that we were in a superior position and gave up. Now, why are we to assume that, when a General like Sir Evelyn Wood could have taken positions that would have dominated Laing's Nek, bloodshed must have ensued? It might be that the Boers would have retreated, and that the English might have marched into the Transvaal without further bloodshed. But how have you treated your noble Army? You have made it stand by while its enemies retired from it in derision, and in possession of trophies snatched from us by treachery. As for these trophies, it is the fact that on two occasions, by means of the white flag, the Boers have got within shooting distance of our forces. The truth is that you have caused the most unfortunate feelings among those whom you sent out to fight the battles of the Queen, and having given them the idea that their first duty was to vindicate her authority, you have withdrawn them, and have betrayed the people under your charge. Probably this peace will not be durable, as, according to the noble Earl himself, it is no more than an outline that ought to be filled up. It would have been better to have advanced and to have shown your strength first, and then to have displayed your mercy and kindness and liberality to the people, who would acknowledge your domination; but you have adopted a policy which will destroy the belief in the strength of England, and cause it to be imagined that we are afraid to meet the Boers in actual conflict. You have spread that illusion throughout South Africa, and the consequence may be bloodshed hereafter—oceans of bloodshed, far greater than would have been caused now by the vindication of the authority of the Queen, and upon your heads that bloodshed will rest when it comes.

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK: The noble Viscount complained that Her Majesty's Government did not, immediately after their assumption of Office, revoke the annexation of the Transvaal, and reverse the policy of their Predecessors.

VISCOUNT CRANBROOK: I did not say that.

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK: If that was not what was meant, he was at a loss to understand the criticisms of the noble Viscount. The annexation of the Transvaal was approved by many eminent men, but disapproved by many others, amongst the latter being several Members of the present Government; and when the present Government succeeded to power, they had to consider, not whether the Transvaal should or should not be annexed, but whether, under the circumstances of the time, it would be wise to cancel the annexation. They had before them information from Sir Garnet Wolseley and Sir Owen Lanyon, who were believed to be best qualified to form an opinion on the subject, and who considered that matters were settling down, and that the rule of Her Majesty over the Transvaal would be accepted by the Boers. In this condition of things he contended that they were right in not at once reversing the policy of their Predecessors, but endeavouring, if possible, to reconcile the Boers to the rule of the Queen, by the grant to them of local self-government, in connection with the proposed federation of the South African territories. Even so late as a few days before the outbreak, Sir Owen Lanyon thought the agitation would cease with the grant of representative institutions; and Sir George Colley termed the movements of the Boers "spasmodic efforts of disaffection." The noble Viscount had not endeavoured to reply to the answers given by his noble Friend (the Earl of Kimberley) to the speech of the noble and learned Earl; but before he (the

Earl of Northbrook) addressed himself to the main question before the House, he would allude to some incidental remarks of the noble Viscount. He had asked if the Boers had dispersed to their homes. Her Majesty's Government had not sufficient information to enable them to answer the question fully. They knew that the Boers had withdrawn from Laing's Nek; but they were unable to say positively that they had dispersed to their homes. He trusted they would carry out their engagements loyally and properly; otherwise, it would be for the Government to consider what course they would take, and they had an ample force at their disposal. The noble Viscount had, to some extent, miscalculated the number of the troops in Natal and the Transvaal. They originally numbered 3,500, and the reinforcements amounted to about 9,000 more, besides the regiments that had been countermanded. Considering that we were dealing with so small a population as the Boers in the Transvaal, the force in Natal under the command of Sir Evelyn Wood was likely to be sufficient to give a good account of any opposition that would probably be brought against him. The noble Viscount had tried to make it appear that the word "suzerainty" had no value whatever. As the noble Viscount had been for some time Secretary of State for India, he ought to be aware that the word had a very well-known meaning, and that the subordinate State could not enter into relations with foreign Powers excepting through the Suzerain, or, to use the Indian phrase, the Paramount Power. This was precisely the position which the State of the Transvaal would occupy with respect to the British Empire. The noble and learned Earl (Earl Cairns) had, on the authority of a newspaper extract, the date of which he had not given, but which he (the Earl of Northbrook) believed was written four years ago, hung some eloquent periods on the evils of slavery; and although the statement might have been correct at the time it was written it did not show the state of affairs now. The noble Viscount who had just spoken had asserted that in the arrangements for peace the interests of the loyal inhabitants of the Transvaal would be neglected. As far as he knew, there was not the slightest evidence for this assertion. One of the main objects of his noble Friend in the negotiations would be that on both sides there should be a complete amnesty for what had passed, and to secure the entire protection of the loyal inhabitants from any injury in consequence of their not having favoured the insurgents. The noble Viscount implied that he thought it was necessary that the war should be continued for the honour of the British arms. But was it really the fact that the small actions which had taken place—none of which, with the exception of Laing's Nek, could be called serious, and in which our soldiers fought against large odds—could so affect the honour of the British Army that it was necessary to continue a war in order to wipe out the disgrace? Was that really the noble Viscount's opinion? If it was, he might tell him, at any rate, that his opinion did not coincide with that of Sir Evelyn Wood, who, he should think, had the honour of the British Army as much at heart as the noble Viscount. Sir Evelyn Wood, in a telegram now before the House, said that none of the actions could be regarded as so important as to affect our prestige. To his (the Earl of Northbrook's) view, to say they must continue this war against the Boers to uphold the honour of the British Army was a most unfortunate and humiliating admission to be made by anyone in that House, and most of all by a noble Lord who at one time filled the Office of Secretary of State for War. He would now say a few words upon the main question before the House. It had been clearly proved by his noble Friend behind him that the negotiations which led to the conclusion of peace were not opened by Her Majesty's Government after a defeat, as was contended by the noble and learned Earl (Earl Cairns); but that almost immediately after the outbreak of hostilities, and before the first battle—that at Laing's Nek—was fought, Her Majesty's Government had informed President Brand of their desire to make a settlement, "provided only the Boers would desist from their armed opposition." That was the real point of the whole question which was now before their Lordships. He held that the Government were right to express a desire to settle this question; and, so far from it being a humiliation to this country, he maintained that it would have been disgraceful to any Ministry if they had, in consequence of the reverses of our troops, withdrawn from their previous assurances, and determined to subdue by force of arms a free people who did not desire to be under our rule. The noble and learned Earl had asked how it was that President Brand was mixed up in the matter. President Brand felt that the hostilities were a serious calamity to South Africa; and, as the President of a friendly State, he considered it his duty to prevent, if possible, the further shedding of blood. He (the Earl of Northbrook) wished that he could have noticed in the speeches of noble Lords opposite some concern for the condition of South Africa, or the slightest desire to prevent the shedding of blood. Would it have been right for the Government, after the assurances they had given President Brand, to have receded from their engagement merely because of reverses to a handful of their troops? That was the question which their Lordships had to consider. The Boers had unreservedly accepted the condition of desisting from armed opposition; and the rest of the conditions, he believed, would be such as their Lordships would approve. What, in fact, did Her Majesty's Government fail to secure? Did noble Lords opposite desire that the Queen's authority should be imposed upon the Transvaal by force? Were they not satisfied with the control this country was to exercise over the foreign relations of the Transvaal, and with the powers proposed to be conferred upon the Royal Commissioners? After all, the difference could only be on questions of detail; and he had not heard from noble Lords opposite a single substantial objection to the terms of peace. All he had heard was a protest against making peace on any terms, in consequence of the misfortunes which had happened to our arms. The noble Viscount had alluded to the speeches made by the Prime Minister in Mid Lothian. He (the Earl of Northbrook) did not understand why noble Lords opposite were so fond of referring to speeches which had done so much to procure the defeat of the Conservative Party at the late General Election. The particular speech was one in which the Prime Minister referred to the disastrous policy of "pride and passion" pursued by the late Government; and his attack could not have found a better illustration than in the speeches of the noble and learned Earl and the noble Viscount opposite—speeches which breathed the same spirit which led to our war with the American Colonies. From first to last there was not in those speeches a single word indicative of a desire to settle the unfortunate troubles in the Transvaal by any other means than force, or a single suggestion as to how a condition of affairs, due entirely to their own policy as Members of the late Government, could be brought to a satisfactory conclusion.

Viscount BURY said, that the whole arrangement entered into by Her Majesty's Government was one which inflicted deep humiliation upon the country; and it was astonishing that so manly and straightforward an Englishman as the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs should have lent his countenance to it. The noble Earl who had last spoken appeared not to realize the full force of the accusation brought against Her Majesty's Government, which was that between the date of the delivery of the Queen's Speech and the conclusion of peace with the Boers a total change of opinion on their part had occurred, of which no explanation had been given. Why was it that at the date of the delivery of the Queen's Speech submission of the Boers to the Queen's authority was a condition precedent to any negotiations, while now, without any such condition, the Boers were to have all they wished for? Peace had been obtained, not by a vindication of the Queen's authority in the Transvaal, but by the surrender of everything claimed by the Boers at the beginning of the insurrection. The Boers had not submitted. They had, it was true, retired to their homes; but they had not consented to lay down their arms until they had obtained every one of the terms on which they had from the outset of the war insisted. As to the question of slavery, to which the noble Earl (the Earl of Northbrook) had alluded, the whole course of Boer history was shaped by the belief that they had a right to subjugate the Native races. They trekked first of all to the Orange Free State, then to Natal, and then across the Drakensberg into the Transvaal; but wherever they settled they had kept up that institution of slavery which they had carried with them from the beginning, and for which they were now fighting. If, then, we removed from them the pressure of British laws, we should only be enabling them to continue a state of things which they had, until the annexation, contrived to maintain, and the trade in black ivory, as it was called, would still go on. The noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies, he might add, spoke of the relationship in blood and religion between the inhabitants of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State as being such that the latter, in all probability, would have been drawn into the war. That possibility might be so; but would not the feelings, he would ask, to which Mr. Kruger referred when he spoke of Africa for the Africander, and to which the noble Earl alluded, have been better met by imposing terms on the Boers after we had driven them back to their own country than by making concessions to them which to many appeared to carry with them the stigma of disgrace? For his own part, he could not help thinking that the former would have been the more prudent policy. Sir Garnet Wolseley, in a speech which he made in 1877, speaking in his official capacity as Lord High Commissioner, said there was no Government, Whig or Tory, Liberal or Radical, which would, under any circumstances, dare to give back the Transvaal. That was the declaration of your own Administrator in South Africa, and he would ask the House to compare it with the words of Sir Evelyn Wood, under the orders of the present Government. The loyal Boers had been mentioned in the course of the debate; but not a word had been said as to the loyal English population in the Transvaal. He, however, knew many persons who, after the annexation, invested all their savings in the purchase of land in that country, and he wished to know what was to become of them; for the terms which had been made with the Boers did not contain a single stipulation in their favour. They were numerous; some said they formed even a majority of the White population, and it was a scandal that they should be ruined in purse and person as well as in honour by the capitulation of the Government. Coming to the question of the meaning of the term suzerainty, he pointed out that no analogy could be drawn from India, as the state of affairs there was wholly different from that which existed, or could be expected to exist, in Natal, where homage, fealty, and investiture were impossible. As to the Military Service, he could hardly suppose that the Government were going to ask the Boers to fight England's battles. They were told that it was important that Suzerainty should be preserved in connection with the foreign relations of the Transvaal. But what would those foreign relations be? They could only be concerned with questions of peace and war; and what would be the use of declaring that the Boers should not make war, except with our sanction, after they had waged successful war upon ourselves? Unless very strong garrisons were to be kept in the Transvaal, stipulations of that kind must be utterly vain, idle, and futile. Nothing remained but a bare understanding, which the Boers might throw over at any time. He held that our position in connection with the Boers would be much the same as the present position of the Sultan of Turkey in connection with Cyprus—that is, we should possess the husk of a nut whose kernel had been extracted. Referring to the Commissioners, he said they would not be backed by any force, and that, consequently, their award would possibly not be respected, unless it met with the entire approval of the Boers. But he understood that no agreement had been made as to the manner in which the award was to be enforced. At any rate, they had received no information about it. Alluding to the attack upon the 94th Regiment, he expressed a hope that his noble Friend opposite would give the House an assurance that the question of the massacre of that regiment would be referred to the Commission for adjudication and report. We had taken over the Transvaal out of pure charity when it was in an altogether bankrupt condition; and he desired to know whether one of the questions to be referred to the Commission was to be that of the repayment of the £200,000 which they had obtained from the Imperial Treasury? He thought the position of the loyal Colonists ought to be considered, and that they ought to have the expenditure incurred by them, on the faith of Imperial Proclamations and High Commissioners' speeches, secured to them, or be indemnified in one way or other.

The LORD CHANCELLOR: My Lords, whatever may be said in favour of the views put before your Lordships to-night by my noble and learned Friend (Earl Cairns), and those who succeeded him on his side of the House, at all events the time has been somewhat unfortunately chosen. There might have been some justification if all the arrangements between this country and the Boers had been brought to a conclusion, whether successfully or unsuccessfully; if either a lasting peace had been secured, or negotiations had failed, then my noble and learned Friend might have been justified in proposing a Vote of Censure against the Government, or in expressing his own personal censure of what had been done. But to do so at this moment, just after the basis of peace has been agreed upon, and just before the Commission is to meet to settle arrangements by which this basis is to be carried into effect, to choose this particular moment to prophesy the possible bad faith of the Boers, and the possible want of power in the British Government to enforce those arrangements—to prophesy that what has been stipulated in our favour may never be carried into effect, to magnify and enhance the difficulties attendant on those stipulations which are most in our favour, and to depreciate their value, and, on the other hand, to exaggerate all that is favourable to the Boers, even to the extent of giving to the future State a name which has not yet been agreed upon, may, perhaps, appear to my noble and learned Friend a wise and a patriotic course; but I am persuaded it will not commend itself to the country as calculated to facilitate the performance of the duty of the Commissioners. There is no better master of minute, destructive criticism than my noble and learned Friend. He has criticized the terms of peace word by word, and has tried to discover inconsistencies, retractations of purpose, changes of opinion. But the country will not look upon the matter with such minute criticism. The country will simply ask whether what has been done is wise in policy, just in principle, and honourable to this country. I am persuaded that the country will approve our policy as wise, just, and honourable, in the circumstances of the case. First, was it wise? We have to consider what has been so powerfully urged by my noble Friend the Secretary of State for the Colonies, the evils which would have arisen in South Africa by a prolongation of the war. It is not that the power of this country would be insufficient to meet the dangers of war with the Boers, or, for that matter, with all the forces which might have been combined against us, in any conceivable development of the war. But the Government had to consider the welfare of the populations of South Africa. Nothing could be more miserable for this country than to be driven into a general contest of race, a contest with the whole White population of South Africa, of kindred race to the Boers. Such a contest would be at variance with the whole spirit of our Government. We should have to establish a dominion of conquest totally different in character from any which we could ever have intended or desired. The Government which preceded us supposed that they had the consent of the great body of the people of the Transvaal to the annexation. It is a most difficult matter to judge whether they were, in this respect, misled by false information, or whether, under the difficulties and embarrassments of that time, a majority of the people of the Transvaal were really indifferent, or for the moment favourable to the change. If the late Government had not believed this, I am quite persuaded that nothing would have induced them to seek to annex that country. And I am further persuaded that if they could have foreseen how utterly false and hollow the state of opinion was on which they had been led to rely, and that in so short a time an insurrection would take place, which could hold its ground, and beleaguer our garrisons, without so much even as a counter movement or demonstration in our favour from those who were supposed to be well affected to British rule, they never would have been willing to place the British Crown in so false a position. It is a position which it would not have been wise to assume, and which it cannot be wise forcibly to retain. If, therefore, an opportunity has occurred of getting out of this miserable war by a righteous peace instead of by conquest, it was right and wise to avail ourselves of that opportunity. And, my Lords, by the terms which have been so much abused we have relinquished nothing which it was desirable to obtain. The terms were ours; the Boers made overtures to us. We did not make any overtures. These terms were accepted by the Boers, being essentially different from anything which they had ever proposed. They are such as sufficiently to realize our own views as to what was desirable to be done for the future of the country. My noble and learned Friend has referred to the passage in the Queen's Speech in which an intention was expressed to give full control over their own local affairs to the European inhabitants of the Transvaal. My noble and learned Friend said that that passage necessarily meant something different from the arrangements which have now been made. I totally deny that. I say, with perfect confidence, that arrangements such as those which have now been agreed upon were among the various alternatives which would have been at that time open to us for the purpose in view; we had formed no resolutions with which they would have been inconsistent. They were perfectly open to us, and were at that time quite as likely as any others. Then as to suzerainty. It was said that this does not mean sovereignty. No doubt, the word "suzerainty" rather than "sovereignty" has been intentionally used, to mark a difference. It involves, however, the ultimate principle of sovereignty. My noble Friend (the Earl of Kimberley) has happily expressed it, as an 'over-lordship.' Suzerainty means nothing if it does not mean that the Suzerain is lord paramount of the people who are subject to it. When it is said that these are the terms which the Boers themselves asked for, I should like to ask when the Boers proposed anything about subjection to us, or proposed to acknowledge the British suzerainty? Then, as to the control of their foreign and Frontier relations, when did the Boers propose that? The control of foreign and Frontier relations essentially distinguishes a paramount Power. No war can be made upon adjoining Native tribes, no Treaty can be made with Portugal or any European Power, except by the authority of this country. With regard, also, to the Native inhabitants of the Transvaal, towards whom, undoubtedly, in the Queen's Speech we had expressed our sense of obligation, we have made a stipulation, which at no time formed part of any Boer terms. The conditions we have laid down, therefore, touch the foreign relations of the Boers, the Frontier relations of the Boers, and the Native relations of the Boers. My noble and learned Friend referred, also, to the mention of a possible separation of the territory to the eastward of the principal part of the Boer State. The great mass of the Native population reside in that territory, and the European population in it is very small; and it may be, that in such a separation the most convenient means may be found of giving to the Native population that protection which they are entitled to expect from us. On that point, no resolution could, as yet, be taken; but it is certainly not from the Boers, that the suggestion of such a separation of territory has proceeded. I shall not stop to deal with the noble and learned Earl's criticisms on the powers of the Resident and the Commission. The Resident will be there to represent the suzerainty Power, and to give effect to all the reservations in which the Suzerain Power is interested. With regard to the loyal population, it is stipulated that no person shall be molested who has taken part in the war, or on account of his political opinions. This is the engagement entered into, and we have no reason to suppose that the Boers will act in bad faith. As to the affair at Potchefstroom, details have not arrived; but I know nothing in the conduct of the Boer leaders which should lead me to suppose that they have been parties to an act of treachery, or will refuse proper reparation for it, if it has been committed by others, or that, in other respects, they will not act honourably upon the engagements they have made. Reference has been made to a great many loyal Dutch and British subjects who are supposed to be in the Transvaal. I do not know upon what authority that statement is made; but what I do know is, that these numerous and loyal subjects were either not numerous enough, or not energetic enough, or not loyal enough, to rise on our behalf, or to prevent our garrisons from being beleaguered. My noble and learned Friend asks, what proof we have that the persons with whom we negotiated had the authority or the power to bind the Boers generally, or to carry through the arrangement which they have agreed to? My answer is, that the only persons with whom, in a case of insurrection, it is ever possible to negotiate, are those who are the actual leaders in arms, who are the commanders of the forces in the field, and at the head of the whole organization of government which represents the insurrection. To say that we are never to negotiate terms of peace with such persons, under such circumstances, without some formal and technical proof of their authority, is equivalent to saying that no terms of peace can ever be negotiated in a war of this kind. I think that argument only shows that as much fault is being found with the arrangement as legal ingenuity could suggest. I think, for these reasons, that we have made a wise arrangement, and that on the ground of policy it is perfectly justifiable. I hold, also, that it is as just in principle as it is wise in policy. There are certain considerations to which few of us will be found insensible. If ever there was a war of an unhappy character it was this war. In the first place, these Boers were not men whose pursuits or habits would naturally lead them to go to war. They are most closely connected with the inhabitants in the Orange Free State, and there is a large Dutch population in the Cape Colony with whom they are also connected by family ties; so that it was something like being at war with our own flesh and blood, not in the general, but in a closer sense. If we regard the question as we ought to regard it, the Dutch population of the Transvaal is entitled to much consideration. What were the prior circumstances? Can we honestly impute rebellion to people who never assented to the annexation? Their leaders have always protested against it; and, no doubt, had the Government then in power been informed of the real state of the facts that annexation would never have taken place. To refuse to arrive at a peaceful settlement, when we had a fair opportunity of doing so, would have been, in these circumstances, and on all points of morality as well as policy, utterly unjustifiable. But it is said, if this is our present view, why did we speak of vindicating the Queen's authority, and send troops into the field for that purpose, at the beginning of the Session? The answer is obvious. The Boers were then in active insurrection, had given no sign of any disposition to lay down their arms on such terms as might appear to us consistent with the dignity of the Crown, had made no overtures for peace. We did, at the time, the only thing which it was possible for any Government to do. But when the insurgents began to evince a desire for peace, the situation was altered. It was not only by conquests in the field that such a vindication of the Queen's authority as we thought necessary might be accomplished. And this brings me to the last question—Whether we have done what was honourable, under the circumstances? I utterly repudiate the idea that we have suffered what is called humiliation. If, when overtures were made to us, we had summarily rejected them, we should have been most justly censurable, and I think none would have been more prominent in censuring us than my noble and learned Friend (Earl Cairns). Overtures came to us, first, through the President of the Orange Free State, and afterwards from the Boer leaders themselves. They were actually made before the first of those three unfortunate engagements which took place, beginning with Lang's Nek. I feel as much as any of your Lordships can do for every disaster which may befall British troops; but we must not forget, when considering the character of a disaster, in what circumstances it took place. These were attacks made by our own troops on a strong position occupied by the Boers, made most gallantly in a manner to which no fault can be imputed, unless it be too much boldness in venturing on a very difficult undertaking with an exceedingly small and inadequate force. There is no dishonour to British troops in the repulse of an attack under such circumstances. Were we on that account, when we had received overtures direct from the Boer leaders, to repel those overtures? We had sent word, before the third of those unfortunate actions, that we were willing to entertain them; but the answer was delayed from circumstances which we did not understand. Sir George Colley waited for some days beyond the time appointed, and then, with an inadequate force, the operation at Majuba Hill was undertaken. When the answer of the Boer leaders came, it was favourable to the progress of negotiations. Were we, then, because those three attacks made by our gallant troops under circumstances so disadvantageous had resulted in disaster, to depart from our previous intention of, at least, ascertaining whether peace could be made upon terms which we thought satisfactory? The British nation is too powerful, and its power is too well understood, to require to be vindicated in any such manner. Was there in the terms no assertion of the Queen's sovereignty—no vindication of her authority? The Boers agreed to disperse and to lay down their arms.

EARL CAIRNS: There is no agreement to that effect.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: The words were not used; but the substance of the thing was there. They carried their arms; but they were no longer to be used for purposes of hostility against us. I state it as I understand it, and I believe I understand it aright. They were to disperse; they were no longer to be in the field in arms against us; they acknowledged the Queen's supremacy; they were to receive an amnesty, which could only be granted by a superior Power; and our Commissioners were to negotiate the particular arrangements by which the terms agreed upon were to be carried out. We dictated those terms; we thought the terms sufficient, and the Boer leaders accepted them. It appears to me, in those circumstances, that if we had continued the war we should have done excessively wrong. My noble and learned Friend said that we put our garrisons in the position of hostages to the Boers. A more ingenious argumentative perversion of the facts of the case I cannot conceive. The Boers would have preferred that the garrisons should go; we thought they ought to remain, and remain as in time of peace; but we did not bind ourselves that they should remain. To say, then, that they were hostages is an assertion purely rhetorical—I might almost say preposterous. If the circumstances, both political and moral, made it, as I contend they did in the highest degree, desirable to lose no fair opportunity of putting an end to the war, was not the course we took honourable? Different people may have different notions of honour, and of shame; for my own part, I hope I may never have more cause to blush than in this instance. I say that to do right, not when you are pressed by a superior force, but when you have already a superior force in the field, able, if necessary, to carry all things before it, and a still greater force coming up every day to back it, to adhere then to your previous purposes, formed under other circumstances, and to forego the continuance of bloodshed for the sake of mere revenge, is an honourable course—a course very far more consistent with true dignity and honour than the reverse would have been.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: My Lords, at this period of the evening it will not be desirable that I should go much further into a question which has been so fully discussed. So far from thinking with the noble and learned Lord who has just sat down that this discussion is in any degree inopportune, I think the country, when it reads to-morrow the luminous and exhaustive statement made by my noble and learned Friend behind me, will have a knowledge of this case which it has not had before, and will be surprised at the disgrace into which we have been led. We have had many accounts of the motives which actuated the Government; and in the forefront of them we have, of course, had an appeal to the Ministerial conscience. Now, I have the greatest possible respect for the Ministerial conscience, and I will say nothing in the least irreverent concerning it.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I made no appeal to the Ministerial conscience; but I did appeal to something far more important—the conscience of the nation.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: Appeals to conscience are brought up on many occasions; but we know that whenever that important phrase passes Ministerial lips some great enterprize of "scuttling out" is under discussion. I venture to take exception to the appeal to conscience in the present instance. It is very doubtful to me whether it is true that originally the Boers were unwilling that the annexation should take place, or that up to a recent period the majority of them felt any such unwillingness. I believe the true history of the conduct of the Boers to have been this—that they found the conduct of their Government wholly impossible, and they were threatened by very serious danger from the neighbouring powers of Secocoeni and the Zulus; and they took shelter under the wing of a stronger Power which could defend them. The Zulu War took place; Secocoeni retired; the danger passed away; and the Boers turned against the Power which had protected them. That, I believe, is the history of that change of Boer opinion. But I entirely demur to the doctrine which finds favour with noble Lords opposite, that the question whether we ought to be in the Transvaal or not depends on the voice of the majority of the Boers. The Boers are an insignificant fraction in that vast territory, in which there are 500,000 or 600,000 men, of whom there is no danger in asserting that they earnestly welcomed our presence, and earnestly regret our withdrawal; and I suppose I shall not hear from noble Lords opposite that the small fraction have white skins and the vast majority have black skins, and that this circumstance makes any difference in the equity of this matter. If we have been turned out of the Transvaal, it has been by the successful armed rebellion of an insignificant minority. We have had a good deal of discussion upon the various phases of Ministerial opinion; but I have not been able, though I have carefully listened, to get an exact account of the state of mind of the Government on the 6th January, when the Queen's Speech was delivered. We are told it would have been a great mistake in policy to have retained the Transvaal by force; and we hear, not only from the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack, but also from the noble Earl who sits opposite, who appeals to the conscience of the nation, that considerations of morality are involved in our not maintaining our supremacy in that country. We are also told that the majority of our White subjects of Dutch extraction would probably have joined the insurgents against us. These are grave considerations; but they were just as forcible on January 6 as they are now. If it is immoral to assert our authority now, it was immoral then. The question is no new one; and the Government have had ample time to consider it. In fact, their attention was called to it by a most potent voice. It had been one of the subjects upon which Mr. Gladstone most loved to dwell; and we know, in the words of Mr. Joubert himself, that it was on the authority of Mr. Gladstone that he appealed to the English people to cancel the settlement. Therefore, whatever reasons exist for abandoning the Queen's sovereignty over the Boers existed also on January 6, when the Government used these memorable words in the Queen's Speech—

> "A rising in the Transvaal has recently imposed upon me the duty of taking Military measures with a view to the prompt vindication of my authority; and has of necessity set aside for the time any plan for securing to the European settlers that full control over their own local affairs, without prejudice to the interests of the natives, which I had been desirous to confer."

The Colonial Secretary said it would have been impossible to offer the terms which the Government have ultimately accepted until they had there a sufficiently large force to prevent our offer being attributed to fear. I can hardly imagine the noble Earl really meaning to offer such an explanation as that.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I said nothing about fear.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: Then it involves this—that for the sake of saving appearances there was a vast unnecessary treasure expended, and many valuable lives sacrificed, which the country could ill afford to lose. You must always remember that in blaming these terms of peace we do not necessarily blame the policy which the Government itself have adopted. We do not approve of it; but the one argument does not involve the other. Even if we had approved of your reversal of our policy, we should still have blamed in the strongest manner your delaying to make the Boers acquainted with that determination until so many English lives had been lost, and so much English honour had been tarnished. It is said, and I think with perfect truth, that the defeats we suffered at Laing's Nek and other places were not really disgraceful, because our forces were overmatched. In that I entirely concur; and if we had only continued the war until we could have made terms which were suitable for the dignity and interests of the country, no one would have said that those reverses had cast any permanent reflection on our arms. But then I understand the noble Earl to say that there is no disgrace in consenting to terms of peace which are an entire surrender of the position which we previously occupied, because we were a large force standing against a small one; and it could not be imagined that we gave way to any considerations but honour and duty. So that we are in the happy position that when we are a small force we are not disgraced by defeat, and that when we are a large force there is no disgrace in making terms because our overwhelming force proves our magnanimity. The noble and learned Lord made a great deal of the fact that we had stipulated successfully that the Queen should be Suzerain of the Transvaal; and he exerted his ingenuity and his learning to show that that title covered a great deal. The noble Earl the late Viceroy of India compared it to the suzerainty of the Queen in India; but nobody knows better than he that that suzerainty does not preclude interference with internal affairs. The peculiarity of this suzerainty in the Transvaal is that interference in internal affairs is absolutely excluded. The only comparison you can make is with the Empire of Turkey, in which suzerainty has sometimes been employed to cover the loss of power by the Sultan. The most remarkable case of suzerainty at present is the relation of the Sultan to the Prince of Bulgaria. That I imagine to be an excellent illustration of the relation of Her Majesty to the Transvaal—only a suzerainty over a Republic is, I believe, merely a diplomatic invention. The suzerainty contains no atom of sovereignty whatever. The truth is that this is merely a device to cover surrender. A Commission is to be appointed whose decrees will not be enforced by any force of troops whatever. If the Commission should confine themselves to the utterance of a certain number of platitudes, or if they should make conditions which are entirely acceptable to the Boers, no doubt their mission will be successful; but if, on the subject of territory or the subject of the treatment of the Blacks, it should be their misfortune to make any decision adverse to the interests, or the prejudices, or the passions of the Boers, you will find that you have set up a mere *nominis umbra,* concealing from the English people the nature of the sacrifice and the abandonment to which you have consented, but possessing no reality of power. My Lords, it is not for military glory that we regret the nature of this step or the circumstances by which it has been preceded. Military glory has been spoken of lightly enough to-night, and one noble Lord had evidently read the pregnant observations of Falstaff on that subject. But military glory contains in it something more solid than the gratification of a sentiment. As long as it is maintained untarnished it is the security for the peace and prosperity of the Empire. You have hinted in very dark terms at the position of our South African Colonies, and you gave us no ground to believe that our English Dominion rests upon that foundation of attachment, entirely free from force, which the noble and learned Lord told us was the kind of dominion that England loved to exercise. On the contrary, when the words of the Colonial Secretary are read at the Cape of Good Hope, will they not encourage the Colonists to believe that it was fear of the Boers that led us to this peace?

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I did not say fear; I said regard for their opinions.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: Regard for their opinions is expressed in a material sense. If matters are really so critical in those Colonies, if there is this division of opinion, and if the British Dominion does not rest on the sure basis of allegiance, you can have made no worse provision for the future than to lower and depreciate our military power, and to diminish the belief which is entertained of its overwhelming force. You induced Dutchmen and Englishmen in the Transvaal to take your side. You informed them in the strongest language that your protection would never pass away from the country. You induced them to stand by you and expose themselves to the vengeance of their enemies, and you now abandon them with nothing to secure them except a paper guarantee. It is the same wretched story as that which we have had recently about Candahar. Well, if there should be any material outbreak of this difference of opinion to which Ministerial speakers have so pointedly alluded, and if the races of the Cape should be ranged against each other, and the authority of the Crown should be in any degree called in question, will it be a light thing that you have discouraged those who otherwise would have done much on your part? Will it be a light thing that the Government have told them, by the strong teaching of example, that when they trust to the English Government the probability is that they will be betrayed? And will the impression you have given to the other side be more favourable? I fear that the course you have now taken at the price of abandoning a great Native population, while it may extricate you from your difficult complications, will leave behind a distrust in your power and a distrust in your fidelity to your engagements which will be fatal to our future Dominion in South Africa.

House adjourned at a quarter past Eleven o'clock, till To-morrow, half past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 31*st March*, 1881.

MINUTES.]—PRIVATE BILL (*by Order*)—*Second Reading*—Guildford, Kingston, and London Railway.

PUBLIC BILLS—*Ordered—First Reading*—Bridges (South Wales)* [129].

Second Reading — Teinds (Scotland) [118]; Land Tax Commissioners' Names* [126]; Alkali, &c. Works Regulation [119]; Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention [120], *debate adjourned;* Agricultural Holdings Act (1875) Amendment [127], *debate adjourned.*

Committee—Report—Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual) [123].

Report—Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Clonakilty, &c.)* [103].

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

GUILDFORD, KINGSTON, AND LONDON RAILWAY BILL (*by Order.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. CUBITT, in rising to move that the Bill be now read a second time, said, he hoped he should be able to show, without detaining the House at any length, that it was a case in which there was no need for the House to interpose at that stage of the measure, seeing that it was a Bill of the character which the House had been in the habit of sending up-stairs to be disposed of by a Select Committee. Now, there had been so much discussion about the Bill, there had been so very much correspondence, such a great amount of Lobbying, such a vast amount of sensational articles in various newspapers, and so many deputations and counter deputations to Ministers of the Crown, that he thought it might possibly surprise the House when he told them that, instead of being a great railway measure, it was a very small Bill indeed, simply for the purpose of constructing what was called a landowners' line. He thought there could hardly have been more excitement if it had been proposed to carry a line under that House in a tunnel, or to cut through Palace Yard into St. James's Park by an open cutting. It was simply a landowners' line, and it affected a not very populous part of the county of Surrey. For some years the county of Surrey had been accommodated by three great Railway Companies —the London and Brighton, the South-Eastern, and the London and South-Western; and after those great Companies completed their undertaking, he believed there was an understanding come to among them that a certain central part of the county should be neutral ground. That neutral part of the county was a sort of quadrilateral, bounded by Kingston and Epsom on the North, and Dorking on the South. After much opposition on the part of these great Companies, and after appearing before several Committees, a line was authorized from Epsom to Dorking. It touched one side of the quadrilateral, and might be described as a line from Kingston to Leatherhead and Guildford, which district had previously been without any railway accommodation. The ground in that district had been particularly in the charge of the South-Western Company. The landowners living along that line had made several attempts to get the South-Western Company to take up their grievances; and it was in evidence, he believed, that the South-Western Company had gone so far in former years as to oppose every independent line that had been suggested for filling up the gap. So things remained until this year. This year a change came over the scene. The Metropolitan line came down to Fulham on the Middlesex side of the river; and the landowners, finding that they had no hope of obtaining anything from the South-Western Company, went to the Metropolitan Company and made arrangements with them to cross the Thames, and, skirting Wimbledon Common, to go on to Guildford. The South Western Company met that proposal in a peculiar way. They did not say that they thought there was no need for additional railway accommodation; but they said — "If you want fresh railway accommodation we will supply it." They happened to have an Omnibus Bill at present before the House, and they proposed to insert in that Bill a provision which would enable them to construct a rival line to Guildford. Consequently, the South-Western Company were, this Session, promoting a rival line. He believed their scheme would be brought before the House to-morrow; but, as far as that stage of the matter was concerned, he thought the House would be of opinion that the South-Western Company were out of court, and that it was not for them to oppose the present Bill, but to show before a Select Committee that their line was superior to the one it was his duty to ask the House to read a second time. There he might now leave the question of the South-Western Railway, and he would come at once to one or two general objections raised against the Bill. The first was that a better line could be constructed, and that it could not be properly worked into London. That, he need not tell the House, was a question which it was quite impossible for them to consider and settle at that time; but it was a question to be fought out before a Select Committee. He would, therefore, pass over that and all the other general objections to the Bill, and go to another point; and that was, how far the proposed line interfered with the common lands in the county of Surrey. That question divided itself into two parts. Hon. Members who knew the county of Surrey knew that it possessed more common land than almost any other county in England, and a great deal of it was of a very beautiful character. There was a considerable amount of very hilly scenery there, with natural woods; and the whole locality was becoming year by year more and more a place of recreation for the hundreds of thousands of the inhabitants of the Metropolis. Although he could not agree with everything the Open Commons Preservation Society proposed, he should not be prepared to move the second reading of the Bill if he thought that one iota of the beautiful commons in Surrey would be destroyed by the construction of this line. If the Bill were likely to occasion serious injury of that kind, he should be among the first in that House to oppose it; but he believed that these common lands would be in a very small degree affected by the Bill; and he would not trouble the House further upon the matter, for this reason, that he understood the promoters of the Bill had undertaken to provide an equal extent of land to that which they proposed to take, and to make up any loss which the commons might experience. The whole quantity of common land proposed to be taken by this line was only 3½ acres; and he thought the House would agree with him that a very great story had been made out of very little. He was glad to see that the Motion which had stood on the Paper in the name of the Chairman of the Commons Preservation Society no longer appeared there, and that it was not the intention of the hon. Member to move the rejection of the Bill. He hoped that further investigation had convinced the hon. Member and the Society that there was really no ground for their interference in this case. Lastly, he came to what he believed to be the most difficult point in regard to the Bill, and that was its interference with Wimbledon Common. The Wimbledon case divided itself again into two parts. First of all there was the commons question, and then the supposed interference of the Bill with the rifle ground. He did not hesitate to say that when the line was first proposed great objections might have been made to the mode in which it was proposed to cross Wimbledon Common. It was proposed partly to cross the common in a cutting, and partly by a covered way. But the promoters had been anxious, as far as possible, to meet the objections of the Conservators of Wimbledon Common, and they had made a great divergence, which he would proceed to describe to the House, and which he believed the House would think ought certainly to satisfy them. The promoters had applied to a neighbouring landowner to assist them in avoiding Wimbledon Common, and that landowner at once acceded to their request. The present state of the case, as far as Wimbledon Common was concerned, was that the line would skirt Wimbledon Common without touching it at all, and would cross Beverley Lane, which was an approach to part of Putney Heath, by a bridge of one span, and then would proceed under Putney Heath by a tunnel, the level of rails being at a depth varying from 50 to 80 feet beneath the surface. He was told that the tunnel would be so deep that no harm would be done, either to the vegetation on the heath, or to the drainage of any part of the common. He hoped he had shown that there was nothing to be apprehended in regard to the destruction of Wimbledon Common as a place of recreation. In saying that, he must remind the House that Wimbledon Common had been already adopted as a place of recreation, and was no longer simply the property of the people of Wimbledon, as they seemed to think it, but that the inhabitants of this great city who had means of access to it were also interested in it. Lastly, he came to a point upon which he professed not to be very fully acquainted, and his want of knowledge of military matters rendered it an extremely difficult one for him to touch; and he did so with more hesitation, because he believed that upon that point he should be encountered by one who had very great knowledge of the subject—namely, the noble Lord the Member for the County of Haddington (Lord Elcho). It was alleged that although that line did not touch the common, it would yet interfere seriously with the rifle practice on Wimbledon Common. All he could say about that matter was that the promoters, in the early part of the measure, had introduced clauses which secured the National Rifle Association, and the various Volunteer Corps who used Wimbledon Common, from any interference; and they had offered to make further arrangements in order to carry out the same idea. He thought the Bill ought to be allowed to go to a Select Committee, so that the promoters might be able to show both the Committee and the Association that all adequate protection would be given to the rifle practice, and that ample protection would also be afforded to the public who would use the line. There was one point more, and then he had done. He had said that he could not venture to cope with the noble Lord the Member for Haddingtonshire in knowledge of the Volunteer Associations, yet it was rather a strong fact that the landowner, who had so cordially met the wishes of the promoters of the Bill by offering his land, was no less a person than His Royal Highness the Commander-in-Chief. The Volunteers had no reason to say that the Duke of Cambridge had ever thrown cold water upon their movement; and, therefore, if His Royal Highness was willing to facilitate this line, he thought the House might conclude that, in the opinion of the Commander-in-Chief, the Bill would not do much damage to Wimbledon Common. He merely pressed this point for what it was worth, in anticipation of the arguments which he knew would be used by the noble Lord the Member for Haddingtonshire. He believed he had now exhausted all he had to say. He wished he could think that any appeal he might make to his hon. Friend the Member for Mid Surrey (Sir Henry Peek) would be useful, and would induce him to withdraw his opposition to the Bill. He could assure his hon. Friend that the promoters would give every weight to the arguments of the Conservators, when they came before a Committee of that House; and he believed that his hon. Friend would consult the interests of the Conservators, as well as the time of the House, if he would not now persevere with his Amendment. At any rate, if he felt justified in saying, as a Wimbledon man, that Wimbledon should be preserved for inhabitants of Wimbledon only, he (Mr. Cubitt) believed he would find himself deceived if he anticipated that he would be supported by any other Member interested in the locality. He begged now to move that the Bill be read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Cubitt.*)

SIR HENRY PEEK said, he had not a word to say as to the tone of the remarks which had been made by his right hon. Friend; and if it was only a simple small landowners' Bill, he should not have been, for one, addressing the House at that moment. He would ask the House to be good enough to listen to him for a short time while he assured them that it was not the simple matter which had been put forward by his right hon. Friend. Twenty-five or thirty years ago, he supposed, there was not one person in 500,000 in this country who knew that there was any such place as Wimbledon Common at all. But those who lived in the West of London knew it perfectly well as one of the most beautiful of all the commons of Surrey. Some 20 years ago, at the institution of the National Rifle Association, they wanted a practice ground upon which they could hold their annual meetings; and, after looking about them for some time, they pitched upon Wimbledon Common. Lord Spencer, being then lord of the manor, met them in a very fair way, and gave them many facilities; but, then, Lord Spencer thought to himself—"Here is a common of 1,000 acres of land; I am lord of the manor, and I ought to be able to do what I like with it. I will, therefore, make a proposition; if the neighbourhood will give me 300 acres in fee simple I will make them a present of the remaining 700 acres, and convert it into a park and put it under management." A great many meetings were held at Wimbledon in reference to this project, and at those meetings the people who resided in the locality declared that they were not prepared to accept Lord Spencer's scheme at all. A great many of them thought that the word "common" implied a great deal more than the interests of the lord of the manor and a few copyholders. They, therefore, opposed Lord Spencer's scheme, and a long and expensive litigation ensued. After a time it was thought desirable to close that litigation; and a special Act of Parliament was passed in the year 1871 in reference to the common. This was the Preamble of that Act—

> "And whereas it would be of great local and public advantage if the Commons (that is Wimbledon Common and Putney Heath) were always kept uninclosed and unbuilt on, their natural aspect and state being as far as may be preserved."

This case of Wimbledon Common had no parallel in the United Kingdom. It was a common that was free and open to all classes of Her Majesty's subjects; but, unfortunately for them, the inhabitants of Wimbledon living within three-quarters of a mile of that common had to find £2,600 a-year for the purpose of keeping it open. He asked the House to bear that fact in mind, that the inhabitants were taxed to the extent of £2,600 a-year in order to keep that common open for the public enjoyment. Now, how was that £2,600 expended? They had to pay in perpetuity £1,200 a-year to Lord Spencer for all his rights. They had to borrow £5,000 in order to pay the expenses of the law suit and the cost of getting the Act of Parliament through both Houses. They owed every farthing of that money now. They had to provide for the general management of the common, to make bye-laws, and to provide for the maintenance of the common. They had to find part of the police of the common; and last, although not least, they had to pay the Crown 30*s.* a-year for estovers formerly enjoyed by the Crown tenant as a Commoner; and all they got in exchange in pounds, shillings, and pence, was £100 a-year from the National Rifle Association, and a few casual receipts which never amounted to more than £200 a-year. By the stringent terms of the Act they were prevented from inclosing it for any purpose whatever. Some three or four years ago the Royal Agricultural Society were anxious to hold their show upon Wimbledon Common. They would have given the Conservators a considerable sum, he had no doubt, for the privilege of temporarily inclosing 30 acres of the common for that purpose; but the terms of the Act of Parliament were so stringent that they could not take the money of the Society, nor could they take the money of any other person. He might mention another thing in order to show what the people of the locality got for that sum of £2,600 a-year. They only had two days in the week upon which they could enjoy the common. There was no firing on Sundays, and there was no firing on Wednesdays; but on every other day for five hours, certain rifle corps paying nothing, among them being the London Scottish Rifle Corps, had the privilege of practising upon the common, by which means they rendered fully one-third of the enjoyable part of the common highly dangerous and, therefore, useless. He thought the House would agree with him that the ratepayers got very little in return for their £2,600 a-year; and the question would naturally arise, why were they so anxious to fall in with that arrangement? Now, he had not the least hesitation in telling the House that it was public spirit alone, and public spirit entirely free from the least taint of selfishness, that induced them to take the course they did. They saw 1,000 acres of the most beautiful common land in the whole of England, consisting of wood and water, and a magnificent open plateau, and they wished it to be maintained for the general enjoyment. They were quite willing to pay that very large sum of money per annum in order that they themselves, and the public generally, might enjoy this common. Perhaps the House would allow him to read three sections of the Act of Parliament which related to the duties of the Conservators, of whom he was one named in the Act. From the passing of the Act till a fortnight since he had been Chairman of the Conservators; but he was now retiring from the Board, and should cease to be a Conservator in a few days' time. Section 34 of the Act of Parliament stated that—

> "The Conservators shall at all times keep the Commons open, uninclosed and unbuilt on, except as regards such parts thereof as are at the passing of this Act inclosed or built on, and shall by all lawful means prevent, resist, and abate all encroachments and attempted encroachments on the Commons and protect the Commons and preserve them as open spaces, and resist all proceedings tending to the inclosure, or appropriation for any purpose, of any part thereof."

Section 35 said—

> "It shall not be lawful for the Conservators, except as in this Act expressed, to sell, lease, grant, or in any manner dispose of any part of the Commons."

And Section 36 enacted that—

> "The Conservators shall at all times preserve, as far as may be, the natural aspect and state of the Commons, and to that end shall protect the turf, gorse, heather, timber, and other trees, shrubs, and brushwood thereon."

If those sections did not lay down the duties of the Conservators in very plain terms he failed to understand what they did. He said just now that they were actuated by public spirit. The Wimbledon people and the Putney people had eyes. In that district there were other commons. They could see the present state of Wandsworth Common. He recollected Wandsworth Common when it was a beautiful open space of 300 acres. And now what was it? They could see Barnes Common with a railway running across it, and completely spoiling it. Mitcham Common was very little better. The railway facilities, as they were called, had absolutely ruined that common. They preferred Wimbledon Common in all its natural beauty; and he had no hesitation in saying and assuring that House that for 10 years they had done the best they could in that way, and that the common was never in such an excellent condition as it was now. That common, as he said before, was a unique common; and he thought the House would agree with him when he said that he believed there were flowers and insects to be found on Wimbledon Common which were scarcely to be found on any other common in England. He knew an entymologist who went down there—a working man—and he could earn as much as £1 a-day by collecting, in certain seasons of the year, rare insects. They might find there partridges, pheasants, hares, rabbits, kingfishers, moor-hens, glow-worms, and all kinds of harmless snakes. There were birds of all kinds, and he himself had bought, not very long ago, a live badger, not one that had wandered on to the common, but one that had been dug out of his lair there. Then, again, many hon. Members of that House would bear him out when he said that the common offered to pedestrians unequalled advantages; it further offered to all persons opportunities for cricket and fishing; and it must be borne in mind that these advantages were given not to the Wimbledon ratepayers, or to the Wimbledon residents alone, but to all Her Majesty's subjects who knew how to behave themselves. The common offered opportunities for cricket, fishing, football, hockey, la crosse, polo, quoits, and many other games. It afforded to equestrians miles of turf; and it afforded to all the very best of air, with cheerful rural surroundings, which he hoped would be long maintained. Such was the position now. Then, what was it that had disturbed their serenity some six months ago? They received a notice that a railway was coming. It became at once their duty to inquire what the railway was; and they found that it proposed, as had been done in the case of other commons, to cut off some 60 or 80 acres from the main common. It further proposedto erect a bullet-proof screen in order to protect the passengers by the railway from the bullets of the National Rifle Association, and he believed power was taken to put up other additional works. Directly the plans were out, the Conservators put themselves in communication with the promoters. He, as Chairman of the Conservators, called a meeting, and asked the engineer to come down and bring any persons with him who were interested in the measure. He came down, and they had a four hours' interview with him; and they then and there told him that they were determined, at every stage of the measure, to oppose that or any similar proposal. Nothing was done for a long time; but when it was found that the original proposition was altogether too violent, modified plans were brought forward, and only last Friday these modified plans passed the Standing Orders Committee. He quite agreed that the modified plans minimized the evil; but the result was, still, to leave a belt of railway and a screen which was perfectly hideous round the edge of the common for nearly a mile. Further, there would be a tunnel under the common, which would be certain to injure the trees and dry up the springs. There was an old well on the common, which had been there since the time of the Romans, and which was enjoyed by hundreds every day; but springs were capricious, and if the tunnel were constructed, those on the common would probably all be dried up. The ponds, which during a great part of the year were used for fishing, and which during the winter were used for curling and skating, would be drained. And then this tunnel was to be a mile long; and, therefore, it was sure, sooner or later, although they were not proposed now, to be furnished with large ventilating shafts thrown up on the common, and these, as all hon. Members would see, would hardly add very much to the beauty of the place. As his right hon. Friend had said, this proposal had created quite a storm in the neighbourhood. Yesterday they had an election of Conservators; and it was a fair stand-up fight on the question of railway or no railway. Well, the votes given to those who supported the railway averaged 600 per man; whilst, on the other side, the votes given to the opponents of the railway averaged over 3,400. That was to say, where one person voted for the railway — and, of course, in such a neighbourhood there were sure to be a few ratepayers who would be benefited by the little money that would be brought into circulation by the line—there were seven who voted against it. As he said before, they had been charged with selfishness by the promoters of the railway; but a more baseless charge was never made. In this Act of Parliament, they excepted all ratepayers who were rated under £35—that was to say, those residents who paid over £35 per annum took the whole burden on themselves. Then they were charged with selfishness with regard to the working man. He (Sir Henry Peek) joined issue, with pleasure, on the working man argument. He never did toady to the working man yet, and he never intended to toady to him. He respected the working man—he was a working man himself—but he would not toady to him. There were two kinds of working men. There was the working man who did not trouble himself about other people's enjoyment as long as he could enjoy himself, and go where he liked, and have his pipe and his pot. Let this man go to Wandsworth Common. He could get there for a few pence, he need only walk a hundred yards from the railway, and there were a dozen public-houses for his enjoyment. But there was another kind of working man who thoroughly appreciated the advantages for himself and his family which he (Sir Henry Peek) had described. Such a man avoided Wandsworth Common, and went to Wimbledon Common, which to him was really in the country as much as though it was 200 or 300 miles from London. He could get the fresh country air there, and it satisfied his wants. Working men would come from the East End of London—they would walk all night in order to take up their position, at day-break, at the ponds on Wimbledon Common. The other day he saw some odd-looking men, whose conversation he could not understand, standing there. He went up to them, and made inquiries, and he ascertained that they were Spanish porters, attached to a wine house, who, once a-year, came to Wimbledon Common for their treat, because it reminded them of the beautiful parts of their own country. What did he see there on the following Sunday? Why, he saw a man, sitting on one of the benches provided for the public by the Conservators, reading his book. He said to the common-keeper, "Do you know that man?"—he thought his appearance was somewhat familiar to him—and the keeper replied—"Yes; he is a clerk—he comes here every Sunday of his life, and brings his sandwiches and sherry." The working man had been quoted; and, what was more, the working men, or a body said to be fairly representative of the working men, waited upon the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade. Now, with reference to that deputation, the Secretary of the Gilders' Society, a body 80 years old—wrote to him (Sir Henry Peek), and said—

> "Permit me to say there is a considerable difference of opinion on the subject (of this railway). A very large number of working men, particularly those belonging to the higher class of trades, are quite opposed to the extension for many reasons, amongst which may be mentioned the want of necessity for such extension (there being more railway accommodation through the county of Surrey than in most counties of the same characteristics), and the ample means of reaching Wimbledon Common from any part of London in less than one hour, and less than a mile walk; whilst the plain fact remains that the opportunity of seizing common land is the temptation too strong to be resisted in the railway speculator's mind."

These were not his own words, but words addressed to him by a perfect stranger, Mr. Robert Francis, the Secretary of this Society. Well, he wanted to know why the railway wished to come to Wimbledon Common? The inhabitants of Wimbledon were not against the railway *per se.* They had shown the promoters an alternative plan, and he had no hesitation in saying that it was a better plan; but, unfortunately, they proposed that the line should be run through property which, although it was not built upon, was in private hands, and would have to be paid for; whereas, if the railway could come through Wimbledon Common, the promoters would get, at any rate, one mile of their distance towards London for nothing at all. He hoped that he had made out to the House that, at any rate, there were two sides to this question, and that this was not the little innocent landowners' railway that his right hon. Friend wished them to believe it. There was a great question involved. This Act of Parliament of theirs was the result of a great deal of litigation; and it had saddled, as no common in England had saddled, the neighbourhood with a charge of £2,600 a-year for keeping up the place, not only for the benefit of the residents, but for the benefit, likewise, of all classes of Her Majesty's subjects; and he, therefore, hoped that to-day the second reading of the Bill would be refused. It should be rejected, if only for the simple reason that the plans only passed the Standing Orders Committee last Friday, which seemed to him abundant proof that the scheme could not be a well-matured and well-considered one. The Bill was certainly not favoured by the best class of working men; it was opposed to all recent legislation as to open spaces near the Metropolis; and it made still more onerous the hard bargain made in 1871. What would be the effect of sending the Bill to a Select Committee? Why, those who were bound to pay already £2,600 a-year for the maintenance of the common would also be bound—for they were not free agents in the matter—to oppose the scheme, and that would add, at least, another £1,000 to the rate which it was their duty to do their best to limit. There was another feature in this Bill which ought to insure its immediate condemnation. In the new clauses just proposed by the promoters, there was this singular provision—that not only was the line to be protected for a considerable distance from the firing on the common by some sort of screen, but the Company was to indemnify all persons lawfully using the rifle ranges from or in respect of any accidents to persons or property that might happen through the insufficiency or want of repair of such screen. That was to say, Parliament was asked to sanction the construction of a line of railway in so dangerous a position that it was thought necessary to provide for possible loss of life through bullets from the rifle ranges entering the carriages; rather than wait another year and then bring up an improved plan, the promoters were actually driven to promise that if anyone was shot on their line they would bear the consequences. Was such a proposal worthy of a moment's consideration? There was only one other matter to which he wished to call the attention of the House. He hoped he had made out a good case for Wimbledon; but there was another case that not only affected the residents of a certain district, but which affected everyone who went to the Thames for the purpose of recreation or amusement. The promoters proposed to take the railway to Putney. It had been determined by the proper authorities to get rid of the old bridge and the present ugly aqueduct and to build a new, handsome structure of granite, of five wide spans, which, no doubt, would be a great ornament to the river. Well, in order to get to London, this railway must cross the river; and it was proposed that they should throw across it a bridge at a different angle altogether to the proposed granite bridge, and consisting of no less than nine arches. The Company said—" Oh, if you want fewer spans, we will hear what competent persons have to say on the subject; and if they say that it will be an improvement we will adopt your suggestion." Still, they could not get rid of the fact that they would have a skew bridge within 200 yards of this new Putney Bridge. He happened to be President of the West London Rowing Club. He did not say anything to the Secretary of that Club about this bridge; but within the last 24 hours he had had five separate Petitions from him and others begging the House, for the sake of boating on the Thames, if for no other reason, to throw out the Bill. Let the House bear in mind that if they did not allow this bridge to be built it would be fatal to the Bill, because the railway could not come into London unless this skew bridge was built; and, at the same time, the House should also bear in mind that if they did allow the scheme to be carried out, it was good-bye to the enjoyment of that which was one of the finest reaches of the river. He was afraid he had been somewhat tedious; but he had this matter very much at heart, and he trusted that his Amendment would be accepted. He begged to move that the Bill be read a second time on that day six months.

Mr. BRYCE said, he rose to second the Amendment moved by the hon. Baronet who had just sat down. After the able and exhaustive speech he had delivered, he (Mr. Bryce) would confine himself to one or two very short remarks. The hon. Baronet had pointed out how injuriously this scheme would affect Wimbledon Common. He admitted the great desirability of opening up the parts of Surrey that this Bill proposed to open up; and he also admitted the great desirability of making not only Wimbledon Common, but all the commons near, accessible to the people of London. As a Representative of a London constituency, he had no hesitation in saying that the House would be rendering a great service to the public by making the commons more available; but in doing that they must not purchase too dear. The Bill proposed not only to injure Wimbledon Common in the way which had been pointed out by the hon. Baronet, but also to take pieces of other commons in Surrey. It was proposed that if this was objectionable the Company should enter into an undertaking to abstain from acquiring any common land if the Home Office required it to so abstain; but he thought the Company should be required to give an absolute undertaking that it would not take common land at all. The Bill proposed to take power to cross the commons, one of them the most beautiful common in Surrey, to sever it in two; and when that was done its enjoyment was, of course, seriously interfered with. As the Mover of the second reading had well remarked, it was time that the railway sought power to throw into these two commons land equivalent to that which it took from them; but the hon. Members who looked at the clauses of the Bill would see that the powers were not sufficiently strong. The powers were merely permissive. They allowed the Company to take the lands, but did not give them power to take them compulsorily. They, having obtained possession of the common land, might say to the Conservators, or those interested—"We cannot get the land we want to throw into the common—the owners will not sell it;" and the commons, therefore, would suffer. He submitted that these commons were matters of great public interest and value. There was no county in England that possessed not only more commons, but more beautiful commons than Surrey; and they ought to be careful not to impair the respect the people had for them as their own patrimony. They ought to tell the promoters that they had brought forward an ill-advised scheme, and that it was incumbent on them to show that they could construct their line without interfering with the commons at all. There was another Bill for second reading to-morrow promoted by the London and South-Western Railway Company which also proposed to take common land in a way that would be more injurious than this Bill. If they did not oppose that Bill, it would be argued with some force to-morrow that as they did not oppose one they should not oppose the other. He submitted, therefore, that the proper course was to reject all the proposals, and to tell the promoters that they must come back next year with better schemes, that would preserve these common lands for the enjoyment of the people.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Sir Henry Peek.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: The Board of Trade have very carefully considered the provisions of this Bill, and we have also had before us the representations of the opponents to the measure and of those who advocate its passage. I may point out to the House that the question before us this moment is not whether the Bill should pass, but whether there is on the face of it any provision so objectionable and monstrous in its character that the House would be justified in refusing to allow it to be read a second time. As I understand the language of the opponents of the Bill, they consider that one or two of its provisions are of this character—The first is the extent of its interference with commons, &c.; secondly, the point raised by the hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Henry Peek)—that the railway can only reach its destination by means of a bridge which it is proposed to erect diagonally with another, to be built by the Metropolitan Board of Works, and of a different span, so as to be dangerous to navigation. As to the latter point, I considered it of so much importance that I engaged Colonel Yolland to make a Report of the facts; and I have received a Report from him, and will submit it to the Committee if the House passes the second reading. Colonel Yolland says he does not see in the proposal any valid reason for refusing to allow the Bill to be considered by a Select Committee. I have also received a letter from the solicitor to, or, at all events, signed on behalf of, the Company; and in that letter they undertake that both the direction of the bridge and the character of its spans shall be altered in accordance with the desire of the Thames Conservancy—who are interested in the river—and the Board of Trade, and, if there is any difference of opinion between them, in accordance with the decision of an arbitrator. That disposes of that objection; but there is still the more important question that the Bill interferes with the enjoyment of commons to such an extent as to justify the House in refusing to allow it to pass its present stage. It seems to me that there are two objects which all lovers of commons should keep in view—in the first place, their preservation intact, and, in the second place, to secure the greatest access to them for the largest possible number of people. It appears to me absolutely impossible that any line should be constructed through what may be called a commons county, such as that traversed by this line, without some slight interference with the commons; but I doubt if access could be afforded to such a large number of commons with less interference than is now proposed under this Bill. I do not think that the extent of the commons in the county of Surrey will be diminished if the Bill passes by a single acre. It is part of the proposal, I understand, that where it is proposed to take a certain part of a common, the Company will throw into it an equal area of private property. It is said that there will be a severance of the commons, which will be a great injury to them; but this is not the fact. As I understand it, there will be an intersection, but not being in the nature of a severance. As to Wimbledon Common, there will be no interference with its surface, and the amenities of the common will still be preserved. The opposition to this Bill—I will not call it a selfish opposition—is on the part of the Conservators of that common and the inhabitants of Wimbledon, who naturally complain that they should be rated for that which it is now proposed to open up to the whole of London. It seems to me they will have a fair case to lay before a Committee—that if the common is to be opened up to the whole of London, the expense connected with the preservation of the common should fall on the whole of London, as has been the case with some other commons. But these are really matters for Committee; and, therefore, under the circumstances, I trust the House will not take the strong step of rejecting the measure on the second reading.

Lord ELCHO said, the right hon. Member for West Surrey (Mr. Cubitt) had referred to him in connection with the

National Rifle Association; and he assumed that, as a member of the Council of that Association, he (Lord Elcho) would not oppose the Bill. Certainly, at one time, he would have done so; but the Company had made proposals to the Association which, to a great extent, diminished the objection which they had to the Bill as originally framed; and—he thought he could speak for the Council of the Association—reserving to themselves the right of appearing before the Committee, they did not propose to oppose the second reading. He opposed it himself as an individual, wholly irrespective of the Association, and on totally different grounds to the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Bryce), who, he believed, was the Chairman of the Commons Preservation Society. This Bill now came before them in a very modest form—in the form of a small landowners' Bill taking only three and a-half acres of common land. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade seemed to think that the intersection of a common by a railway was not a severance; but he should like to know what was a severance if an intersection was not. He was not aware what the distinction drawn by the President of the Board of Trade was.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN said, the communication between the land on each side of the railway was preserved to the public.

Lord ELCHO said, they had a clear severance, and the right hon. Gentleman evaded the real point. He asked the House to reject the Bill on the broad matter of principle. It came before them as a landowners' Bill; but it was of a very different character when the plans were first deposited and it was first brought forward. Why, as regarded the National Rifle Association, it took no heed of that important body for the encouragement of rifle shooting in the United Kingdom; and if it had stood as originally framed it would absolutely have put a stop to all rifle shooting. The way they treated all rifle corps who had a right to shoot there was simply by giving them notice that they were about to take their shooting ground. In that way they regularly sought to override the public interest in a manner which the House of Commons ought not to sanction. The House ought to lay it down as a principle that Companies were not to come to Parliament to override public interests, and then to be allowed to bring in an amended scheme. They had often heard it stated that Railway Companies would not hesitate, if it suited their purpose, to run a railway through St. Paul's or Westminster Abbey; and his right hon. Friend, in moving the second reading, said there was such an opposition to it that one would suppose the intention was to run a line to the House of Commons with a cutting through Palace Yard. The Bill did not propose to do that; but it did propose to cut through Parliament, or the intention of Parliament, as shown by Parliamentary Committees and Acts of Parliament, because it had for its object to cut through and take a large portion of the lower part of a common. They ought to teach Railway Companies a lesson, and show them that they were not, for the sake of saving money to the shareholders or for some other purpose, to bring in a Bill overriding the intention of Parliament; and then, when they were stopped—as they had done in this case — to bring forward a modified scheme, saying—"We will not do all the harm we intended to do." The plans showed what was originally intended; and what was now meant was a modification of that original scheme. They did not propose to cut through the common, but to carry out the same plan by travelling under it. He should give his vote heartily for his hon. Friend who moved the rejection of the Bill, to teach the Railway Companies a lesson which might save them a great deal of litigation in future cases.

Mr. ONSLOW should like to say a word on the matter before the House went to a division. He had heard nothing from the hon. Baronet, nor the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Bryce), which should induce the House to refuse the second reading of this Bill. The remarks that had been made concerning its provisions touched subjects that could be very well dealt with in Committee, and he certainly could not see that there had been a strong case shown for the refusal of the Bill. They all expected that the noble Lord (Lord Elcho) would say something which might induce the House to throw out the Bill, because he was connected with the Volunteer movement; but he had shown them conclusively that the measure would not interfere with the shooting at Wimbledon. [Lord Elcho: As now proposed.] The House had nothing to do with that particular branch of the subject. It was said that ricochet shots from the butts might have some injurious effect on the line, and that, of course, was a very serious consideration; but it was not a reason why they should throw out the Bill. The hon. Member for Mid Surrey (Sir Henry Peek) seemed to take a local objection to the Bill; but it was not a local measure. The matter was one which affected a very large number of the inhabitants, seeing that at present there was no railway accommodation at all. He should be the last person to support the Bill if he thought the common lands in Surrey were likely to be interfered with by it; but he thought that, beautiful as the commons in Surrey were, at this moment the general public had so few facilities for visiting them that if they were not likely to be cut up or destroyed, a railway should be constructed for the purpose of giving access to them. The hon. Baronet behind him (Sir Henry Peek) had not shown how, if the proposed railway were made, it would interfere with the games which were played at Wimbledon, or with the rare insects which were to be found on Wimbledon Common. He held in his hand a Petition in favour of the Bill from the borough he had the honour to represent. It was signed by the Mayor and Corporation, under the corporate seal, and it pointed out that the Petition in favour of the line came from every part of Surrey through which the railway would pass. He believed that it would be a very popular line; and that when it was made it would be found that there was no objection to it at all. If it were laid down that no railway should pass through common land in the county of Surrey it would be impossible to have any railway at all. The whole of the lines in Surrey passed through common lands; from Wimbledon to Guildford, from Guildford to Aldershot, and all through the county there was one succession of common lands. If they were to pay any attention to the sentimental idea that they were not to interfere with the common lands which now existed in the country, in future it would be impossible to construct a new railway in Surrey. At the present moment, the line from London to Portsmouth passed through a large extent of common land, and it would be altogether impossible to construct a line from Guildford to Portsmouth, unless they did pass over common lands. It had been said, and said most truly, that, at the present moment, the London and South-Western Railway Company had a monopoly of the railway accommodation in this district, and that fact constituted one of the chief reasons why he supported the present Bill. Nothing could be worse than the accommodation provided by the London and South-Western Railway Company at the present time, and a little wholesome competition was very much needed. The fares charged by the Company were excessive; the stations and the accommodation generally were as defective as possible; and throughout the whole of England there was not a worse line of railway than that of the London and South-Western Railway Company's from London to Portsmouth. He believed that his hon. Friend behind him (Sir Henry Peek) had gained a great deal of unpopularity by the course he had taken in reference to the present Bill; but he (Mr. Onslow) hoped that unpopularity would die away long before the next General Election, and that it would not interfere with his seat in any way whatever. For the reasons he had given, he begged to support the second reading of the Bill.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL said, that he also intended to support the second reading of the Bill, and he did so entirely irrespective of the merits of the measure; but because he thought the House of Commons was a tribunal totally unfitted to dispose of a project of this kind, without first sending the Bill before a Select Committee, which alone was capable of dealing with the questions involved in it. As so much, however, had been said upon the merits of the Bill, he wished to say one word in reference to a matter which was within his own personal knowledge. Richmond Park was, he believed, the largest and most magnificent park in the United Kingdom. In every way it was the best park in the neighbourhood of London; and it so happened that those parts of it which were nearest to the Metropolis were also near to the proposed line. A man who was able to keep a horse, and drive to Richmond Park, when he got there found it almost a solitude, the best parts of it being almost entirely shut out from the inhabitants of London, owing to the absence of the means of getting there. In Richmond Park there were miles and miles of the most magnificent country scenery, full of woods and dales, and trees and ferns, and everything which made rural scenery enjoyable; but, owing to the absence of railway facilities, the park was comparatively unused. At present the only means the inhabitants of London possessed of getting to Richmond Park was by going down to Richmond by rail or river; and then they had to walk through the town, and travel for a mile and a-half, before they reached the farther end. He felt certain that if railway accommodation were provided in such a way that there could be no insuperable objection raised, the inhabitants of London would highly appreciate the privilege of obtaining free access to Richmond Park at the near end about Robin Hood's Gate.

MR. BRODRICK said, he simply desired to answer one of the points which had been raised in the course of the debate. An hon. Member opposite (Mr. Bryce) suggested that the Bill should be deferred for a year. Now, on behalf of his constituents, who were deeply interested in the matter, he (Mr. Brodrick) ventured to protest against any delay whatever. The proposed railway would be 22 miles long, and in almost the whole of the district through which it passed it was not opposed in the slightest degree, and the objections which had been urged to it in respect of Wimbledon did not apply. He, therefore, hoped that the House would agree to send the Bill to a Select Committee, who would carefully inquire into the whole merits of the case.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 275; Noes 49: Majority 226.—(Div. List, No. 172.)

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed.*

LONDON CITY (PAROCHIAL CHARITIES) BILL (*by Order.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. BRYCE, in moving that the Order for the second reading of the Bill upon Wednesday next be discharged, and that the Bill be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, said, that he made this Motion in conformity with the established practice of the House; but in doing so he wished to call attention to the inconvenience and hardship which the practice inflicted upon private Members. When a Bill was referred in this way to the Examiners of Private Bills it necessarily lost its place on the Paper for second reading; and, as the House was aware, it was almost impossible to get a Bill to a second reading unless the Member in charge of it balloted for a day on the first night of the Session. If he was successful in obtaining an early day, and the Bill affected any particular locality, or appeared to affect any rights of private bodies, it then became necessary to refer th Bill to the Examiners, and he lost the day he had obtained. This happened even though the Examiners might ultimately hold that the Bill was entirely a public one. It thus became practically impossible for a private Member to bring in a Bill with a prospect of getting it read a second time, however important it might be, if it became necessary to refer it to the Examiners. He hoped the House would see its way to modifying the existing practice by a new Standing Order, which he hoped to be able to propose, dealing with this inconvenience, and permitting a Bill referred under such circumstances to the Examiners, to retain its place on the Order Book for second reading. He might add that the difficulty became greater by the application of the half-past 12 o'clock Rule.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the Order for the Second Reading of the Bill upon Wednesday next be discharged, and that the Bill be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills."—(*Mr. Bryce.*)

MR. PELL hoped he might be allowed to say a word upon the subject. He would not take up the time of the House by commenting upon the reference of the Bill to the Examiners; but he could not let the opportunity pass of calling the attention of the Government to the importance of the measure, and of expressing a hope that if the Bill came forward too late to be fully considered this Session, the Government would, at the earliest time at their disposal, take up this important matter, with a view of giving effect by legislation to the views of the Royal Commissioners.

Motion *agreed to.*

Leave given to the Examiners to sit and proceed forthwith.

QUESTIONS.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—ARRESTS—KILMAINHAM GAOL.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, How many town councillors, members of poor law boards, and students of the learned professions are now imprisoned in Kilmainham under the Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that, in accordance with the terms of the Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, it was his duty to lay upon the Table a list of all persons arrested under it, and by help of that list the hon. Member would be able to obtain the information he desired.

POST OFFICE ACT, 1837—DETENTION AND OPENING OF LETTERS.

Mr. A. M. SULLIVAN asked the Postmaster General, Whether, in the case of duly prepaid private letters stopped, opened, and read by the Post Office authorities, by virtue of a warrant from the Secretary of State, or otherwise, it is usual to prevent the communications from reaching their intended destination, and to return them as "Returned Paid Letters" to the writers, without any explanation or reason for their stoppage; whether, on or about the 13th instant, a duly prepaid letter, addressed to a young lady residing at West End Park, Harrogate, was, by authority of a special warrant from Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State, or otherwise, stopped, opened, and read by the Post Office authorities, and by them returned to the writer as a "Returned Paid Letter," without any explanation of such proceeding on their part; whether, on or about the same date, a letter addressed to a young lady in a boarding school at Haverstock Hill was in a like manner stopped, opened, perused, and returned as a "Returned Paid Letter" to the writer by the Post Office authorities, without any explanation of their conduct; and, whether it is a fact that in each case it was discovered that the communication so intercepted by the authorities was from a young lady in Ireland inclosing a spray of Shamrocks to a former schoolfellow in one case, and to the writer's sister in the other; and, whether it is not possible that, since the Home Secretary has been reported to have opened letters, dishonest letter carriers had availed themselves of the opportunity of opening them also, thinking that the recipients would imagine it had been done by the Home Secretary?

Mr. FAWCETT: Sir, I need scarcely say that the two letters referred to in the Question of the hon. and learned Member were not opened by a warrant from the Secretary of State. I find, on inquiry, that the explanation of the matter is simply as follows:—On St. Patrick's Day, a great number of letters are always sent containing shamrock. The two letters referred to in the Question contained shamrock in such a wet condition that the moisture came through and injured the other letters. The course was then taken which is always followed when a letter is in such a condition that it cannot be forwarded without damage to the other correspondence. These letters were sent to the Returned Letter Office. They were, of course, not read, but treated in the same way as letters which are sent to the Returned Letter Office to be returned to the writers in consequence of insufficient address or other cause. I think, however, it might be better, and would probably cause less inconvenience, if, under similar circumstances in the future, letters thus detained are forwarded to their destination instead of being returned to the writers. Through an inadvertence the letters in question were returned to the writer endorsed with the word "shamrock," instead of with the words "damp shamrock withdrawn," which would have explained the cause of the detention.

CRIMINAL LAW — ARREST OF THE EDITOR OF THE "FREIHEIT."

Mr. GREGORY asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he is aware that a paper called "Freiheit" is printed and published in London, in which paper the assassination of the late Czar of Russia is justified and approved, and in which the destruction of other sovereigns of Europe is suggested; and, if he will consider whether such a publication is consistent with our International obligations to friendly States or the Law of this Country? He desired to explain that, since placing this Question upon the Paper, he had ascertained that proceedings had been taken against the editor of the paper referred to.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked, Whether it was true that the editor of the *Freiheit* was arrested yesterday, under a warrant charging him with inciting the people of a foreign State to sedition and rebellion; and that his money, his watch, his bank book, and his letters were taken from him; if so, by whom the warrant for his arrest was issued, and whether the warrant authorized such rigorous treatment, and under what law or statute the arrest was made, and under what law or statute the police were justified in forcibly ejecting the compositors from the premises, in taking possession of the keys, and in shutting up the premises?

MR. J. COWEN inquired, Whether the prosecution of the editor of the *Freiheit* had been undertaken by Her Majesty's Government at the request or suggestion of any foreign Government?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Sir, I will first answer the Question of the hon. Member for East Sussex (Mr. Gregory). The attention of Her Majesty's Government has necessarily been directed to the article referred to. It has been reproduced with more or less detail in most of the English and foreign newspapers. Its revolting character is universally known, and it seemed to Her Majesty's Government impossible to ignore it. I hold in my hand a translation of that article, and I am afraid I must shock the House by reading one or two sentences from it. In this article there is no circumstance of bestial ferocity absent. After describing with exultation the assassination of the Czar, it proceeds—

> "Triumph, triumph! . . . The Emperor of Russia is no more . . . One of those brave young men who produced the revolutionary movement in Russia, Rousakoff—with reverence be his name uttered—threw a dynamite bomb under the despot's carriage, which, indeed, did great damage to the conveyance and to its immediate neighbourhood, but left the crowned murderous thief uninjured. . . . Then flew another bomb. It fell at the despot's feet, shattered his legs, ripped open his belly, and caused many wounds and deaths among the surrounding military and civil Cossacks. Those who witnessed the scene were paralyzed, but the energetic bomb-thrower retained his composure and happily succeeded in escaping. The Emperor was conveyed to his palace, where for an hour and a-half he was able, amid horrible sufferings, to meditate on his guilty life. At last he died—as a dog dies. . . . For three years has many a shot whistled past the ears of these monsters without—except in Nobiling's attempt—hurting a hair of their heads. . . . The other rabble, too, which in various countries pull the wires of Government mechanism for the ruling classes, experienced a powerful 'moral delirium' and melted in tears of confession, whether they were mere head lackeys on the steps of the Imperial Throne, or Republican 'regulation bandits' of the first class. The whimpering was no less in France, in Switzerland, and America than in Montenegro or Greece. A Gambetta caused the adjournment of the Chambers and thereby put an insult on France. The leaders of the ruling classes see in the successful destruction of an autocrat more than a mere act of homicide. They are in face of a successful attack upon authority as such. They all know at the same time that every success has the wonderful power of instilling respect, but of inciting to imitation. Hence they are trembling, from Constantinople to Washington, for their long forfeit heads. . . . What we might at any rate complain of is that so-called tyrannicide happens so seldom. If only a single crowned wretch were disposed of every month in a short time no one would any more care to play the Monarch. . . . Indeed, we might actually wish that it should so turn out, for we hate the hypocritical mock-liberal Monarch no less than the despots *sans phrase*, because the former, perhaps, have greater power of retarding the development of civilization than the latter. . . . Meanwhile, be this as it may, 'the throw was good,' and we hope that it was not the last."

In the opinion of Her Majesty's Government it would be a grave error to regard this matter solely, or even principally, from an international point of view. It is not so much as an offence against foreign Governments, but as a domestic crime, that such publications should be dealt with. They constitute a gross and flagrant breach of our public morals. Incitements to murder, whether levelled against princes or peasants, against citizens or strangers, are like obscene libels; they attack the foundations of civil society and shock the conscience of mankind. No Government, which desires to do its duty to the society with whose safety it is charged, can tolerate the open advocacy of atrocious crimes. Those who are justly jealous of the rights of asylum will be the first to demand the punishment of its monstrous abuse, which, if permitted, would destroy the privilege. The refuge of a free State is not to be converted into a propaganda of assassination, whether at home or abroad. It is for these reasons that Her Majesty's Government have determined that the persons responsible for this infamous outrage should be dealt with according to law. That answers the Question, I think, of the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill). This prosecution is instituted upon the authority of Her Majesty's Government. I directed the matter some days ago to be placed in the hands of the Solicitors to the Treasury, who have taken, I suppose, the ordinary steps which are proper in such circumstances. In answer to the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. J. Cowen), I have to say that, as soon as this article came to my knowledge, without any instigation from any foreign Government, I immediately directed it to be laid before the Officers of the Crown.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked the right hon. Gentleman under what statute the editor was searched, his money and watch taken from him, and the compositors ejected from the premises?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT said, the noble Lord would be informed of that when the indictment was preferred.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, he considered that the right hon. Gentleman was bound to answer the Question in the House of Commons. He would repeat it to-morrow.

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL (POLITICAL AFFAIRS).

Mr. WODEHOUSE asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the Transvaal State will be designated as "the South African Republic," when under the suzerainty of the British Crown; and, whether the reserved control of its relations with Foreign Powers will include the control of its relations with independent chiefs of Native tribes?

Mr. GRANT DUFF: Sir, to my hon. Friend's second Question I must answer—Yes. The Commission will have to determine the manner and extent of the control to be exercised, and it will be also part of its duty to consider the question of the name of the Transvaal State, due regard being had to all relevant circumstances.

THE SUEZ CANAL COMPANY—THE BRITISH SHARES.

Mr. LABOUCHERE (for Mr. Bradlaugh) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If his attention has been called to a letter in the "Times" of Saturday, stating that the 176,602 shares in the Suez Canal Company, purchased by the late Government in 1875, have now a price of "78," showing "the handsome profit of £10,242,916;" whether it is not the fact that 176,602 shares so purchased had their interest coupons detached prior to such purchase; and, whether such shares are not absolutely unsaleable at any profit whatever?

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If his attention has been called to the enormous rise during the last few years in the value of the Suez Canal Shares; and, if he can, in reference to the 176,602 shares held by the British Government, state the difference in value between the price paid for them in 1876 and the latest market quotation, first, on the assumption that they are now entitled to the same dividend coupons as other ordinary shares, and, secondly, making an actuarial calculation for the difference in their deferred value; and, whether the 5 per cent annuity guaranteed by the Egyptian Government for nineteen years has hitherto been regularly paid?

Mr. GLADSTONE: It is in the recollection of the House that 176,000 odd shares in the Suez Canal were purchased in 1875 by the Government, and that the price given for them was £4,076,000. That was at the rate of about £23 per share. The interest coupons on these shares were detached from them until the year 1894, when the Government will be entitled to take dividends on the shares. In the meantime they are entitled to receive £5 per cent on the purchase money from the Egyptian Government, and that has been regularly paid. With regard to the Question whether these shares can be sold, I am not aware whether there is any legal provision on the point; but there is no doubt that, as far as the market is concerned, arrangements could be made for selling them if it were deemed expedient, and it was quite evident they could be sold at a convenient profit. It is stated that the present value of Suez Canal shares is about £78, and that is a price which, I believe, has been recently obtained. They were purchased, as I stated, at £23 1*s.* 8*d.*, and at that time the price of the shares in the market was about £30; the difference between those two sums represents the sum set down by the Government in their calculations against the postponement of profit on the shares to the year 1894. The share profit is now considered to be worth in the market £58 on the £20 share, receiving profit continuously; but when the period to which the profit on the 176,000 shares is deferred is taken into account, then it may be held to be relatively £27 more than in 1875. Consequently, there may be said to have accrued a gain of £4,750,000 on the purchase of the shares.

RAILWAYS (INDIA).

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the Secretary of State for India, If the Government have determined again to try to have Railways constructed in India by private Companies aided by the State, and on what terms the Calcutta and Khoolna Railway has been offered to Messrs. Rothschild; and, whether any other lines have been offered to private projectors with any, and what, Government aid?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Sir, the Government are extremely desirous of seeing private enterprize applied to works of public utility in India, and hope to see railways constructed through the instrumentality of private Companies, without the usual guarantee hitherto given, but with certain aid from the State. It has, therefore, been determined to assist a Company, in which Messrs. Rothschild have taken much interest, for making a line from Calcutta to Jessore and Khoolna. The terms which have been agreed upon with the promoters of this railway are briefly these:—The Government is to provide the land free of cost to the Company, and to grant them a lease for 99 years. Government is to have the option of purchasing the line at the end of 30 or 50 years on paying £125 for every £100 stock. On the termination of the 99 years' lease the works are to become the property of the Government, the movable stock being purchased at a valuation. The capital, as raised, is to be paid into the Bank of England to the account of the Secretary of State for India in Council. Interest at the rate of 4 per cent is to be advanced on money so paid till the line is opened, or until June, 1886, whichever occurs first. The interest so advanced is to be repaid to the Government, with interest from half the earnings of the line above 5 per cent. No other schemes of a similar character have been brought under my notice, and no other lines have been offered to private projectors.

BRAZIL—CLAIMS OF A BRITISH SUBJECT.

MR. ANDERSON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If Her Majesty's Government will take the opportunity of a new Minister being sent to Brazil to give him such instructions in regard to British claims as will show the Brazilian Government that Her Majesty's Government will resist the postponement of a settlement of claims arising before 1858, and that they will in no case allow counter-claims arising out of destruction of slave ships to enter into the question?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Mr. Ford sent home, on the 20th ult., a revised list of British claims, and reported that he was daily expecting to hear from the Brazilian Minister for Foreign Affairs that he was prepared to confer with him as to an adjustment of this long-pending question. Her Majesty's *Chargé d'Affaires* will be instructed to press the matter forward; but Her Majesty's Government do not consider that it will be necessary to give any further instructions than those already issued.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—JOSEPH B. WALSH.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether Joseph B. Walsh, now in Kilmainham Prison, under the Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, is detained because he is declared to be reasonably suspected of having committed an offence, for which the maximum punishment after conviction is three months' imprisonment; and, whether, after he has suffered the full sentence which the law allows for persons convicted of this crime, Her Majesty's Government will discharge him?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. LAW): No, Sir; the maximum punishment for the offence is not three months' imprisonment, but penal servitude for seven years, or imprisonment, with hard labour, for three years; long before the expiration of either of which periods the Act for the Better Protection of Person and Property in Ireland will have ceased to be in force.

THE CUSTOMS SERVICE—OUT-DOOR OFFICERS—COMPETITIVE EXAMINATION.

MR. A. M. SULLIVAN asked the Secretary to the Treasury, If it is the fact that a competitive examination for the promotion of out-door officers of the Customs Service was announced more than fourteen months ago, and held on the 15th October of last year; if it is true that the result has not as yet been made known; and, whether he will take steps to prevent the delay prejudicially affecting the competitors, found to have meritoriously passed in October last, by causing their promotion to reckon from that date?

LORD FREDERICK CAVENDISH: Sir, notice of an examination was given in January, 1880, and those candidates who passed a preliminary test examination were admitted to competition on October 18 last. The number examined, 430, was unusually large, because candidates for the offices, both of examining officer and of gauger, which were formerly dealt with separately, were taken together; and, as the examination included practical subjects relating to both branches of the out-door department, the inspection of the answers has occupied a longer time than usual. But the work is now nearly complete, and the results will probably be made known in a few days. The successful candidates will have no claim to have their appointments pre-dated. The examinations are not held for the purpose of filling existing vacancies, the officers found qualified being only entitled to be placed on a list to receive appointments, in order of merit, as vacancies occur.

Mr. T. P. O'Connor

THE WEST INDIES—THE CURRENCY.

MR. PARKER asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether in our West Indian Colonies creditors are by law compelled to accept British token silver, shillings, sixpences, &c., without limit, not at their intrinsic value, but at their nominal value as parts of the pound sterling; whether in consequence West Indian currency consists mainly of such coins, with notes partly based on them, and for want of gold intercolonial and international remittances are unduly expensive; and, whether the present Secretary of State adopts the language held by his predecessor, in a Circular addressed to these Colonies, that so long as they unwisely place no limit upon the tender of token silver, "they in fact suspend cash payments;" and, if so, whether further steps might not now be taken towards the amendment of "an unsound currency," by limiting the legal tender of silver, as at home, to forty shillings?

MR. GRANT DUFF: Sir, in reply to my hon. Friend's first Question, I have to say that his statement is perfectly correct. In reply to his second Question I have to say the same. In reply to his third Question I have to say yes; but the prevalence of erroneous ideas on the subject of currency in some parts of the West Indies makes it extremely difficult to move in the matter as quickly as we could wish.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS ACT, 1868—THE REPORTED BOROUGHS.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he will be able to inform the House before Easter, what course Her Majesty's Government propose to take as to those Boroughs with reference to which the Election Commissioners have reported that Corrupt Practices have extensively prevailed therein at the last General Election?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he hoped he might be allowed to answer the Question. The House was aware that the Commissioners had made their Report in seven cases, and only one—that of Oxford—remained to be reported upon. These Reports and the evidence were very voluminous, in one case alone 85,000 questions having been put. Any steps taken either by way of disfranchisement of the boroughs, or suspension of the writ, or disfranchisement of individuals, must be by legislation, and therefore a Bill must be brought into the House. In order to arrive at the degree of punishment that should be inflicted, it would be necessary to inquire into the degree of guilt of the constituencies; and to do that they must take into account not only the schedules with regard to the late elections, but also what had occurred at former elections. Some time must, therefore, elapse before a result was arrived at. Certainly no steps could be taken before Easter.

In reply to Colonel Taylor,

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, he could not state when the remaining Report would be presented.

PARLIAMENTARY OATH (MR. BRADLAUGH).

In reply to Mr. Gibson,

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, as far as he understood, there would be no objection to lay on the Table the judgment in the case of "Clarke *v.* Bradlaugh."

POOR LAW—WORKHOUSE INMATES—RELIGIOUS ATTENDANCE.

Mr. SUMMERS asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether Boards of Guardians in England and Wales are bound by the provisions of the Poor Relief Amendment Act, 31 and 32 Vic. c. 122, to permit any inmate of a workhouse for whom a religious service according to his own creed is not provided in the workhouse, to attend, at such times as the Poor Law Board shall allow, some place of worship of his own denomination within a convenient distance of the said workhouse?

Mr. DODSON: Sir, section 21 of 31 & 32 *Vict.* c. 122, expressly provides that every inmate of a workhouse for whom a religious service according to his own creed is not provided in a workhouse shall be permitted, subject to regulation to be approved or ordered by the Local Government Board, to attend, at such times as the said Board shall allow, some place of worship of his own denomination within a convenient distance of the workhouse, if there be such. In case, however, of the abuse of such permission, or on some other special ground, the Guardians may refuse permission to any particular inmate.

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL—THE 94th REGIMENT—PROTECTION OF NATIVE INTERESTS—SLAVERY.

Sir JOHN HAY asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, when the Convention was approved by Her Majesty's Government, which granted an amnesty to those who had taken up arms against the Queen, they were aware of the terms of Sir Owen Lanyon's Despatch, which states that the Boers "sent in a message with the white flag, ordering the Colonel (Anstruther) to halt and proceed no further;" that "while this was being done the enemy continued to advance under cover of the white flag, and so took up positions, which, from a previous reconnoitre of the ground, they had selected as being most suitable to pour in a deadly fire on our men;" and that "on the receipt of the reply that their orders could not be complied with," they did immediately "open a murderous fire on our men from about 200 yards with such effect, that in a short time 57 were killed, and 101 officers, men, and women were wounded;" and, if so, whether Her Majesty's Government will treat this attack as within the scope of civilised warfare?

Mr. GRANT DUFF: Yes, Sir; and I am not surprised by the right hon. and gallant Gentleman's Question; but Sir Owen Lanyon was at Pretoria when this deplorable event occurred, and Her Majesty's Government was also in possession of the despatch of Colonel Anstruther, the officer in command, which gives a somewhat different complexion to the affair. More than this I had rather not say at present.

Mr. GRANTHAM asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether as it appears by Sir Evelyn Wood's telegram, that no instructions had been given by Her Majesty's Government to the Commissioners in the Transvaal to protect the interests of British subjects who had purchased land or advanced money on land in the Transvaal in consequence of its having been annexed as a British Colony, Her Majesty's Government have since given, or will now give, such instructions; and, as Sir Evelyn Wood states in the said telegram "that the Royal Commission should consider the provisions for the protection of native interests," how is it that the Government had taken no steps to ensure that the Royal Commission should also consider provisions for the protection of British interests, and especially of British subjects who purchased land or advanced money upon the land in consequence of the Transvaal having become a British Colony?

Mr. GRANT DUFF: Sir, the hon. Member will, perhaps, permit me to reply to his two Questions. As to the first, I have to observe that, as Her Majesty's Government have not yet given instructions to the Commission upon any subject, it has not given any instructions on the particular subject to which the hon. Member alludes; but, as a matter of course, it will do so. That statement is a full reply to the latter part of the hon. Member's second Question; but I may add that I fail to see how the fact that Sir Evelyn Wood had very properly called attention to Native interests should have led the hon. Member to infer that Her Majesty's Government proposed to neglect British interests.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether Her Majesty's Government will give instructions to the Transvaal Commissioners to enforce the Article of the Sand River Convention, by which it is agreed that no slavery is or shall be permitted or practised to the North of the Vaal River, a stipulation which was continually violated by the South African Republic?

Mr. GRANT DUFF: In reply to the hon. Member for the City of London, I have to say that Her Majesty's Government will call the attention of the Commission to the provisions of the Sand River Convention on the subject of slavery.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether he can give the House any information as to the number of slaves, if any, who were found in the Transvaal at the time of the annexation, and what course the British Government took with regard to these slaves?

Mr. GRANT DUFF: In reply to the hon. Baronet, I have to say that I never heard that any person in what is technically known as a state of slavery was found in the Transvaal at the time of annexation. The facts which have been so much commented upon occurred, I believe, some years before that event.

Mr. MACFARLANE asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether he can state approximately the number of so-called "apprentices" employed by the Boers in the Transvaal at the time of its annexation; whether that "apprenticeship" is or is not a system of forced, unpaid labour; and whether he can explain the difference between that institution and slavery?

Mr. GRANT DUFF: No, Sir, I cannot state the figures, nor do I know that they are procurable. I am afraid that apprenticeship not unfrequently bore a good deal of resemblance to slavery.

STATE OF IRELAND—ALLEGED OUTRAGE BY SOLDIERS—CO. CORK.

Mr. PARNELL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been directed to a paragraph in the "Cork Examiner" of March 28th, giving an account of the capture, at Corkbeg near Whitegate, of three soldiers from the garrison at Carlisle Fort, attempting to mutilate sheep, the property of Mr. R. U. Penrose Fitzgerald; and, whether he has directed any inquiry to be made into the matter with a view of ascertaining the correctness of the statement?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: Yes, Sir, my attention has been called to this matter, and I have received information from the constabulary in reference to this subject, and I find that the account given in the newspaper is not correct. If the hon. Member will look at the *Freeman's Journal* of yesterday he will find a paragraph that puts the matter in a correct light.

Mr. A. M. SULLIVAN asked, whether the Report did not state that the men were not Marines?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: The Report does state that they were not Marines.

Mr. PARNELL said, that what he asked the right hon. Gentleman was, whether he had directed any inquiry to be made into the matter with the view of ascertaining the correctness of the statement referred to by the paragraph in the newspapers; but he did not give him the information he required.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I have inquired into the matter, and I find that the account given in the newspaper is not correct, and I think it was admitted by the newspaper yesterday that it is not so.

Mr. O'DONNELL: But, in a matter of so much importance, would it not be more becoming and satisfactory to state to the House what was the result of your inquiry, and not merely state that the account in the newspaper was not correct?

Mr. PARNELL asked, if the right hon. Gentleman could inform him whether two soldiers had been captured under circumstances which gave rise to the belief that they were going to mutilate sheep?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: Perhaps the hon. Member will give Notice of the Question.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—BOARD AND VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS.

Mr. LYULPH STANLEY asked the Vice President of the Council, Whether the Education Department in the new Code will secure equal treatment in the matter of reckoning school accommodation to Board and Voluntary Schools?

Mr. MUNDELLA: Sir, there is no difference in the mode of reckoning the amount of accommodation in schools on the ground that they are Board schools or voluntary schools. But if a school has been built, with the consent of the Department, to accommodate a particular number of children, and if, in order to do so, the Department have, at the request of the locality, allowed them to obtain the money by mortgaging the rates, the Department take care that the accommodation provided shall not be less than 10 square feet for each child. But, unless this special privilege is so obtained, the annual grant is not forfeited so long as the minimum of eight square feet is provided. As I have already told the hon. Member, the Department would be glad to see this minimum increased, both for Board and for voluntary schools. Where schools with the enlarged accommodation have been provided, we do not consent, except in cases of urgent necessity, to allow them to be crowded to the full extent of the minimum requirements of the Department.

AFGHANISTAN—POLITICAL AFFAIRS.

Mr. O'DONNELL asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether it is true, as stated in the Calcutta Correspondence of the "Pioneer," dated the 28th of February, that the mission of General Mir Ahmed, the plenipotentiary of Abdur Rahman—

> "Is first of all to convince the Indian Government that the Ameer has done everything in his power to secure himself in Cabul, and then to sound our officials upon the subject of further subsidies * * * * The ten lakhs which have already been given to the Ameer, and any subsidy which may now be offered to him, will, it is presumed, figure in the Budget under the head of Afghan War Expenditure;"

whether he will state to the House what subsidies, if any, have been granted to Abdur Rahman; and, also, whether Government will treat the payment of subsidies for the maintenance of Abdur Rahman in Cabul and Candahar as a matter of Imperial concern not exclusively affecting the interests of India, and will propose that the British Exchequer contribute in an equitable proportion towards such expenditure?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Sir, I do not think that the nature of General Mir Ahmed's mission to Calcutta has been correctly stated in the Calcutta Correspondence of *The Pioneer*. The cause of that mission originated in a communication from the Viceroy to the Ameer suggesting that, in order to discuss certain affairs connected with Cabul generally, and especially the proposed arrangements to be made in Southern Afghanistan, a confidential agent should be despatched to India. The mission of General Mir Ahmed was the result. I believe it is a fact that the agent in question asked for some war material and received it. We have no information of any request about subsidies; but I have not yet received a full official Report from the Indian Government as to the results of the mission. The subsidies granted to the Ameer are as follows:—On the 2nd of August, 1880, the sum of nine and a-half lakhs of rupees found by Sir Frederick Roberts in the Cabul treasury on his occupation of the city was given over to Abdurrahman. Ten lakhs were, at the same time, given to him by the Indian Government. A sum of five lakhs has, since January 19, 1881, been given to him, making 25 lakhs in all given to him by the Indian

Government. These sums have been taken into account in arriving at the cost of the Afghan War, in respect to which the contribution has been made from the Treasury. As I do not know that any arrangement has been made as to the granting of an annual subsidy, it will be impossible for me to answer the second part of the Question.

SOUTH AFRICA—BASUTOLAND (PEACE NEGOTIATIONS).

Sir WILFRID LAWSON asked, Whether it is now possible for Her Majesty's Government to take the "friendly action with a view to the restoration of peace" in Basutoland, which was alluded to in the Speech from the Throne, and endeavour to protect the lives and property of Her Majesty's subjects in that country?

Mr. GRANT DUFF: Sir, Her Majesty's Government did take that friendly action through Her Majesty's High Commissioner some time ago; but I regret to say that his efforts towards bringing about a settlement were not crowned with the success they deserved, the Basutos declining, in spite of their loyal professions, to confide unreservedly in the Representative of the Crown. Within the last day or two he has informed us that he has again made an attempt to get them to do so; but, when he last telegraphed, their answer had not been received.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL wished to know whether Sir Hercules Robinson asked the Basutos to put themselves in his hands, as distinguished from those of the Cape Ministry?

Mr. GRANT DUFF: Undoubtedly.

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL (POLITICAL AFFAIRS)—LAND OWNERSHIP.

Mr. CROPPER asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the Royal Commission in the Transvaal will be directed to inquire into the operation of the Law which prohibits Natives from holding land, and, at the same time, to consider the expediency of securing in this matter equality between the two races?

Mr. GRANT DUFF: Sir, the attention of the Royal Commission will be called to this important matter.

STATE OF IRELAND—RIOT AT MIDLETON, CO. CORK.

Earl PERCY (for Mr. A. J. Balfour) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to a riot which took place in the town of Midleton, county Cork, on Tuesday the 21st, and to the fact that a house next door to the police barracks was wrecked, and that three houses were subsequently burnt down; whether he is aware that the police made no attempt to quell the disturbance, and that no arrests have since been made; whether, under the circumstances, a general meeting of the Land League, which has been summoned for Sunday next, and from which similar disorder may be feared to result, will be permitted to take place; and, whether the baronies of Clony and Kinalla, in the county Cork, have been proclaimed?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, that one of the baronies in question had not been proclaimed; and the other, which was in the East Riding of the county, had been. He had expected to receive more information relative to the Question of the noble Lord than had yet reached him; but he hoped he would have it by to-morrow. He would, therefore, ask the noble Lord to repeat the Question; but he thought he might already say that the matter appeared to have been much exaggerated.

THE BRITISH MUSEUM—ELECTRIC LIGHTING.

Mr. ALBERT GREY asked the Right honourable Member for the University of Cambridge, Whether, considering the success that has attended the electric lighting of the Reading Room of the British Museum, the Trustees have considered the expediency of extending the hours of opening from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m.; and, if so, whether they have made application to the Treasury for provision to meet the increased expense?

Mr. SPENCER WALPOLE: Sir, the Trustees of the British Museum have not had under consideration the extension of the hours of opening the Reading Room from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m., and, therefore, they have not made application to the Treasury for provision to meet the increased expense. At the same time, it is right to state that since this Question has been put on the Paper I have made inquiries about it, and I am informed that such a proposal as the one referred to could not be adequately carried into effect without lighting all the rooms connected with the Library as well as the Reading-Room; and the question would then arise as to whether this could be adequately accomplished until better provision is made for dividing and distributing the light than is practicable according to the apparatus now used.

LICENSING ACTS—SUNDAY SERVICES IN MUSIC HALLS.

MR. P. EDWARDS asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Why the Middlesex magistrates authorised the abrupt closing of the Sunday evening religious services, and thereby put 2,000 persons to considerable inconvenience on Sunday evening last; and, whether it is intended to close other music halls which have been used for similar purposes in the Metropolis for many years?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Sir, the Chairman of the Middlesex magistrates has communicated to me the form of licence granted by the Court under the Act of 25 *Geo.* II., which expressly stipulates that music halls shall not be opened on Sunday, Ash Wednesday, Good Friday, and Christmas Day. This was a very proper provision to prevent them from being opened for ordinary amusements on those days. It did not apply, however, to religious services, and was not intended to place any difficulty in the way of the gratuitous opening of these houses for religious services; but they were not to be used on these occasions as a common tavern. The police reported to me most favourably of the character of these services on Sundays. They seem to have been always permitted at the Metropolitan Music Hall and elsewhere in London. I must say I do not understand on what ground it is intended to close them. As far as my information goes, they appear to me to be altogether unobjectionable. There must be some error on the part of the magistrates, and I shall inquire about it.

MR. P. EDWARDS said, that since he had put the Question, he had received a telegram from the Rev. Mr. Cook, asking whether he could hold services in one of these halls next Sunday.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I am afraid not, because I have no authority to give such permission. The Middlesex magistrates are the executive authority in that matter.

STATE OF IRELAND—EVICTIONS, MOHILL UNION, CO. LEITRIM.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (for Mr. FINIGAN) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the many evictions for non-payment of rent recently carried out and in course of being carried out in the Mohill Union, in the county of Leitrim; and, whether he will cause an inquiry respecting these evictions to be instituted, with a view of ascertaining the amount of rent as compared with the Poor Law valuation?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: Precisely the same Question was asked in the names of the hon. Members for Ennis and Cavan last Tuesday, and I must refer the hon. Member to my answer.

MR. PARNELL said, in reference to the answer which the right hon. Gentleman had just given, he would ask whether he could not obtain information with regard to the rates in the Poor Law valuation; whether he could not direct the constabulary to obtain the information from the officer of the clerk of the peace in the different counties, and also from the clerks of the Unions? The information with regard to the Poor Law valuations of the Union and the information with regard to the rents might be obtained.

MR. W. E. FORSTER: Undoubtedly, it will be in the power of the Government to obtain through the police the Poor Law valuation; but I doubt whether we have a right to compel an answer as to the amount of rent. I fear we have no official means of ascertaining that, but I will inquire. I shall be very glad to be able to lay the information asked for upon the Table of the House.

COOLIES (INDIAN)—THE HURRICANE IN LA REUNION.

DR. CAMERON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether his attention has been called to the disastrous hurricane which raged in Réunion on the 21st January last; whether he is aware that the Indian Coolies (British subjects) resident in the island have in consequence been subjected to great sufferings; and, whether he can inform the House whether Her Majesty's Consul in Réunion has taken any steps to alleviate the distress of the Coolies?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, the attention of Her Majesty's Government was called by the gentleman in charge of the Consulate, during the absence from ill-health of the Consuls, to the great damage caused by the hurricane in Réunion on the 21st of January last; but as no mention has since been made of the special sufferings of the coolie population, it is hoped that their privations were only temporary.

PUBLIC HEALTH (METROPOLIS) (LAW COSTS)—HAMPSTEAD HOSPITAL CASE.

Mr. FIRTH asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether the statement made at the last meeting of the City of London Union that the costs of the recent Hampstead Hospital case amount to £40,000 to £60,000 has any foundation in fact; and, whether he has now ascertained what is the estimated amount of such cost; and, whether there is any and what statutory authority enabling the Metropolitan Asylums Board to expend the money of London ratepayers in such litigation, or upon what ground such expenditure is approved by the Local Government Board?

Mr. DODSON: Sir, I do not know what the costs in this case amount to; but I think that there can be no doubt that this statement that such costs amount to either of the sums in question must be an exaggeration, as the costs of the managers up to the beginning of the present year did not amount to one-sixth of the last-named sum. I am not aware that there is any express statutory authority enabling the managers to pay the costs of the proceedings which have been instituted against them; but, having been advised by high legal authority that they had a good defence, it was open to them, as to any other public body, to defend what they believed to be their legal rights, and, having regard to the importance of the subject, they might have been exposed to reproach had they failed to do so.

INDIA—THE NAGAS TERRITORY.

Mr. O'DONNELL asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether portions of the territory of the Nagas bordering on Eastern Bengal, lately occupied by the British troops, have been recently annexed; whether the Nagas have asked for annexation to the British Dominions; and, whether, if not, the annexed territory will be immediately restored?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON was understood to say that Commercial Treaties were concluded in 1826 and 1833 with the territory in question; but, owing to the nature of the country and the people, with little result. Since 1867, in consequence of very savage raids made on several British and neighbouring villages, active measures had been taken to put a stop to them. A British Resident was appointed, and after certain military operations in the spring of last year, in consequence of the murder of a British subject, strict injunctions were given that no further operations should be undertaken against these tribes without careful previous inquiry from the Government of India.

PUBLIC HEALTH—CHOLERA AT CHICAGO—BUTTERINE.

Mr. O'SHAUGHNESSY asked the President of the Board of Trade, If his attention has been called to the fact that an outbreak of cholera which has occurred in the town of Chicago has been attributed by physicians of that town to the use of butterine, into the composition of which lard enters largely, and to the statement made by these physicians that the process of making butterine does not require so high a temperature as to kill the germ of disease in lard; and, whether the Government will consider the advisability of taking measures of precaution, by inspection of butterine and other similar commodities imported into this Country, to prevent the dissemination of disease by their use?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN, in reply, said, he did not know the names of the physicians referred to, and had no means of ascertaining whether they were men of any authority. Many opinions adverse to those described might be given. As regards the last Question, he had no evidence whatever that was trustworthy to show that any disease had been disseminated by butterine or any similar commodities.

STATE OF IRELAND — CONVICTIONS FOR "BOYCOTTING."

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, If he will have any objection to lay upon the Table of the House a Copy of the Indictment in the case of the two persons recently convicted, at the Cork Assizes, of having "Boycotted" Jeremiah Hegarty; and if he will state the statutes under which the prisoners were indicted?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. LAW): Of course, Sir, the convicts referred to, or their advisers, were furnished with copies of the indictment against them; but I have no objection to lay a further copy on the Table of the House. The last part of the hon. Members's Question I cannot answer, as I have not myself seen any copy of the indictment.

ARMY—CRIME AND PUNISHMENT, 1879.

MR. CAINE asked the Judge Advocate General, If he can inform the House the number of punishments in the Army for the year 1879, and how many of those punishments were for drunkenness, or directly resulting from drunkenness?

MR. OSBORNE MORGAN: Sir, the total number of punishments inflicted in the Army by order of courts martial in 1879 was 14,750. The Returns do not state what proportion of these punishments were for drunkenness; but I can state the number of courts martial held on soldiers in 1879 for drunkenness. They were, for drunkenness on duty, 1,895; for simple drunkenness, 2,526. making together, 4,421. These numbers, however, do not by any means represent the total amount of drunkenness in the Army, which will be more clearly shown by the number of fines inflicted during the year, both by order of courts martial and of commanding officers. There were 43,372 fines inflicted upon 23,316 men, giving a proportion of 236 fines to every 1,000 men. The number sounds large; but it has been steadily decreasing for the last 10 or 12 years. As to the second Question, as to how many of these punishments were for crimes resulting from drunkenness, the Returns give no information, and I could only answer it after reading through proceedings of 15,512 courts martial; but, speaking from my official experience, I should think a very large proportion, probably three-fourths, of the crimes committed by soldiers are in, some shape or way, attributable to drink.

SOUTH AFRICA — THE TRANSVAAL (MILITARY OPERATIONS) — SURRENDER OF POTCHEFSTROOM.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he has been able yet to ascertain if the Boers besieging Potchefstroom knew of the armistice when the town was surrendered; if so, what steps are the Government taking on account of this conduct of the Boers, which would be contrary to the usages of war; and will they at once insist on all arms being immediately restored?

MR. GRANT DUFF: Sir, perhaps the hon. and gallant Gentleman will allow me to answer the Question. I have to say that Sir Evelyn Wood has telegraphed that he is making inquiries on this subject, and it is possible that some days may elapse before they are completed.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he should like to ask the Prime Minister, whether, before they broke up for the Easter Recess, he would make any statement with regard to the terms of peace with the Boers, and with regard to those acts which were said to have been committed by the Boers which were contrary to the usages of war?

MR. GLADSTONE: I think it is very improbable we shall be in sufficient possession of the facts on those rather nice judicial questions, as to acts contrary or not contrary to the usages of war, before we separate for the Easter Recess. With respect to the terms of peace with the Boers, in their general principle they are set out with perfect clearness, I think, in the telegrams laid before the House, and the House is in possession of the means of forming a judgment on our conduct. In the pressure of Public Business which now prevails, I do not think it will be in my power to volunteer a statement of the kind suggested. Any additional explanations that may be desired with respect to our motives are quite at the command of the House.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked, whether it was to be understood that the Government expected to receive full written despatches from Sir Evelyn Wood in the course of a week or a fortnight; and, if so, would they be laid on the Table before the holidays?

MR. GLADSONE: Of course, we shall proceed with the same disposition and desire to communicate to the House everything material to the formation of its judgment which, I hope, we have already shown. But I think the noble Lord will allow Sir Evelyn Wood but a very short time if he expects that in the course of a fortnight or thereabouts we can have from him the means of passing a full judgment on the whole details of the proceedings. The time allowed for the probable conclusion of the affair, according to the best judgment that could be formed out there, is six months; and I think it probable that some time —I do not say six months—must elapse before the House is in possession of full information with regard to the whole of the interesting matters involved.

MR. PARNELL asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, whether the Armistice between Sir Evelyn Wood and the Boers had any other reference to the garrisons in the Transvaal than was involved in the sending of provisions to them?

MR. A. M. SULLIVAN asked, whether the attention of the right hon. Gentleman had been called to the reports of meetings held in the Colonies for the purpose of inciting to civil war in the Transvaal, and to the statement that one Colonist offered £1,000 for the purpose of promoting civil war in the Transvaal, with which we were at peace; whether this was legal conduct on the part of a Colonist; and, whether any notice would be taken of these transactions?

MR. GRANT DUFF: I shall be glad if hon. Members will give me Notice of these Questions.

PARLIAMENT—PUBLIC BUSINESS—SCOTCH BILLS.

MR. RAMSAY asked the Lord Advocate, Which of the three Scotch Bills that stood next on the list after the First Order of the Day he intended to take up that evening; and, further, whether any of these Bills were to be deferred till after the Easter Recess?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. M'LAREN): I think, Sir, that the Question of my hon. Friend might, perhaps, with greater propriety have been addressed to the hon. Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar). I may state, however, that if the Business of the House admit, I am desirous of moving the second reading of the Teinds Bill this evening, as I had not an opportunity of giving any explanation as to its purport when moving its introduction. The Poor Law Officers' Superannuation Bill I propose, however, to defer till after Easter; and I understand from my right hon. Friend the Vice President of the Council that he will not proceed with the Endowed Institutions Bill without due Notice being given of the day fixed for the second reading.

ARMY RE-ORGANIZATION—INFANTRY AND CAVALRY MAJORS.

MR. MONTAGUE GUEST gave Notice that he would ask the Secretary of State for War, Whether his attention has been directed to the fact that under the new scheme for the re-organization of the Army, by which a double Infantry regiment will have five lieutenant-colonels, the result will be that half the majors of Infantry will be promoted over the heads of Cavalry majors; further, with regard to senior captains in the Cavalry, who, under the old system, would shortly become regimental majors at the pay of 19*s.* 3*d.*, whether they will not now become majors on the 1st of July in this year at the pay of 14*s.* 7*d.*, besides having to serve as captains for three years; and, if such is the case, whether he will take into his consideration the position of senior captains in the Army?

MR. CHILDERS: I can save the hon. Member the trouble of putting the Question on the Paper. All these are matters of detail which are under reconsideration in connection with the general scheme.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

ARMY DISCIPLINE AND REGULATION (ANNUAL) BILL.—[Bill 123.]

(*Mr. Secretary Childers, the Judge Advocate General, Mr. Trevelyan.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."—(*Mr. Secretary Childers.*)

Viscount EMLYN, in rising to move—

> "That it is undesirable that punishments to be awarded by Courts Martial for grave offences committed by soldiers on active service should be regulated by the Secretary of State, and thereby withdrawn from the direct control of Parliament;"

said, the question he desired to raise did not affect the main principles of the Act of 1879; but it appeared to him that the 4th clause of the Bill now before the House would import in that Act a principle so new and so objectionable, that he claimed to be justified in raising the question before the stage of Committee. The principle to which he referred was no other than this—that for the gravest offences a soldier could commit on active service the punishment should be regulated, not by Parliament, but by the Secretary of State. They all remembered what took place in 1879, and how the question of the abolition of flogging was introduced. It was then said that the great difficulty in the way of its abolition was the finding of punishments which could be substituted for it. They remembered, too, the strange changes of front which were executed by the noble Marquess the present Secretary of State for India, then the Leader of the Opposition changes brought about by concessions made by his right hon. and gallant Friend the then Secretary of State for War (Colonel Stanley), and also by the pressure brought to bear upon him by his supporters below the Gangway. The result was that the question was made a Party question, which had landed them in a not very pleasant position. What had been the result to the soldier? It was this, that he was now placed, as regards grave criminal offences, in a worse position than any one of Her Majesty's civil subjects. The punishments could be changed by the Secretary of State at his will, and for the gravest offences the soldier would be subject to what he must call experimental punishments. It might be said that the Bill contained such restrictions that it would be perfectly safe to leave the matter in the hands of the Secretary of State. But, even from a civilian's point of view, it appeared to him that to be tied to a cart tail or to a horse's tail with heavy weights on one's back and to be marched under the sun for a period of 18 days was nothing less than torture. They had been told that the Secretary of State was anxious to see how these punishments would work; but the Bill would not come into operation, except for the United Kingdom, Europe, America, and the West Indies, until the 31st of December next, and, as the Bill must be renewed this time 12 months, he did not see how experience of its working was to be acquired. It had been frequently stated that it was desirable to abolish flogging in the Army because it prevented good men joining the ranks. Well, he said it was most desirable that whatever be the punishments to be inflicted for these serious offences, above all was it desirable, in the interests of all concerned, that they should be clearly known and understood by every recruit who joined; and yet we found this Bill—if passed in its present form—adding this further difficulty to recruiting, that no man coming into the ranks to-day could tell to what punishment he would be subject for those grave offences to-morrow. No good purpose could be served by discussing at any length rules which at any moment might be altered; but they need not go beyond the provisions of the Bill itself, and the language used from the Treasury Bench, to find the strongest condemnation of the rules in question. The right hon. and learned Gentleman who introduced it said he would lay the rules on the Table, but could not say that they had been approved of even by the highest military authorities—they might have to be changed, and the Secretary of State did not wish to have his hands tied. He maintained that the hands of the right hon. Gentleman ought to be tied. He claimed for the soldier as well as for the civilian that for grave criminal offences he should be subjected to no punishments but such as were clearly prescribed by statute. The right hon. Gentleman said he was willing to share his responsibility in this matter with the House. Well, he believed the House was willing to take its full share of that responsibility. A very large principle was involved in the question. When the Bill of 1879 was before the House, the right hon. Gentleman the present Home Secretary said—

> "There were many parts of the Bill on which he was incapable of forming an opinion; but the great merit of it was that it was a consolidation of the Mutiny Act and the Articles of War, and that it brought the whole thing under Parliamentary revision and control."

But what were they asked to do now? Why, they were asked actually to remove from Parliamentary control some of these very provisions over the acquisition of which the Home Secretary rejoiced so much in 1879. He wished the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War to understand that in anything he said he was not actuated by the slightest mistrust of himself; but the question was one which involved a large and grave principle—a principle to which he hoped the House would not assent. The noble Lord concluded by moving the Amendment of which he had given Notice.

Earl PERCY, in seconding the Amendment, said, his noble Friend had sought to justify the course he had adopted by the fact that the proposal of the Government was altogether unusual. He might have cited, too, the tone adopted by Members of the Government on the second reading of the Bill, from which it would appear that their condemnation of flogging was of a very qualified nature. They had more than once appealed, not to a sense of what was really necessary for the proper discipline of the Army, but to what would be popular with the constituencies. For his part, he believed that if some of the supporters of the Government had their own way, uncontrolled by the influence of popular sentiment, they would re-enact some of the clauses of the Bill of the late Government, and, to some extent, restore flogging to the position it was in before the Bill of 1879 passed. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Judge Advocate General quoted, with approval, the statement of the hon. and gallant Member for Sunderland (Sir Henry Havelock-Allan), that the lash was an appropriate punishment for the crime of drunkenness, and for crimes arising out of drunkenness; but he added that he wanted the question looked at from a popular point of view also. His main objection to the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War was that it was calculated to impose upon soldiers an absolutely uncertain punishment, and that it would afford to commanding officers a power to inflict as much physical torture on their men, if they were so disposed, as was possible under any system in which flogging was included. He could not imagine any punishment more degrading than for a soldier to be dragged through the country tied either to the tail of a cart or the stirrup of a horse; and though surgical advice was to be taken as to the punishment being inflicted, it might involve the men in great torture, because it was by no means easy to tell whether a man was or was not malingering. He would shrink from exposing the British soldier to such a degradation, and he believed that its effect would be injurious to the Army.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "it is undesirable that the punishment to be awarded by Courts Martial for grave offences committed by soldiers on active service should be regulated by the Secretary of State, and thereby withdrawn from the direct control of Parliament,"—(*Viscount Emlyn,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. CHILDERS said, that nothing could be more moderate or reasonable than the speech of the noble Lord who had brought this question forward. He (Mr. Childers) hoped the House would agree with him that in a matter of this kind the responsible Minister of the Crown could have no object except to propose to Parliament what, in his judgment, appeared to be the best solution of the question. In asking Parliament to give the Secretary for War power to define for the next few months what ought to be the summary punishment for certain offences, he did so not because he desired to have that power, but solely because he thought it would be in the interest of the Public Service. Before bringing in the Bill he consulted with those with whom it was his duty to consult whether it would not be possible to introduce into the Bill itself a proper definition of the summary punishment which was to be substituted for flogging; and it was only after very careful consideration with his military advisers that he came to the conclusion that it would be better if the House would repose in the Secretary of State for the next few months the responsibility of deciding, from time to time, what ought to be the punishment, rather than to stereotype at once in the Act words which it might be desirable to alter when it would not be possible to do so. In reference to the concluding remarks of the noble Earl, he need only say that the punishment of tying a soldier to a cart or the stirrup of a horse if, finally adopted, would only be resorted to when the Army was in the field, or so far removed from a prison that he could not be conveyed thereto. The Bill said that in cases of disgraceful conduct—especially drunkenness and offences connected with drunkenness, which formed by far the greatest item in the list of the crime of the Army—there should be entrusted to commanding officers, who could not send the offenders to prison, power to inflict upon them a summary punishment which would be a deterrent, while at the same time it would not possess those characteristics which had made flogging so odious to the English people. In answer to requests that had been made, he had laid on the Table of the House a Paper explanatory of the intended punishments to be inflicted for offences for which flogging had been formerly the penalty; and these punishments, drawn in a spirit of humanity, but with a determination to preserve discipline in the Army, would only be inflicted with due consideration for the physical powers of the soldiers upon whom it was deemed necessary to inflict punishment. These were the proposals which the Government had to make, and under them the punishments to be substituted for flogging could not be inflicted for more than a certain number of days in the aggregate, nor for more than a certain number of days continuously; while the officers were required to take care that no personal injury was done to the individual being punished, and on the certificate of the medical officer, the punishment was immediately to be discontinued. It had been objected, on the one hand, that the punishments indicated would not be effectual substitutes for flogging, in consequence of their being of too mild a character; and, on the other, that they were so severe that they would prevent men from joining the Army. He, however, felt himself justified in coming to a conclusion which lay between these extremes, and in thinking that the punishments were neither too mild nor too severe. He was afraid, in the circumstances, that he must ask the House to repose confidence in the Government until next year, when he hoped to be able to submit a Schedule to the Army Discipline Bill containing a more exact description of these summary punishments.

Colonel NORTH regarded the interference on the part of the Government with the old punishment of flogging, before they were prepared to lay before the House any definite substitute for it, as a great misfortune. He was one of those who were in favour of retaining the power of flogging as a punishment in the last resort. How could the proposed punishments be carried out in the case of forced marches? In that case, to place the lazy blackguard in the waggon was exactly what he would like best, and would throw his share of the work upon the honest and loyal soldier.

Major O'BEIRNE said, he could not see how the punishments proposed in place of flogging could be inflicted in India under a burning sun. Although he was by no means an advocate of flogging, nevertheless he could not help feeling that it would be very difficult to keep up the discipline of the Army without it. Insubordination in the Army had been far more frequent since the introduction of the short-service system than it was before, owing to the utter inefficiency of the non-commissioned officers, and the discipline of the Army had sadly deteriorated in consequence. It was this want of discipline that had led to the disasters at the Cape, where, to use the words of *The Times* Correspondent, the men had ran away helter-skelter with a cry of despair.

Lord EUSTACE CECIL regretted that the Government should have taken the step of abolishing this old-established punishment without having anything definite to propose in its place. The right hon. Gentleman said that the Government had taken that course after consultation with their military advisers; but he should like to know whether they had taken the advice of any General who had commanded an army in the field, such as Lord Napier of Magdala, Sir William Codrington, Sir Garnet Wolseley, or Lord Chelmsford? It would have great weight with the country if the change could be shown to have the support of those distinguished officers. The prevailing idea in the Army and the country was that it had been effected from political motives. The summary punishment now proposed would be impracticable in the field. It would take away the ill-behaved soldier from the labours and risks of actual warfare, which was a very serious consideration in the case of a small army; and, moreover, under certain circumstances, it must become an exceedingly brutal punishment. That was altogether a novel power to give to a Secretary of State. It was certainly an un-English idea to tie people by their hands to a cart or a horse by way of punishment. He would not say that such a punishment never took place in this country, because he did not know what happened before we had a Standing Army; but he did not think that since we had had a Standing Army there had been such a mode of punishment. If the right hon. Gentleman was determined to abolish flogging, he had better leave the matter as it was. Imprisonment might be inflicted where it was available; if it was not, he could see no other alternative but a resort to the *ultima ratio* which he did not care to name. He made these observations in the hope that his right hon. Friend would make inquiry of experienced officers with reference to this subject and give time for reflection.

General Sir GEORGE BALFOUR said, he could not conceive it was possible to retain corporal punishment any longer in the face of the strong public opinion against it which prevailed throughout the country. He had seen hundreds of lashes inflicted, not upon one man, but upon many men, week after week, and he was not surprised at the feeling of horror with which the people of this country regarded that brutal punishment. He considered that the punishment proposed to be substituted was detestable; but, at the same time, he admired the right hon. Gentleman for taking upon himself a responsibility which few politicians would assume, instead of throwing it upon his military advisers. He thought much could be done to keep the soldiers from drink, under the influence of which the crimes were committed which brought the punishment of flogging upon them. He objected strongly to soldiers being sent to the field until they were declared fit by competent officers. It was a scandal that youths with only three months' service should be sent into the field, as had recently been the case. We spent millions upon millions on our Army, and yet we had no security that the men were fit for their duties.

Colonel STANLEY said, that the right hon. Gentleman himself recognized that the power he asked for was one which had never been granted to a Secretary of State before. They were not asking that every detail should be specified, but at present everything was left vague. The right hon. Gentleman said that as one person argued that the punishments would be hard and another that they would be moderate, the objections answered one another and fell to the ground. But if the rules could be read with such different interpretations that persons who did not wish to distort anything could take opposite views of the matter, that only showed how objectionable it was to leave a discretion on the subject. The lash had the advantage of uniformity so far as uniformity was possible. Officers had no discretion one way or another as to the administration of the punishment, which was as certain as any punishment could be. But that would not be the case with the punishments now proposed. Could the right hon. Gentleman assure the House that in the punishments to be substituted there would be the same amount of uniformity as attached to the punishments formerly administered? They were throwing a great responsibility upon the officers constituting courts martial and those who had to review the sentences of those courts. It would be much fairer to allow the officer commanding to carry out the punishment as he thought fit than to leave the matter so vague. The right hon. Gentleman spoke about putting a man into irons, and then said something in a gentle way about the ancle. Did that mean leg-irons or not—that a man was to be put into irons hand and foot, and that the irons were to be linked together; or did it mean some much more gentle mode of dealing with the man as the right hon. Gentleman indicated? The right hon. Gentleman said that the punishments would be regulated by the Secretary of State, and would not be subject to the control of Parliament. Parliament did not wish to interfere with details, but to leave them to the Executive officers and to hold them answerable for the result. Would the right hon. Gentleman introduce upon the Report or some other stage some words which would in some degree explain the nature of the summary punishments? Would the right hon. Gentleman sanction the French mode of burying a man? He quite admitted that certain matters must be left in the hands of the Executive. The Amendment of his noble Friend was quite in harmony with that sentiment. If his noble Friend went to a division, he would support him; but, at the same time, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would give such explanations as would render a division unnecessary.

COLONEL COLTHURST said, the question was not whether flogging should be abolished. Public opinion had declared itself so strongly against that punishment that it could not be retained. There was an almost universal consensus of opinion that the existence of the punishment was hateful to well-conducted soldiers. He was perfectly convinced that three-fourths of such men held that the retention of flogging would be a degradation and injury to them. It was perfectly impossible for any Government to retain it. But if flogging were abolished, it was necessary that some summary mode of punishment should be adopted for offences such as drunkenness on duty and on the line of march. At present there was no power of summary punishment whatever; and two-thirds of the crimes committed in 1877, and for which death or penal servitude ought to be the punishment, did not occur twice in 25 years. He thought the Secretary for War had acted discreetly in making the punishments under this Act experimental, until he had sufficient information to enable them to fix them by statute. It was to be determined whether the retention of corporal punishment, even in a modified form, was possible. He maintained it was. The feeling of the country was not so much against corporal punishment as it existed in 1879, but as it existed 40 or 50 years ago. He had not voted for the abolition of flogging, simply because he did not see what punishment could be substituted for it; and he had reason to complain of the hon. Member for Cork City (Mr. Parnell), who denounced him to his constituents as one who was in favour of the brutal and cruel system of flogging in use at the close of the last century. He had no hesitation in supporting the substituted punishments, which, he thought, should not be introduced into the statute, leaving it to time and experience to determine whether they would be effectual.

MR. GIBSON asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman considered himself bound under the existing law to lay all these rules, or modifications of them, before the House?

MR. OSBORNE MORGAN thought it better not to leave this matter in doubt, and he had prepared a clause which he would move in Committee on the Bill to make it perfectly clear. The clause was to this effect—

> "That all rules made in pursuance of this Act shall be laid before Parliament as soon as practicable, and if Parliament be not then sitting, as soon as practicable after the beginning of the next Session of Parliament."

He had very little to add; but, in reply to the noble Lord, he must state that he had never said that this was a matter on which they should defer to popular clamour. He said they should be guided by the opinion of the most experienced men; but it was impossible to disregard altogether the opinion out-of-doors. The Army was recruited by voluntary enlistment, and they all knew that the retention of this punishment deterred not the blackguard, but the best class of men from entering the Army. When it was abolished, they would get a better class of men to join it. Flogging was dead. There was no use in re-arguing the matter. They could not revive it. The only question was what punishments could be substituted for it? The noble Lord said the punishments proposed to be substituted were too vague; but it should be borne in mind that they would be administered by reasonable and humane men, and with reference to the climate and country where they would be inflicted. Against the conduct of any of our soldiers in the Transvaal we might well set the conduct of our troops on the march from Cabul to Candahar. He believed the discipline of the Army to be thoroughly sound, and he hoped that what they were doing, so far from having any tendency to destroy it, would have the effect of improving it.

SIR JOHN HAY said, that the Motion of the noble Lord had his entire concurrence. Its object was to prevent the re-introduction of methods of torture in substitution for flogging. He wished to know whether, under the new condition of things, a soldier would not escape the liability to be flogged for offences which would be punished with flogging if committed by civilians? He put the case of a man who, after being imprisoned on board ship for striking a man, rushed on his victim and worried him. In civil life the man would have been liable to be flogged for the analogous offence of garotting. If the triangle and the lash were abolished, there was no knowing what torture an officer might think it necessary to inflict for the purpose of maintaining discipline in the field.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, in reply to the question just put, said that the offence of garotting would be a civil crime, for which the soldier would be punishable by a civil tribunal.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, that the noble Lord had done good service in bringing the question before the House. An explicit declaration had been given that any new rule should be laid on the Table. Never before had the House been asked to sanction the proposal that a Secretary of State for War should have the power of prescribing what punishments were to be inflicted, and of doing it in the vague way indicated by the Bill. He would put it to the right hon. Gentleman whether it would not be far wiser to leave to the officer in command the responsibility of deciding what it might be necessary to do in the peculiar circumstances of each case? He hoped that, at least, the right hon. Gentleman would place something more definite before them, in order that they might know what was to be done in the case of an emergency arising in the field. It would be interesting to know whether the right hon. Gentleman had consulted the highest military authorities with regard to these punishments, and particularly those capable of expressing an opinion as to whether they would be effectual in the field?

VISCOUNT EMLYN said, after the statement that had been made, he should not trouble the House to divide, but would ask leave to withdraw the Motion, reserving the right to raise the question, if necessary, on the Report.

MR. CHILDERS desired to say, in response to the appeal that had been made to him, that these punishments were as distasteful to him as they could be to any Member of the House, and he looked forward to the time when the character of the Army would be so much improved that everything in the nature of punishments like these might be minimized. He had consulted those whom he thought it was his duty to consult on questions of detail concerning such punishments, and he did not feel prepared to narrow at present, too far, the power proposed to be given to the Secretary of State—powers of deciding from time to time what the nature of summary punishment should be. But he would undertake, between the Committee stage and the Report, to make further inquiry in orderto ascertain whether it would be possible to introduce into Clause 4 of the Bill a few words limiting the summary punishment to personal restraint, and such hard labour as shot drill. He would take the Report on Monday next instead of to-day (Friday), which would give him time to consult those whose advice would be useful on this point, and he hoped that on Monday, after the Report, the Bill might be read a third time.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *agreed to.*

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clauses 1 to 3, inclusive, *agreed to.*

Clause 4 (Summary punishment).

MAJOR NOLAN said, by the Amendment to this clause standing upon the Paper in his name, he intended that no summary punishment should be inflicted on non-commissioned officers. He found, however, that the Judge Advocate General had considered the point, and had put down an Amendment which fully met the case. He should not, therefore, move his Amendment.

On the Motion of Mr. Osborne Morgan, Amendment made, in page 3, line 30, at the end of the sub-section, by inserting the words—

"The said summary punishment shall not be inflicted upon a non-commissioned officer, or upon a reduced non-commissioned officer, for any offence committed while holding the rank of non-commissioned officer."

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 5 (Summary court martial).

On the Motion of Mr. Osborne Morgan, Amendment made, in page 4, line 12, after the word "convened," by inserting the words "and shall have jurisdiction."

Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN said, he proposed to add words in line 15 that would, he believed, meet the objection of his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Galway (Major Nolan) to evidence being given without an oath being administered, as indicated in the Amendment standing next in his name. It was intended to provide rules to govern the proceedings of these summary courts martial, which, when they were seen, would be found to guard very carefully against the miscarriage of justice feared by his hon. and gallant Friend.

Major NOLAN thought the point he intended to raise had, perhaps, hardly been understood. He was, however, satisfied with the provision that witnesses were to be sworn.

General Sir GEORGE BALFOUR pointed out that there was, in the case of a drum-head court martial, no time to carry into effect many minute regulations. Still a certain form was gone through. An oath was administered, a simple note was taken of the men forming the court, and a record made of the punishment awarded.

Major NOLAN said, there was no such thing as a drum-head court martial, although there might have been 70 or 80 years ago. They had, moreover, never been recognized by law, and the sooner the idea of their existence was ceased in the minds of the people, the better. No doubt, a drum might be placed on the ground, and a Bible put upon it; but so-called drum-head courts martial only existed in romances.

General Sir GEORGE BALFOUR said, he had himself been present at a drum-head court martial.

Amendment *agreed to.*

On the Motion of Mr. Osborne Morgan, Amendment made, in page 4, line 19, after "1879," by inserting the words "as amended by this Act."

Major NOLAN said, he did not intend to move his Amendment to retain the five sections of the Army Discipline and Regulation Act of 1879, because the principal reason he had urged in support of it on the second reading—namely, that witnesses and others would not be sworn—had been met by the Judge Advocate General. Still, there were many things to be said in favour of the retention of the five sections of the Act of 1879, which provided certain safeguards for the administration of justice—among others, that the officer prosecuting should not sit on the court martial or give evidence as a witness. All these safeguards would now be abrogated by making the sections in question inapplicable to summary courts martial as constituted by the present Bill. The Amendment he now intended to move related to the number of officers necessary to form a summary court martial. He had given the subject careful consideration, and arrived at the conclusion that the words "where a summary court martial consists of less than three officers," ought to be left out. This Bill constituted a totally new form of court martial, and he hardly thought the Committee quite realized the effect of passing the clause as it stood. The minor punishments of carrying an extra weight, or of being tied to a waggon, he did not regard as very serious affairs, so far as the power of sentencing to them by the summary courts martial as constituted by the Bill was concerned. But when the power of sentencing to death was given to these courts martial, the matter became very serious indeed. Under the present Bill, if any three subalterns were got together and any two of them decided that a man should be punished with death, the punishment of death could be inflicted. The court that had this power was of a most informal character. It was not, however, so much the court itself that he feared, it was the action of the provost marshal. That officer, at starting on the line of march, was no worse than any other officer, but he very soon became so. He was made responsible for almost everything, and in time he became a sort of policeman. If discipline was not preserved, he knew very well that he would be reprimanded, and was, therefore, determined to stop every irregularity. Under those circumstances, he flogged men for almost anything. He (Major Nolan) was afraid that, under the present Bill, he would shoot a man for almost anything. The provost marshal or senior subaltern had nothing to do but to get an assistant and form a summary court martial. The sentence of the court could be carried out on confirmation by the major. The major might not like to confirm the sentence; but he would know very well that the provost marshal had the ear of the General of the Army, and that he would be looked upon as a weak man if he did not support the provost marshal. He would be, so to speak, afraid of the provost marshal, or rather of his influence with the General. He (Major Nolan) could not help thinking that, in a great many cases, a weak officer would be coerced into approving the sentence. Again, the clause was, in his opinion, objectionable, because it allowed the Commander-in-Chief to remove the responsibility for shooting a man from his own shoulders and cast it upon an inferior officer, who, being a weak man, might be inclined to shoot one or two men for the sake of example. It would be seen in line 31, page 4, that a sentence of death awarded by a summary court martial might be confirmed by the General or Field Officer commanding that body of the Forces with which the prisoner was present at the date of his sentence. In the Act of 1879 it was not so. In the old Mutiny Act, the responsibility was brought home directly to the General or Commanding Officer, who knew very well that, when he shot a man on his own responsibility, he must have a clear case. But the present Bill did away with that safeguard, and practically placed it in the power of the provost marshal to force, perhaps, a major to say "yes" or "no" to the sentence of the summary court martial. Formerly, no man could be shot until the General Officer commanding in the field had signified his approval; but it was now proposed that every major in charge of a baggage guard should have the responsibility which, in the Peninsular War, rested only with the Commander-in-Chief. It amounted to this—that any offence whatsoever could be punished with death by any major in command of a body of the Forces. That seemed to him very like murder. It had been remarked to him recently by an American officer that our system of field general courts martial was very much more simple and expeditious than that in force in the American Service. We had already far more power in our system than was deemed necessary in the United States Army, and yet we were about to double and even treble the powers of courts-martial. He had never heard of such tremendous powers being given to any court.

Amendment proposed,

In page 4, line 26, to leave out the words "where a summary court martial consists of less than three officers."—(*Major Nolan.*)

Sir HENRY FLETCHER hoped the Judge Advocate General would not agree to this Amendment, because he thought it important that, as flogging had been done away with, there should be some means of punishing an offender in a summary way. If the clause was not carried, he feared that General Officers commanding an army in the field would have great difficulty in maintaining discipline. He would not follow the hon. and gallant Member who had just spoken into all the details of the subject, but would remark that he had had an opportunity of discussing the question with a General Officer of distinction in the field. That officer was of opinion that no General could undertake the discipline of his army without summary courts martial, seeing that the punishment of flogging had been abolished. There could be no doubt that, when a disgraceful crime had been committed, the best way to deter others from committing it was by punishing the offender at once. It would never do to allow two or three weeks to elapse before bringing the offender to justice. He felt that summary justice had the best effect in deterring men from following a bad example, and therefore trusted the hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill would not give way.

Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN said, it would be utterly impossible for the Government to assent to the Amendment of his hon. and gallant Friend. The observations with regard to the provost marshal might have applied before 1879; but the Act of that year practically abolished the power of the provost marshal. It established a court called a field general court martial, which was, of course, only another name for a summary court martial. If hon. Members looked at Section 49 of the Act of 1879 they would see that the field general court martial might consist of three officers, who could inflict capital punishment, penal servitude, corporal punishment, and imprisonment, subject to this—that the sentence of capital punishment had to be confirmed by the general officer commanding. It had now become absolutely necessary to have the power provided by this section. Officers in command of a small detachment, possibly in a beleaguered town, must have at their disposal means of promptly suppressing mutiny. The object of the Government was, therefore, to put the summary court martial in the place of the field general court martial, with, in some cases, more extensive powers. They were, however, practically in conformity with the Act of 1879. The rules of procedure issued by the late Secretary of State for War governed the course of procedure in the case of general courts martial. One of these provided that the witnesses and the members of the court were to be sworn, and that if the court passed sentence of death the whole court should be of one mind. That rule was now in force. He thought that the hands of these courts martial should not be crippled; and, therefore, could not accept the Amendment of the hon. and gallant Gentleman.

Mr. BRAND said, the hon. Gentleman admitted that the proposed regulations were more stringent than those under the system of field general courts martial. That was the whole point in the argument of the hon. and gallant Member for Galway. His case was that under the field general courts martial there was security that the sentence of death should be confirmed by the general officer commanding the forces in the field. Under the proposed system, these summary courts martial would be formed without any limitation as to the rank of the officers composing them; so that, in fact, sentence of death might be delivered by three subalterns of the regiment. Whereas, under the old system, the sentence had to be confirmed by the general officer commanding in the field, it might now be confirmed by a major. He regarded that provision as a distinct addition to the severity of the system. The sentence of death ought not, in his opinion, to be delivered by any court martial that had not at least upon it an officer of the rank of captain, and that it ought to be confirmed, as it had been formerly, by the general officer commanding.

Sir ALEXANDER GORDON said, the hon. Member who had just spoken had alluded to a point that had seriously occurred to himself. It was not three officers alone, but two, who could deliver a sentence of death. There was really only one independent officer to judge of the case, and that officer might be a junior subaltern. He hoped the Judge Advocate would consider the extent of the power conveyed by the clause. It was a remarkable fact that there existed a strong tendency to make Mutiny Acts annually more severe.

Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN pointed out that, under the rules which governed the procedure of field general courts martial, there must be an absolute concurrence on the part of the members of the court, in cases where the sentence of death was awarded. The words—

> "By the general or field officer commanding that body of the forces with which the prisoner is present at the date of his sentence,"

were introduced to meet the case of a mutiny breaking out in a small detachment commanded by two or three officers, cut off from communication with the outer world. He was unable to give up the wording of this section.

Mr. BRAND said, the Judge Advocate General now admitted that there was only one valid reason for this increased severity. It was intended, he said, to meet the case of a force cut off from the main Army. But surely there was no necessity for hurling a man out of existence in such haste. He thought the officer in command of the force to which the man belonged might detain him in prison until he could get a confirmation of his sentence from the general officer commanding the forces.

Major NOLAN said, he wanted to guard against making it easier to shoot a man than it was before.

Mr. CHILDERS was willing to agree that the sentence of death should only be carried out in the manner provided by the clause in cases where there was no practicable communication between the main body and the beleaguered forces.

Major NOLAN said, that, on those conditions, he was willing to withdraw his Amendment.

Sir ALEXANDER GORDON wished to ask the Judge Advocate General whether one of the three officers who might sentence a prisoner to death could be the officer who investigated the charge beforehand and ordered the court martial? The words which allowed this were, at his request, struck out in Committee on the Army Discipline Bill of 1879; but he afterwards found they had been re-introduced on the third reading. He thought that the officer referred to should not be a member of the court martial.

Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN said, as a matter of fact, the convening officer might be a member of the field general court martial; and he was afraid that it would not be possible to insert words in the direction indicated by the hon. and gallant Member for East Aberdeenshire.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN moved, in page 4, line 32, to leave out "that body of forces" and insert "force."

Major NOLAN said, the substitution of the singular for the plural in this instance might have an important effect. He understood that the proposition of the Secretary of State for War was to leave the Act in the same state as it was left by the Act of 1879, except in regard to its legal character.

Mr. CHILDERS said, the Amendment was proposed so that it might apply to the case where there was a small force commanded by an officer who was not a general.

Amendment *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to,* and *added* to the Bill.

Clause 6 (Abolition of capital punishment) *agreed to.*

Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN moved a new clause to provide that all rules made in pursuance of the Act should be laid before Parliament if Parliament was sitting at the time; if not, as soon afterwards as practicable.

Sir ALEXANDER GORDON said, he had intended to move a new clause to the same effect, the only difference being that his clause required the rules to be laid before Parliament within 14 days after they were issued.

Clause *agreed to,* and *added* to the Bill.

Mr. CAINE moved to insert the following clause after Clause 3:—

(Prohibition of supply of intoxicating liquors.)

"On and after the commencement of this Act the sale of all intoxicating liquors in canteens and other places of refreshment in garrisons shall be prohibited, and the supply of spirit rations on the march discontinued."

The hon. Member stated that he proposed this clause in consequence of a sentence contained in the speech of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Judge Advocate General (Mr. Osborne Morgan) upon the second reading of the Bill. The right hon. and learned Gentleman was referring to the strange and unaccountable difference in the Return of offences in different regiments; and he said—

> "It did seem to show, some way or other, how he would not pretend to say, that you could make the British soldier pretty nearly what you liked; and that if, on the one hand, he could be powerfully influenced for evil, on the other hand he could be powerfully influenced for good. How was that object to be carried out? They would not do it by the lash; they would not do it by these summary punishments, however necessary they might be; but they would do it by raising the character and *morale* of the soldier, by removing the temptations to drunkenness, which was his greatest curse."

When he (Mr. Caine) heard those words, he took it for granted that the War Office fully intended to take some immediate steps to remove "the temptation to drunkenness" which the right hon. and learned Gentleman himself said was the British soldier's greatest curse; but he found nothing in the Bill now before the Committee, nor any expressed intention in the right hon. and learned Gentleman's speech, that at all pointed to any such intention. He proposed to insert this clause in the Bill as the best means known to him for securing these desirable results, and making some change in the awful and deplorable state of things revealed by the right hon. and learned Gentleman's reply to a Question he (Mr. Caine) had put to him that afternoon at Question time, when the right hon. and learned

Gentleman told the House that in 1879 there were 14,750 punishments in the British Army under the sentences of courts martial, 4,421 of which were for drunkenness. There were also 43,372 fines imposed, and out of the total number 23,000 resulted from drunkenness. [Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN: Upon 23,000 men.] He (Mr. Caine) inferred from that some men came up two, three, and four times to be fined for the same offence of drunkenness. The right hon. and learned Gentleman further gave the House the astounding information, although they were certainly prepared for a serious state of things, that 236 per 1,000 of the entire British Army were fined or punished for drunkenness during that year—1879; and also, that three-fourths of the whole crime of the British Army resulted from drunkenness. [Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN: It was a mere surmise of mine.] The right hon. and learned Gentleman further told them that these figures were the result, after a great declension from year to year, the declension having been caused by the inculcation of principles combatting this drunkenness. The House had also heard the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War state that night that drunkenness, and crimes resulting from drunkenness, made up nearly the whole crime of the Army; so that both the Secretary of State for War and the Judge Advocate General had arrived at the same opinion, that a large proportion of the crime in the Army resulted from drunkenness. He must say that he had considerable sympathy with the difficulty which seemed to have been felt in the House, especially on the Opposition Benches, in devising some punishment which should take the place of the barbarous punishment of flogging. What he wanted to do, if he could get this clause inserted in the Bill, was to prevent the offences resulting. He ventured to think that prevention was much better than cure. He had heard an hon. and gallant Member on that side of the House (Sir Alexander Gordon) say that the Mutiny Bill increased each year in severity. He was not surprised at that, when such a state of things existed as that which they had heard of to-day from the Government Benches. He was afraid he should be obliged to trouble the Committee with a good many quotations; but he would not apologize for doing so, because he knew that in military matters the opinions of a civilian like himself, however they might be in accordance with common sense, would have no great weight. During the last few weeks he had taken the trouble to collect the opinions of many of the most distinguished officers in the Army upon this vital question, and he had done so in view of the Resolution he hoped to bring forward on going into Committee of Supply upon the Navy Estimates. The first opinion he would give was that of Sir Garnet Wolseley, from *The Soldier's Pocket Book*, published in 1868, and which was accepted as a standard authority in the Army. Sir Garnet Wolseley said—

> "Give your men as little spirits as possible; tea and coffee are much more sustaining, and are more profitable. The old superstition that grog is a good thing for men before driving, or after a march, has been proved by the scientific men of all nations to be a fallacy, and is only still maintained by men who mistake the cravings arising solely from habit for the promptings of nature. It is the commonest thing to see men, when travelling at home, taking brandy to keep themselves warm. It is an ascertained fact that alcohol of any sort reduces instead of increases the temperature of the body. The use of spirits in cold weather has been well tested during the various Polar expeditions, the medical officers of which all condemn it as a preventative against cold. No men require greater endurance than the trappers of North America, and none do a greater amount of hard physical work than the voyagers' lumbermen there; none of them drink spirits when in the woods, tea being their constant beverage. Our armies in Kaffraria had no spirits issued to them, as a rule, and no army in the field was ever more healthy (if any other was as free from sickness). Our experience in the Indian Mutiny also carries out this theory; for months, in some places, our men were entirely cut off from all liquor, and they were healthier than when, subsequently, it was issued to them as a ration. By increasing the allowance of tea, and abolishing that of rum, you diminish the supplies to be carried to a great extent, whilst you add to the health and efficiency of your men. Their discipline will improve as their moral tone is raised, engendering a manly cheerfulness that spirit-drinking armies know nothing of. No men have ever done harder work than was performed by the troops employed upon the Red River Expedition. No spirits of any sort were issued to them; but they had practically as much of good tea as they could drink. Illness was, I may say, unknown amongst them."

That was an old opinion of Sir Garnet Wolseley, published in 1868. For fear, however, that any hon. Member should think that that gallant officer had changed his opinion, he would quote a passage from a letter written by him from the War Office at the Horse

Guards, on the 17th of August, 1880, in which he said—

> "My experience has proved to me that less liquor there is consumed in an army the more efficient is its condition. I have never seen men do harder work than that done by the three battalions I took with me on the Red River Expedition in 1870, and I never saw men make lighter of hardships, be more cheerful, more healthy, or better behaved than they were. With the troops under my command recently in South Africa, we had very little spirits. Of my own personal escort the majority were total abstainers, and they were models of what soldiers on service should be. I find that if you give men plenty of tea and sugar they do not miss their grog after a time; having no grog with you in a campaign eases your transport very considerably, and removes a temptation to steal which its presence with an army always creates. There is no one that wishes well to the temperance cause more sincerely than I do."

That was the opinion of Sir Garnet Wolseley expressed within the last 12 months. He would now quote a single passage from the book of Lieutenant Colonel Denison on *Modern Cavalry* which, he believed, was another standard book—

> "Care should be taken on the line of march to prevent men drinking. Some will say it is necessary to give men spirits to keep them up. I do not see any necessity for it. I have always noticed the men who do not drink at all work the best and will hold out the longest."

He was sorry that he was not able to quote the opinion of Major General Sir Frederick Roberts. Had that gallant officer been in the country, he believed he might have been able to do so. But when at the Mansion House the other day at the banquet given to him there, in answer to Mr. John Taylor, a member of the National Temperance League and a personal friend of his (Mr. Caine's) own, Sir Frederick Roberts stated—

> "That the absence of crime amongst total abstainers in the Army was almost incredible, and that drink was a great incentive to punishable offences in the Army."

In a letter sent from Simla in October, 1877, to the Soldier's Total Abstinence Association, Sir Frederick Roberts said—

> "I have the pleasure to inclose a cheque in aid of the Soldier's Total Abstinence Association, in the success of which I am deeply interested."

The next letter he would read was one from Lord Napier of Magdala, dated May 5, 1876. The noble Lord said—

> "I have deferred writing to you regarding the operations of the Society for the Suppression of Drunkenness in the Army in India, in order that I might ascertain thoroughly how the action of the Society has affected regimental discipline, and what has been its effect upon crime resulting from drunkenness."

In 1874 there were in the Indian Army 1,751 abstainers, and 16,233 non-abstainers. The crimes committed by the teetotallers were virtually none. The aggregate percentage of crime committed by teetotallers during the five years amounted to 0·12, while those of the non-abstainers amounted to 4·68, or, in round numbers, were about 40 times as numerous. He came next to a letter from Lieutenant General the Hon. Sir Henry W. Norman, a Member of the Council of India, dated October 3, 1876, and written in connection with the Association in which he (Mr. Caine) had for a long time taken a warm personal interest. Sir Henry Norman said—

> "You are well aware of the interest I take in the Soldier's Total Abstinence Association, and may rely upon my aiding it as far as I am able. The work you are engaged in is one of the highest value, not only to the soldiers themselves, but also to the Government they serve, which has the strongest reasons for desiring the success of efforts calculated to promote the physical and moral welfare of the troops."

He did not conceive that he was wasting the time of the House in reading these extracts. He merely wished to give the opinion of these distinguished officers rather than offer any arguments of his own. The next opinion was that of Lieutenant General Sir Charles Staveley, Commander-in-Chief of the Bombay Army from 1874 to 1878—

> "I desire to say that there is no doubt that drunkenness is the source of nearly all the crime in the British Army, and here in India of a very great deal of the sickness and invaliding."

That confirmed the opinion which had been expressed on the Treasury Bench. He would now quote a letter from Sir Richard Temple, and he was almost inclined to regret that the hon. Gentleman had been unsuccessful at the last General Election, because otherwise he might have been sitting on those Benches to endorse, as he (Mr. Caine) was sure he would have done, the views he was now expressing. Sir Richard Temple, writing from Malabar Point on the 18th of March, 1878, said—

> "From long experience in the field in almost all parts of India, I am convinced that beer, wine, and spirits do not conduce to strength and en-

durance under circumstances of severe and sustained physical exertion, but have rather a contrary effect, and are often at the bottom of illness and ailments erroneously attributed to the Indian climate and other causes."

He would next read a portion of a letter from Colonel Charles Blewitt, now commanding the brigade depôt at Halifax, written in 1874, when commanding the 65th Regiment in India—

"I do not hesitate to say that were the principle and habit of totally abstaining the rule and not the exception crime would be comparatively unknown, and the roll of other offences insignificant. Drunkenness at all times and in all regiments has been, in my opinion, the direst foe to discipline, and the destroyer of the health of the soldier. Further, it has sapped his moral and weakened his manly character. Men of experience in the Army know what shifts a man will make to buy, conceal, and consume a bottle of rum. He will prevaricate and mislead to prevent his superiors learning from whence he obtained it. The same man, when free from the debasing influence of liquor, would scorn to deceive on any subject whatever. Abstinence from intoxicating liquors is, I think, of greater consequence in its moral effects than its physical. Under the first condition we have our soldiers in their own proper nature, loyal, truthful, frank, and bold, doing the right for the right's sake—hating the wrong, because it contaminates, and is loathing to their manhood."

He would now venture to read a short extract from the opinion of a colonel in the Indian Army, who, however, had not given him permission to use his name. He quoted this gallant officer because he was not a total abstainer, and he stated so in his letter. The letter said—

"Many commanding officers, myself among the number, are not advocates of total abstinence; but I believe all commanding officers to be hostile to the issue of rum to the men: at least, all I have ever conversed with have been so, and I believe if by your efforts you can induce the authorities to stop the issue of spirits to all regiments arriving in this country, you will confer a great boon on the Army, and you will remove one of the chief causes of the universal use of spirits in the Army in India. I look upon a free canteen as fatal in India, where a man has so much money to spend, and so much idle time. The strongest argument against free canteens is the fact that in the Army of India, the greatest proportion of delirium tremens is amongst the sergeants who are possessed—in their mess—of the privilege of a free canteen. If, therefore, these men, the selected men of each regiment, with superior education, cannot be trusted, what would be the result if free canteens were thrown open to the whole body of men?"

From a very interesting Return from Her Majesty's 1st battalion of the 11th Regiment in India he would quote three sentences—

"The late Commander-in-Chief, Lord Napier of Magdala, in his farewell General Order to the Army in India, proclaimed that the introduction of temperance had been clearly the means of reducing the number of courts martial during the last five years by one-half; and he said that the proportion of crime in Bengal amongst temperance men, versus the moderate and intemperate, was 1 to 40. Statistics from the records of the 1st battalion, 11th Regiment, bears out the above statement in every respect, as the following examples will show:—The number of trials by courts martial in 1870 was 45, of which 33 were for drunkenness. The numbers of trials in 1875 was 11, of which 6 were caused by drunkenness."

He had quoted these figures in order that the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Judge Advocate General might see whether they were in a decreased or in an increased degree. The next short sentence he selected, because he thought it might have some weight with hon. Members on the Opposition Benches. There were, certainly, not many present on those Benches; but he quoted the passage because he thought it might have some effect upon the two or three who were there. It was the opinion of the Marquess of Salisbury, written in January, 1875, respecting the Army Sanitary Commission. Lord Salisbury said, in his despatch—

"I would also request your attention to the remarks of the Commission as to the importance of every effort being taken by the Government to discourage the use of alcoholic drinks in the Army in India."

He was now about to trouble the Committee, for a moment or two, with the medical declaration respecting the habitual use of intoxicating liquors in the Indian Army; and he might add that he did not intend to quote any authority that evening that was not an Army authority. The declaration to which he referred was signed by six deputy surgeons, 35 surgeon majors, and two surgeons, all of them in the Army Medical Depôt. The declaration said—

"I. Being fully convinced that nearly all military crime may be traced to the use of intoxicating liquor, and a great deal of sickness caused by its excessive use, there can be no excuse, on physical grounds, for rejecting the practice of total abstinence. II. A common idea, that intoxicating stimulants are necessary in India, is a fallacy, which has gradually led many moderate drinkers into baneful excess. The habitual use of rum, brandy, and other spirits, is far more injurious than beneficial to the vast majority of those who daily indulge in them. III. Young soldiers, on landing for the first time in India, should be warned against the pernicious habit of drinking a dram of rum daily. Many men, who never knew its taste before receiving their first dram at the canteen, have acquired a thirst for spirits, which has ruined their prospects in the Service, and prevented the recruit from developing, morally and physically, into a well-trained soldier. IV. The men who abstain from intoxicating liquor, in the Service, are not more subject to climatic diseases than their drinking comrades; on the contrary, the teetotallers are not so frequently under medical observation or invalided. V. The object of the Soldiers' Total Abstinence Association commends itself to our sympathy, in its endeavours to suppress drunkenness in the Army. The whole question of the use of alcohol, as a medicine, is not touched upon by the pledge of the Association, which leaves every member at liberty to use such, under medical direction."

He had read this medical declaration through, because he thought it was not fair to take extracts from it. There were now two or three individual opinions from the surgeon majors who had signed the declaration, which he would also read. The first was from Surgeon Major Hamilton, who said—

"I have long advocated the disuse of spirits in canteens as a Government issue. The best change Sir Hugh Rose ever effected for the British soldier in India was the alteration in the rum ration, when it was reduced from two to one 'tot' per day; and that Commander-in-Chief who completes the work, and stops the issue of rum in canteens, will do more for the *morale* of the European force, and cause a greater diminution of crime, than any other measure that has hitherto been proposed."

For the benefit of those civilians who did not know what Sir Hugh Rose's Order was, he had it there, and would quote it. It was an Order given at Simla in June, 1864, and was as follows:—

"Sir Hugh Rose has taken into mature consideration the opinion, and unanimous one, of medical officers, that it is prejudicial to the health of the soldier, especially in a tropical climate, to drink daily two drams of spirits. They consider that this constant consumption of ardent spirits weakens gradually the organs of life, affects the head, excites the senses, and paves the way to crime. His Excellency is persuaded that many young soldiers, sober from childhood, have contracted habits of inebriety from drinking, at the canteen, what they conceive to be a regulation allowance of spirits for soldiers."

A very important separate opinion was given by Mr. F. R. McFarlane, Surgeon Major in charge of the 65th Foot. Mr. McFarlane said—

"In reply to your letter, asking me the relative numbers of teetotallers to non-teetotallers admitted into hospital, with the general results of disease, I send you the following particulars taken from the admission and discharge book. From the 1st of January to the 26th July there were 565 admissions; of these, 45 were teetotallers, or about 1 in 12; but, as only about a third of the regiment are teetotallers, the proportion of admission of teetotallers to non-teetotallers is about one to four. I believe, in nearly all cases, it is the rum ration which makes men spirit drinkers; they rarely are so when they enlist. If the rum ration were done away with, I do not think many men would drink native spirits."

Mr. Caine

The last opinion he would give from those who signed the medical declaration, although he might, if necessary, give replies from nearly all of them, was from Surgeon Major Robinson, who said—

"I hope such an amount of consentient testimony may be obtained, as will enable the advocates of temperance and of total abstinence to obtain the withdrawal of the rum ration. I believe that a large proportion of the rank and file of the Army, who now partake of it, would be pleased with such a result. I have myself recommended this step, and have no doubt that many medical officers have done likewise."

There were just two or three other sentences from other letters with which he would close. Surgeon-Major Turton said—

"The dram of rum might, with advantage, be done away with in India, as it is not only unnecessary, but pernicious."

Surgeon Major Condon said—

"The rum ration is about the greatest curse ever inflicted on the Army. The soldier takes it, at first, because he thinks Government is giving him a boon."

Surgeon-Major Colan said—

"Some men who were temperate before canteen facilities were opened to them thereby acquired a thirst for spirits."

He would close his quotations with two from distinguished medical officers at home. The first was from the late Dr. E. A. Parkes, F.R.S., Professor of Military Hygiene at the Army Medical School, Netley, who, in the latest edition of his *Manual of Practical Hygiene*, asked—

"Are there any circumstances of the soldier's life in which the issue of spirits is advisable, and if the question, at any time, lies between the issue of spirits and total abstinence, which is best? To me there seems but one answer. If spirits neither give strength to the body, nor sustain it against disease—are not protective against cold and wet, and aggravate, rather than mitigate, the effects of heat—if their use, even in moderation, increases crime, injures discipline, and impairs hope and cheerfulness—if the severest trials of war have not been merely borne, but more easily borne without them—if there is no evidence that they are protective against malaria or other diseases—then I conceive that the medical officer will not be justified in sanctioning their use under any other circumstances."

Surgeon-General W. C. Maclean, M.D., C.B., Professor of Military Medicine, Army Medical School, Netley, in a lecture at the Royal United Service Institution, delivered in February, 1874, said—

> "If there be any point of military hygiene that may now be regarded as settled beyond doubt or cavil it is this—that spirits are not only not helpful, but are hurtful to the marching soldier, everywhere, I believe, but nowhere more so than in hot climates. The evidence on this point is overwhelming. Were I the medical chief of any Army destined to take the field in a tropical climate, not a drop of spirits should, with my consent, accompany it, save what the requirements of the ambulance service demanded. The evidence shows that wherever soldiers, by accident or design, have been cut off from the use of spirits on marches, on active service, in temperate climates exposed to wet and cold, or in the tropics to ardent heat, or in laborious sieges, they have maintained their health, spirits, and discipline far better than when the once-deemed indispensable grog was in daily use. I cannot leave this important subject without adding that for 12 years I have, at Netley, had unrivalled opportunities of studying the effects of habitual dram-drinking on the persons of our soldiers, and add my testimony to the immense weight of evidence accumulated by medical men in civil and military life, to the effect that alcohol is one of the most active agents in causing degeneration of the human tissues—in other words, disease, premature decay, and death. If this be true, as I believe it is, those officers who, by precept and example, strive to wean their men from the practice of this, our national vice, may, with truth, be said to be engaged in a patriotic work, and to deserve well of their country."

He had no other quotation to lay before the Committee, though he could have given a great many more. He could have occupied two or three hours' time in making quotations from the speeches and writings of very great authorities, all of which would tend in precisely the same direction as those he had already made. What he wanted to point out was that the Government proposed no remedy for the appalling state of things that was revealed in the answer to the Question he put to the Government this afternoon. He proposed, no doubt, a very drastic remedy; but still, until the Government proposed some remedy which would be equally effective, he must press his case to a division, that the feeling of the House might be tested upon the question. He could not understand how the War Office could go against such opinions as he had just quoted, unless it was, as had happened before, that the influence of the leading and active agents of the Army counted little or nothing as against that other influence which sometimes prevailed in that particular branch of the Service. The Government admitted the evil; they expressed their intention, in the speeches they delivered from the Treasury Bench, to do something or other; but they did not do so. He now gave them an opportunity, by their acceptance of his clause, to get rid of those temptations to drunkenness which they themselves provided.

New Clause (Prohibition of supply of intoxicating liquors,)—(*Mr. Caine,*)—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

MR. OSBORNE MORGAN said, that with a very great deal of what had fallen from the hon. Member for Scarborough (Mr. Caine) he most cordially agreed. The hon. Gentleman would know that there was no man in the House who was more anxious than himself (Mr. Osborne Morgan) to put a stop to the terrible amount of drunkenness which prevailed in the Army, and which, as he stated early in the evening, in answer to a Question of the hon. Member for Scarborough, was the root and cause of a very large proportion, if not the whole of the crime committed in the Army. But what he was afraid of was that his hon. Friend's clause would not secure the object he had in view; in fact, he thought it would have an exactly contrary effect. The hon. Gentleman proposed, in order to promote sobriety in the Army, to stop the sale of all intoxicating liquors in the canteens. Why, if that were done the soldier would simply be driven from the canteen to the public-house. Instead of getting good liquor, as he now did get in the canteen, the soldier would get bad liquor at the public-house; and instead of drinking beer, as he did now, it would be found he would drink gin and other spirits. Was the hon. Member aware that the sale of spirituous liquors was expressly prohibited on home stations? In the course of the 11 months he had held Office, he had never come across a single case of drunkenness occurring in canteen; cases of drunkenness had invariably originated outside. That, he thought, would be also the experience of his Predecessor (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck). He (Mr. Osborne Morgan) would go further and say that in India, where there were no public-houses, but where the only drink supplied was that from the canteen, cases of drunkenness, as compared with those in civil life in England, were exceedingly rare. The Queen's Regulations relating to canteens strictly prohibited the sale of ardent and spirituous liquors of any description in canteen on home stations, although at foreign stations the sale of spirits was permitted at the discretion of the commanding officer. Furthermore, it was stipulated that no intoxicating or malt liquors of any description were to be sold before 12 at noon, or after tattoo, or during Divine Service, or to any man apparently intoxicated. His hon. Friend had spoken of the prevalence of drunkenness in the British Army. Great as the drunkenness was it had been steadily diminishing; and he had heard, though he could not state it as a fact, that the number of total abstainers in the Army was as large as 25 per cent of the whole force. At any rate, temperance was on the increase. There was another objection to the adoption of the proposed clause. It was not a clause which could be conveniently inserted in a Mutiny Bill, inasmuch as it was quite outside the scope of the Bill. He hoped the hon. Gentleman would not press the clause to a division, because, if so, he would be compelled, for the reasons he had assigned, to vote against him.

Dr. KINNEAR could not follow the hon. Member for Scarborough (Mr. Caine) in the extracts he had read; but he could give the Motion his heartiest support. In the North of Ireland he, as pastor of a congregation, constantly came in contact with the soldiers stationed there. He had questioned the men with reference to drinking in the Army; and from the answers he received he had concluded that if the Government would offer the men, in addition to their pay, 2*d.* per day in lieu of the drink rations, at least 50 per cent would very gladly accept it. There was hardly a young man who entered the Army or Navy who did not leave his parents' home without carrying with him the prayers of his father and mother, and who did not join the Service without promises of the very best nature. He would like to see the Government doing everything to assist the men to carry out the promises which had been so justly and solemnly made; and he hoped the arguments of the hon. Member for Scarborough, supported as they were by such weighty authorities, would commend themselves to the judgment of the Committee. Their earnest desire ought to be to promote the characters of the young men in the Army and Navy for sobriety and righteousness, which was the greatest aid to discipline and efficiency.

Captain HERON-MAXWELL said, that as the clause applied to home stations the Committee ought not to accept it. Judging from his own experience as a soldier he did not think there were many cases of drunkenness arising out of the drink obtained at the canteens; and if, as it was now proposed to do, they drove a soldier out of the canteen, they would inevitably drive him to the endless number of public-houses which infested camps and military stations. The real remedy of the evil of excessive drinking in the Army was that the magistrates who had the issuing of licences should restrict the number of public-houses in the neighbourhood of large camps. That would assuredly have the effect the hon. Member for Scarborough had so much at heart. In India there was a very common conviction that spirit drinking and the issuing of the rum ratio was deleterious in the extreme to the health of the soldier. But at home, on account of the good regulations in force in respect to the canteens, it was hardly possible for men to get drunk in those establishments; and the shutting up of the canteens would simply result in the soldier being driven to the public-house, where he would get drunk unknown to the authorities. The evil of drunkenness would increase rather than diminish; and he, therefore, hoped the Committee would refuse the Motion now before them.

Colonel STANLEY said, he had not the advantage of being present during the early part of the discussion; but after reading the mere terms of the Motion on the Paper, and after hearing from his hon. Friends around him an account of what had taken place, he was bound to join with those who wished to offer an opposition to the insertion of the clause. He did so, not because he was less anxious for temperance than even the hon. Member for Scarborough himself, but simply on the grounds he had already heard stated by the hon. and gallant Gentleman (Captain Heron-Maxwell) and by others—namely, that if they prohibited the sale of intoxicating liquor in the canteens they would drive the men outside where they would get liquor of an inferior description, and in quantities totally unstinted. He did not believe the bounds of reasonable drinking were at all exceeded in canteens. He was a member of the Canteen Board, and he spoke from personal observation when he said that when the canteens were taken over from the canteen keepers, for the benefit of the soldiers, they were very well regulated and looked after, and drinking was reduced to a minimum. Furthermore, he could not help feeling that if they were to get, as they hoped they would now get, a better class of men in the Service they would not do so by restrictive measures of this sort. He was glad there was one common ground on which the hon. Member for Scarborough and himself could meet, and that was in the promotion of the new movement which he hoped would gain ground every day, that of the Army Coffee Taverns. He trusted that in the persons of the hon. Member for Scarborough, and those who thought and acted with him, they might find supporters of that movement; and he felt persuaded they would do more, by engaging in a work of that kind, to promote temperance in the Service than by coming to the House with a Motion of the description now on the Paper. He wished to enter his very earnest protest against soldiers being understood to be the most drunken class of men in existence. That was an entire mistake. He did not mean to contend for a moment that there was not too much intemperance in the Army; but it must be borne in mind that when hon. Gentlemen read the lists of punishment and the general Returns connected with the Army they read of cases of drunkenness in men who were under observation at all hours of the day and night. The soldier, from his very uniform, was conspicuous; and he (Colonel Stanley) was afraid there was not always a friendly feeling towards him on the part of the general public, but that they were always ready to notice in him the slightest shortcoming. He was glad to believe there was not more drunkenness existing in the ranks of the Army than there was in the corresponding branches of civil life. He would be pardoned for entering his protest against the character usually given to our soldier. It was very easy to give a soldier a bad name; but it was very difficult for a man to retrieve his reputation when he had once, whether rightly or wrongly, lost it. He felt hon. Gentlemen would best advance the social position of the soldier, if, instead of giving him a bad name, they would assist him in getting a better one.

Colonel COLTHURST did not think the object the hon. Member for Scarborough had in view would be attained by closing the canteens. Drunkenness in the Army had diminished very sensibly since the Government took over the canteens. This very action had tended to discourage drinking, not only at home, but in the Colonies, and for the simple reason that the men now got in the canteens a good description of liquor at the lowest price. The drink sold outside barracks, both at home and in the Colonies, was very bad; and, in his opinion, it would be a great improvement if spirits were sold in canteens. There were some men who wished to drink spirits, and if they were supplied in the canteens they would be of good quality. He hoped the Committee would not accept the Motion.

Mr. A. M. SULLIVAN said, it was cheering to him, and it must be cheering to the country, to know that both the present and late Ministers for War were entirely at one in a sincere desire to assist the soldier who was willing to assist himself in pursuing a policy of sobriety. He did not believe any one of them had the well-being of the individual members of the Army more at heart than the Secretary of State for War himself. The only difference between the hon. Member for Scarborough and the War Office authorities was as to the mode of attaining the desired end. Perhaps he might be allowed to point out what struck him as an unconscious inconsistency in his friends. Either the position of the hon. Member (Mr. Caine) was untenable, or he was right. The soldier ought to have good drink in the canteens, because if he could not get it there he would go to the public-house. They ought to give him brandy and whisky as well as other liquor. If the soldier wanted good and honest liquor, but it was not provided for him in the canteen, it was agreed that he would be compelled to go out of the barracks, where he would get what his hon. Friend the Member for Limerick (Mr. O'Sullivan) called "silent spirit," but which, in reality, was a spirit which made him very noisy. That struck him, and others, as inconsistent and illogical in the present position. He appealed to the War Office to consider that the step they had already taken, such as it was, in the direction of his hon. Friend's position, had been attended with great benefit. They had struck out the more ardent spirits, and since the military authorities took over the canteens and placed them under their own regulations there had been good order prevailing in the barracks. His hon. Friend considered that if they would take the remaining half-step they would go the whole way, and make the canteens army coffee taverns. Then, at all events, the soldier would not be in a position to turn round to his court martial, and say—"You train me to the appetite within the barrack gates, and upbraid me for the consequences." He admitted the men did not get drunk in the canteen; they commenced the drinking in the canteen, and, having taken the first two or three steps in drunkenness, they went out of the gates. He protested against throwing the blame on the public-house keepers, for they only finished the transaction. The first part of the operation was performed under the authority of the War Office, and the finishing touch was put upon the business by the unconscious and innocent publican over his counter. [*A laugh.*] He meant that it might happen that a soldier might have had several glasses of good beer in the canteen, and have gone to the public-house before the beer had produced any marks on his countenance; the publican would then innocently complete the wreck by supplying him with more drink. It was not for a moment supposed that there was any want of desire to help forward sobriety in the Army. He knew nothing connected with the Service better calculated to attract young men of good conduct than the abolition of flogging, and the establishment of reading rooms and the like, in the different barracks. The hon. Member for Scarborough simply asked them to take into account that they had done a great deal of good by prohibiting the sale of ardent spirits, but that they would do a great deal more good if they went still further.

MR. ILLINGWORTH thought the Committee owed a debt of gratitude to the hon. Member for Scarborough for having brought the question under the notice of the Committee. He had no doubt it was true that since the Government had undertaken the control of the canteens drunkenness in the Army had very greatly diminished. This, however, conclusively showed that if no intoxicants were supplied they would have everything they desired in making the British Army the model army of the world. But then they were told that if intoxicating liquors were suppressed in the canteens the soldiers must go outside and get worse drink. If that were so, it was only necessary to go a step further. They already punished a soldier for drunkenness, why should they not punish the publican for making him drunk? That was no new doctrine. It was the law of the land, and the only misfortune was that the law was never put in force. He hoped his hon. Friend would go to a division, because they were all interested in raising the character of the British Army. Every Member of the House must be concerned to hear the testimony about the desertions in the Army, the great percentage of crime, and the great outcry made about the relaxation of discipline, and the increase of mutinous spirit in the Army. The testimony produced by the hon. Member for Scarborough was to the effect that if there were no drink there would be no insubordination, but perfect discipline; and it appeared to him, therefore, that the duty of Parliament was clear—namely, to force on the War Office the necessity of introducing this system of suppressing intoxication and supplying non-intoxicants in the canteens instead of these dangerous things. If the hon. Member went to a division, he should be glad to support him; and other hon. Members, by supporting him, would be doing more to lessen the expenditure upon and increase the efficiency of the British Army than by any other step it was left to the British Parliament to take.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT did not think that the hon. Member who just sat down had shown that by introducing this clause in the Bill they would raise in the manner described the credit, and discipline, and honour of the British Army. The hon. Member was one of those who, like so many hon. Members who sat near him (Sir Walter B. Barttelot), wished to regulate by Act of Parliament, not only what people might drink, but also what they might eat. He had always believed that we in England were a free people, and should be allowed to do that which we thought to be in our best interests; but there were some people who seemed to think that we should be regulated in all we did by Act of Parliament. He admired those who could refrain from drinking ardent spirits or malt liquor, or anything else; but they must certainly give people credit for some little discretion, and allow them to do that which they considered for their own interest and benefit. There was not one of the hon. Members who had spoken but had shown that it had been a good thing to take away from the canteens the power of selling ardent spirits; but they had not proceeded beyond that one inch. They had not shown that by giving the soldier good beer in his own barracks they had not prevented him from going into the public-houses, which had been the curse and the abomination of the soldiers of the British Army. What he wanted to point out was that if the men wanted beer and porter, and could get it good in their own barracks, it was infinitely better for them to get it there than to have to go outside for it. Hon. Members must not tell him that if they did away with the canteens they were going to prevent soldiers from drinking in public-houses outside the barracks. Then, he wanted to know, what good would they do? They would take the men from those places where they got good liquor which did not make them drunk, and drive them to those places where they would get bad liquor which would make them drunk. The argument hon. Members used was absurd. He knew what their feelings were, and that they would like to make all the soldiers sober. If they could, well and good; but it was impossible to make them more sober by what they now proposed than they had been able to do before. They had all listened attentively to the statements that had been made, and he would venture to say that if they looked back to what the Army was 40, 30, 20, or even 10 years ago, with regard to drunkenness, and then at what it was now, they would find that a great improvement had taken place. If that was so, why not let well alone? They should not hurry the thing too much, for if they did they would bring about an outbreak far greater than anything they could attempt to remedy. [*Laughter.*] The hon. Member for Scarborough might laugh; but, although, no doubt, he had got up the question very well to-night, he practically knew little or nothing about it; and he (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) would inform him that if they stopped the sale of malt liquor at the canteens they would drive the men to public-houses outside; and it was because he wished to prevent men going outside, and getting worse liquor than inside, that he was for maintaining the canteens.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON thought his hon. and gallant Friend (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) must have an extraordinary idea of what "well" was when he said "Let well alone." They had a list of 22,000 soldiers in the British Army fined for getting drunk in one year. If that was the hon. and gallant Baronet's opinion of what was "well," he must say he could not endorse it. The hon. and gallant Baronet was a good old Constitutional politician — for here he was, staunch as ever, standing up for flogging and drinking in the Army. The hon. and gallant Baronet talked about the temptations outside the barracks, about the better conduct of the men inside, and so forth; and, no doubt, his argument would have a certain weight if they were discussing one of his (Sir Wilfrid Lawson's) Bills, which he wished to apply to the general public; but nobody knew better than the hon. and gallant Baronet that the soldier was in an exceptional position altogether. He was under masters— captains, colonels, and generals. He was looked after to a certain extent— regulations being made for him that would not be made for other people. Now, they had heard a great deal lately in these Army debates, and had read a deal in printed articles, about the importance of removing temptation out of the way of the soldiers. The Judge Advocate General himself had spoken about it; but he (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) did not in the least know what was going to be done. He had heard nothing in connection with this Mutiny Bill, nor in connection with any other Bill, about removing this temptation, which, they were told, did so much harm, out of the way of the soldier. The only person who proposed anything was the hon. Member for Scarborough; and because he proposed the clause he was said to be impracticable. Theoretically, they were all in favour of sobriety and everything else that was good, and they were all united in desire to advance any scheme that proposed to bring about sobriety. He would ask, then, was there ever a stronger case than that which had been brought forward by his hon. Friend to-night. The Judge Advocate had said—and he was not a man who exaggerated—that three-fourths of the crime in the Army was owing to drink, and they had evidence from the most competent authorities that drinking was a great cause of sickness in the Army, and the cause of the Army being more inefficient than it otherwise would be. Before the House was as full as it was now, they had had voluminous evidence tendered to them by his hon. Friend on his left, to the effect that all the principal generals agreed in saying that drinking in the Army was an alarming evil, and that our soldiers would be much more efficient in every way if the means of obtaining drink were kept from them. They talked of improvement in the Army; well, he was glad it was improving, and that in spite of the 22,000 fined for drunkenness, according to the Judge Advocate General, there were 25,000 teetotallers in the Army. [Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN: 25 per cent, I said.] That made the number still greater. If a fourth part of the Army were teetotallers, what awful drinkers the others must be; but, really, the principal argument used to-day was this—that if we did away with the canteens the men would go to the public-houses. Well, why should they not go to the public-houses? ["Hear, hear!"] An hon. Member said "Hear, hear!" but he (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) maintained that if the public-houses were good places, why should not the soldiers go to them? He hoped the next time he brought forward a Bill, endeavouring to get rid of public-houses, hon. Members, who were so horrified at soldiers going into these public-houses, would vote for it. They must remember that it was they who set up the public-houses, and not the soldiers. They licensed these traps where these men were caught; but he was glad to hear the argument that was advanced on the other side, because he was sure it would prove a very useful one. He had noticed over and over again, when these questions came up, hon. Members, who were opposed to his views, made use of arguments most useful to him. Sir Garnet Wolseley had said that intoxicating drink was bad for soldiers both before, during, and after a march—surely that meant that drinking was bad for them during the whole of their lives. But he had been told another thing. It had not been said openly in the House, but it had been said to him by a gallant soldier who was a Member of the House—"Why, if this clause of the hon. Member for Scarborough is carried, you will never get the men to enlist at all." That, he believed, was in the hearts of many hon. Members, though they did not like to say so. What a shameful and miserable idea it was—that they could not get men in the Army unless they did what was wrong. He was sure our soldiers would fight quite as well without this temptation. What happened the other day? Why, Sir Evelyn Wood was negotiating as to the terms of peace with the Boers—whom, we all agreed, made gallant soldiers—and, in the course of the proceedings, he offered them champagne. It was not accepted. "No," said the leader, "thank you; we came here not to drink, but to fight." And we knew they did fight, just as our own soldiers would fight without this temptation. When he (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) brought forward any Motion to shut up public-houses, in general he was always met with the compensation argument. It was said—"Compensation must be given to the people who keep these houses." But there was no question of compensation here. It was to nobody's interest to keep these places open, for canteens were Government property; indeed, it would be a saving to the Government, as well as a benefit to the men, if they were shut up; and he could not see why the Secretary of State for War should not be careful about the soldiers, and anxious as for their benefit, as the

Navy authorities were for the benefit of sailors. They knew what the naval authorities had done? During this very Session they had heard that they were going to cut off the spirit rations from the sailors, and give them other things in its place. ["No, no!"] Well, perhaps they were not going to cut off the spirits entirely, but only to a certain extent. The use of spirits would be very much restricted. ["No!"] At any rate, alternatives were to be given to the men. The Secretary to the Admiralty would correct him if he was wrong; but he believed they were going to take away all spirits from everyone under the age of 20; but why should they not extend the age to 40 or 60? If the Government looked sharp after the health and morality and efficiency of the Navy, why should they not do the same thing for the Army? He hoped the House would divide on the question, so that they might see who were the real friends of the soldiers, and who were they who only made speeches about them in the House.

MAJOR O'BEIRNE thought it would not conduce greatly to the discipline and good feeling of the Army to have one law for the soldiers and another for the officers, for the latter could have what they chose to drink in their mess. But there was another objection to the clause proposed — namely, that if it were adopted recruiting would simply come to a standstill. Everyone knew that our Army was drawn from the lowest classes of society in this country. It necessarily must be so, seeing that it was a voluntary Army. Well, the lowest classes of society were frequenters of public-houses; therefore, if the canteens were closed, an end would be put to recruiting.

MR. LABOUCHERE thought the hon. Baronet the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) was going against his own favourite principle in advocating this clause. The hon. Baronet had distinguished himself as the great advocate of local option; and, to be consistent, he should be ready to apply the principle of local option to the barracks—to allow every regiment to say whether they would have canteens or not. He did not see why the hon. Baronet should step forward and, without allowing the soldiers to vote upon the question, say "They shall not have liquor supplied to them in-doors."

SIR ALEXANDER GORDON said, he would go even further than the hon. Member who said they should have the same law for the officers as for the soldiers. He would say they should have the same law for the House of Commons as they had for the Army. If they were anxious to teach soldiers not to use intoxicating liquors they should exclude those liquors from the bar of their own Lobby. If they did that the soldiers would see that they were in earnest and were ready to set the Army a good example, and it would then be easier to shut up the canteens. If it could be shown that the sale of liquor in the canteen was under complete control, and was not abused, the House should not support the clause, which was, in his opinion, contrary to common sense.

MR. W. FOWLER could not accept the language of the hon. and gallant Member who had just sat down. As far as he was concerned, he should be delighted to see the sale of intoxicating liquors stopped at the bar, because he was one of those infatuated people who did not make use of such liquor. What did we want to give our soldiers these liquors for? Was it to make them stronger and more efficient? No; he apprehended that the real reason was because they thought the men liked it, and because they thought the men considered it pleasanter to get liquor at home than to be driven into the public-houses outside for it. This was not the only question they had to consider. They had to consider whether it was good for the soldiers to have liquor sold in the barracks. It could be shown that the system did a great deal of harm to the soldier, and the only argument he had heard used against the clause was that if they did not give the soldiers liquor in the canteen they would be driven outside to get it. That was what the hon. and gallant Member opposite (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) and others would say; but he would point out that the House was not responsible for that. The men were not bound to go outside, and would not if they had tea and coffee and that sort of thing provided inside. He admitted that the clause was an extreme one. It was a strong measure to say that intoxicating liquor should not be sold in the canteen; but it was desirable, if the men wanted it, that they should get it in places licensed by Parliament. He did not see any necessity for intoxicating liquor being sold in the canteen; and he, for one, would vote for the clause.

Mr. CHILDERS: I yield to no man, not even to my hon. Friend the Member for Scarborough (Mr. Caine) in my desire to do all I possibly can to promote the sobriety of soldiers. No one who knows anything of the records of intoxication in the Army and its effects on crime can have any other wish. But still I would repeat what has been said by others opposite to me and near me, that the consumption of intoxicants in the Army is steadily diminishing, and that, though there is still more to be done in the direction of promoting sobriety, the Army now is far more sober than it was 30 or 40 years ago. Therefore, from the evidence before us, it does not seem necessary to adopt such a drastic measure as that which the hon. Member for Scarborough proposes, when we see that without it sobriety has been steadily increasing. So much for the general principle. Will the Committee allow me for a moment to go to the particular proposal of my hon. Friend, which may be divided into two parts. One is that he wishes the spirit ration to the Army to be put a stop to in India; and the other s that he wishes the canteens elsewhere, in which spirits are not sold, but beer only, to be stopped altogether. The hon. Member quoted from the Reports of medical officers and others as to the state of the Indian Army; but I would remind him that the Mutiny Bill only refers to the Army in the United Kingdon and some of the Colonies. India is not referred to in it; and the adoption, therefore, of the clause would not interfere with the sale of spirits at canteens in India. I will say at once, however, on that point, that I will spare no pains to endeavour to discourage the issue of liquors to the soldiers in tropical countries. I firmly believe with those who have gone before me that the use of spirits by soldiers, particularly when it is possible for them to get malt liquor, ought to be discouraged as much as possible. That is the policy I shall endeavour to adopt, and that, I know, has the general approval of military authorities. Passing now to the proposed prohibition of the sale of malt liquor, I must protest against the doctrine laid down by some hon. Members that it is wrong to drink a glass of beer. ["Oh!"] Well, I have taken down the words of more than one hon. Member who has spoken in this debate, and I find that allowing beer to be sold in the canteens has been described as tempting men to do that which is "wrong." I protest against that doctrine altogether. There are some people —though I am not one of them—who have been accustomed to do without malt liquor, and others who have trained themselves to do without it; but I am bound to say, and I think I shall have the majority of the House with me, that a very large number of peeple indeed who have been accustomed to drink it are none the worse for it; and that, in moderation, it is the most wholesome and healthy of the national beverages of the country. To lay down the doctrine that to drink a glass of beer is to do something that is wrong is a piece of fanaticism with which the House, I am sure, will have no sympathy. Therefore, I say distinctly, whilst wishing to do what I can to put down, as far as it lays with me, the unnecessary use of spirits, that I will not be a party to the doctrine that the soldier is to be prevented from getting a glass of beer when he can get it good and wholesome, because the country, by allowing him to get it, is tempting him to take a first step in doing what is wrong. I do not think it is wrong for the soldier to drink a glass of beer; therefore I say that if the result of selling good beer in the canteen is to save the soldier from getting a worse description of drink outside we are doing not a wrong thing, but a good thing, in maintaining the canteen system. I cordially go with those who advocate the principle of giving the soldiers not only the opportunity, but every encouragement to drink coffee and cocoa. My right hon. and gallant Friend opposite (Colonel Stanley) has been good enough to say that he, when he was in Office, and that I am now doing all that is practicable to encourage the sale of good wholesome coffee and cocoa in the garrison towns. More than one society has been established for the purpose, and the right hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite and myself have done all we can to promote them. We must give the soldier inside the barrack-yard opportunities for obtaining good wholesome coffee and cocoa at a fair price, so that those who wish to have these beverages can have them instead of drinking beer; but I am not prepared to drive the soldier out of the canteen, where, at any rate, he gets wholesome beer, into the public-houses of a garrison town, where the associations are not always of the best, and where, certainly, the beer is not always of the best, and where he will be tempted into excesses of which there would be little or no danger in the canteen.

SIR ROBERT CUNLIFFE said, his hon. Friend (Mr. Caine) would admit that he (Sir Robert Cunliffe) was not indifferent to the subject of intemperance. He was very sorry he could not stand on the same ground as his hon. Friend on this question. So far as he could follow the hon. Member's remarks, the assumption upon which his speech was founded was, that by accepting his Motion they would be removing the temptation to drink from the path of the soldier. He (Sir Robert Cunliffe) differed from his hon. Friend. He maintained, and he believed the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War went to prove it, that if the soldier could not get wholesome liquor in the canteen he would go and get it somewhere else. The hon. Baronet the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) had alluded to the fact that 25 per cent of the Army were teetotallers, and had gone on to say what "awful drinkers the rest of the Army must be." But if his hon. Friend's proposition was right, and they drove these "awful drinkers" out of the canteens into low public-houses, how much worse they would become? The teetotallers did not want the canteens; but the "awful drinkers" would be better for drinking their beer there. Yet the hon. Member said—"You must not have it in the canteen; you must go outside for it." During the time he had been in the Service, he had had an opportunity—in Canada—of observing the result to the soldiers of their getting a bad description of liquor. He could appeal to several hon. Members to bear witness to the way in which the men suffered from the spirits sold in Montreal. The hon. Member for Scarborough seemed to assume that if his Motion was carried an immense deal would be done to put an end to drinking in the Army. That was an assumption he should be very glad to accept; but it seemed to him that the hon. Member had not given sufficient arguments in support of it. He thought his hon. Friend had not proved his case; but that he had only proved that if the liquors, which were believed to be in a large degree wholesome, were not bought in barracks they must be bought elsewhere. As the Motion stood, he must vote against it.

MR. RAMSAY regretted that he could not see his way to voting for the clause proposed by the hon. Member for Scarborough; but he observed that it consisted of two parts. In the first place, it proposed that the sale of intoxicating liquors in canteens should cease from the passing of the Act, and then it proposed that the supply of liquor on the march should be discontinued. He thought he could vote for the latter portion of the Motion, believing it to be well worthy of the consideration of the Committee whether it would not be advantageous to discontinue the supply of liquor on the march, and give money in lieu of liquor to the soldiers who were teetotallers, or who did not desire the liquor. It would be better to give them the chance of taking the value of the liquor than to force them to drink; and, if the hon. Member could confine his clause to the discontinuance of all supply of spirits on the march he should support the Motion.

MR. CAINE, replying, said, the Judge Advocate General and the Secretary of State for War had suggested that he claimed a monopoly in that House of a love of temperance. He did not claim any such monopoly, and he was quite sure that the right hon. Gentlemen were quite as anxious as he was for the sobriety of soldiers; but he did claim something of a monopoly in having proposed the right remedy. A great deal had been urged in favour of the canteen as against the public-house outside, and a great deal had been said of the good and cheap liquor at the canteens and of the bad liquor supplied at the public-houses; but no evidence had been adduced, or could be adduced, to show that there was any real difference between the liquor in the canteens and the public-houses. The beer, as a rule, in public-houses, whether large or small houses, was pretty much the same, and he had not found any adulteration in it, because it was difficult to tamper with beer. What he wanted to point out was that, under the present system, the soldier subscribed for liquor in the canteen, and when the sergeant in charge, thinking that he had had enough, refused to supply any more to him, the soldier then went elsewhere and got more to drink than was good for him. The sergeant would refuse him more drink because he showed signs of having been drinking; but, as the hon. and learned Member for Meath (Mr. A. M. Sullivan) had said, the publican outside was not to be blamed for supplying drink to a soldier, if he only showed slight signs of intoxication. He contended that the canteen gave the first impetus to drunkenness, which was completed elsewhere; and he hoped that before long the Government would do away with canteens, and, at any rate, not supply liquor themselves. Twenty-five per cent of the soldiers were teetotallers; but the existence of the canteens was a continual temptation to them. In the interests of those teetotallers in the Army who were trying to live sober lives, something ought to be done in the direction of removing temptation. The late Secretary of State for War had spoken of the coffee canteen, and suggested that he (Mr. Caine) and those who agreed with him might found coffee canteens. There were coffee canteens in the Army, and the number was increasing; but nearly all the coffee canteens in the Army had been started by teetotallers, in the same way that coffee palaces and cocoa-houses all over the country had been started by teetotallers. Something had been said in favour of the much abused soldier, as to his not being such a bad character as he was said to be; but it was also remarked that there was no very friendly feeling on the part of the public towards the soldier. We constantly heard of the soldier being refused admission to coffee palaces and places of entertainment, and he thought that the proprietors of those places ought to be compelled to treat soldiers in the same way as other people; but it could not be wondered that people shrank from soldiers when, as the House had been told, 23,000 soldiers were punished every year for drunkenness. In reference to an observation by the hon. and gallant Member for West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot), he did not base his argument entirely upon his own opinions; but on the opinions of experienced officers in the Army. Sir Garnet Wolseley, who had served in India, at the Cape, in Ashantee, and in the Red River country, had declared that, in his opinion, in each of those campaigns the soldiers were bettter without liquor than with it. In conclusion, he would only say that he had been exceedingly gratified by the sympathy of the Government, especially by the statement of the Secretary of State for War. It was because he felt sure of their sympathy, though not, perhaps, of their support, that he put his Amendment on the Paper. He should proceed to a division; and, in consequence of the strong opinion expressed that something should be done with regard to spirit rations on the march, he should, on Report, bring forward a clause, declaring that, from the passing of the Act, all supply of spirits on the march should be discontinued.

Major VAUGHAN LEE, as an old soldier, wished to defend the soldiers against the accusations of drunkenness; and said he doubted much if the hon. Member (Mr. Caine) himself would not like to have had a glass of rum if he was up to his knees in snow for the whole night. The soldier who got his liquor at the canteen paid ready money for it; and it would be very hard that a man who might be at drill from 6 in the morning to 4 in the afternoon should not be allowed to get a glass of beer during the whole of that period. He had served Her Majesty in the Crimea, and he did not know where the soldiers would have been at night without their rations of rum.

Colonel STANLEY asked the Judge Advocate General whether he correctly understood him to say that 23,000 cases of drunkenness occurred every year in the Army?

Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN: 23,000 are fined for drunkenness.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 34; Noes 156: Majority 122.—(Div. List, No. 173.)

The CHAIRMAN: The next Clause proposed is in the name of the hon. and gallant Member for Kincardineshire (Sir George Balfour); but it is not possible to introduce that as a proviso in the Preamble as he proposes, and as a new clause, as it is outside the scope of the Bill.

Bill *reported;* as amended, to be considered upon *Monday* next.

MR. CHILDERS said, he proposed to take the Consideration on Monday next, as he had promised the Committee to confer with those he should desire to consult about the introduction of words limiting summary punishment to restraint and hard labour; and, if the words should be acceptable to the House, he hoped the Bill would be allowed to be read a third time on that day, as there would otherwise barely be time to get it passed before the Easter Recess. He would try to put the words on the Paper before Monday.

TEINDS (SCOTLAND) BILL.—[BILL 118.]

(*The Lord Advocate, Secretary Sir William Harcourt.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. M'LAREN), in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said: The subject of this measure for the improvement of the Law of Teinds or Tithes in Scotland is one of a somewhat technical character; and I shall not occupy very much the time of the House in explanation of its provisions. It is right that I should state, at the outset, that the subject has attracted a great deal of attention in Scotland; and this measure has been prepared at the request of a very influential committee, consisting of representative members from the various County Boards of Scotland, who had appointed a committee of their number to investigate the subject and make recommendations. The judicial procedure regarding tithes in Scotland is one of the most antiquated, barbarous, and cumbrous systems of judicial process that exists in any part of the civilized world. While every other part of our judicial system has been simplified and improved in conformity with modern requirements, this department touching upon Ecclesiastical Law, and relating to the rights of the Church, has been allowed to remain as it stood two centuries ago; its very nomenclature unintelligible to the community; its rules, those that existed at the time when a Court of 15 Judges, sitting with endless opportunities of reclamation and appeal against its own judgments, had its time chiefly occupied in deciding questions of form. The object of this measure is to introduce a simpler and more economical method of ascertaining and valuing the tithes of the country, and of apportioning the liability between the different landed proprietors affected by it. In order to explain the provisions of the Bill, it will be necessary to state, in a sentence or two, how the Common Law stands at the present time with reference to the liability of owners of tithes towards the clergyman. It is probably known to many Members of the House that there is a material difference between the position of the clergy of Scotland and those of England—that while in England tithes are mostly in the hands of the rectors, who own the property of the tithes subject to certain deductions, in Scotland the tithes are almost entirely in the hands of persons who, in the language of the English law, would be called lay impropriators, but who with us are called titulars. It is matter of history that after the Reformation the great mass of the tithes in Scotland were made over by grants from the Crown to influential landed proprietors, who made use of their influence to obtain these favours. They have been assigned and have passed into various hands. I am glad to say that a considerable part of the tithe property belongs to the Crown, and is administered by the Commissioners of Woods and Forests. A considerable portion belongs to the Universities and other corporations. Much of the tithes remains with the proprietors of the soil from which they are levied; but a large portion still belongs to the titulars, who have no connection whatever with the soil; but who have the right of drawing the tithes by virtue of their titles from estates to which they are strangers. The clergy, as a rule, are stipendiaries. They, under an Act of the Scottish Parliament, passed soon after the Reformation, were entitled to have competent stipends assigned to them as a charge upon the tithes in whose hands soever these might be found. In modern practice every clergyman was entitled once in 20 years to come into Court and ask for an augmentation or increase of his stipend; and there ensued a general litigation among all the heritors and landed proprietors of the parish to ascertain who were primarily liable, and to what amount, and whether the tithes were valued or not. Now, if the system that was devised after the Reformation had been carried out, this costly and troublesome process recurring at frequent intervals would have had no place in our judicial system. In the time of King Charles II. two successive Commissions were appointed, with powers to value all the teinds in Scotland, and to ascertain the liabilities of persons entitled to them. Unfortunately, a considerable part of the records of the valuation of these Commissions was destroyed by fire; another portion of them was removed to England, and lost at sea in the transit; and, by various accidents, the result is that only a part—though, undoubtedly, a considerable part—of the official valuations of the tithes of the country which were thus valued remain extant in the records of our Register House. The result is that whenever a minister has obtained an increase of stipend he has to call all the landed proprietors of the parish into Court. A common agent was then appointed to attend to the interests of the proprietors collectively; and every man appointed his own solicitor to look after his individual interests; and litigations went on that lasted for 5, 10, or even 20 years, sometimes becoming dormant and being revived again, and it not unfrequently happened that the cost of the ascertainment of the liability amounted to more than all the benefit the clergyman obtained by his application. This state of things has given rise to a great deal of feeling on the part of landed proprietors, and last year a Committee of the Commissioners of Supply or County Boards was appointed to draw up a scheme, and they requested the Government to give effect to it by bringing a Bill into this House. The provisions of the Bill, which have been adjusted after consideration with persons of great experience and practice in this branch of law, I shall shortly explain to the House. It appears to me that, instead of treating this branch of legal practice as a subject of litigation, it ought to be regarded as an administrative proceeding to be regulated by Commission; but, inasmuch as the questions that are likely to arise and to engage the attention of the Commission are of a legal character, it is desirable that the person who undertakes the settlement of these questions should be a lawyer of the highest reputation, and one who would command the confidence of the country. It is proposed that one of the Judges of the Superior Court should be appointed Judicial Commissioner for making up the roll of tithes in the various parishes. It is provided that he should begin with those in which the tithes have been already to a certain extent valued, beginning with the more recent cases and advancing to the more difficult; that he should make up a draft roll, and should then advertise a day on which he will proceed to hear all objections to that roll, and to declare it final with regard to the parish. Power is given, in case of any question arising of importance or difficulty, for granting an appeal to a Division of the Court of Session. I shall not trouble the House by explaining or enumerating the different matters which are to be embodied in a tabular form in the roll of the tithes, and which are to become the basis of future assessments for ministers' stipends. There is one other matter which requires attention. It had been the practice hitherto to allocate stipends of ministers in grain. He got so many bolls, firlots, and other ancient denominations, and measures of wheat, barley, oats, and beans; and after these had been carefully calculated and reduced to a tabular form they were converted back to money, and the clergyman was actually paid his stipend in money. We have thought it desirable that this antiquated process should cease, and that all stipends should be allocated in the current coin of the Realm upon an average of years preceding the making of the application. No change has been made with reference to the rights either of the minister or the rights of the proprietors. The right of the minister to apply to the Court for an increase of his stipend is preserved; but some improvement is made in the course of procedure, and the rights of the proprietors to the reversionary interest in the tithes are also preserved. The only change is in their mode of ascertainment. I am very hopeful that this measure will be favourably received by the landed proprietors of Scotland, because it is based on their own recommendations, and has met with the approval of some of the most eminent Judges and authorities on this branch of the law. I shall, therefore, as the subject is one which in its own nature cannot be familiar to many Members of this House, and which I must ask them, therefore, to take to some extent on trust, venture to ask the House to give a favourable consideration to the Bill. I know there are some hon. Members who desire not to be committed to the second reading of the Bill; and if an adjournment is proposed, I have no objection that some time should be given for consideration, and the second reading deferred till after Easter. I have been desirous to make this statement of the objects of the measure, and also to explain what objects are not contemplated by the Bill, in order that at the meetings of the county proprietors, which will be held in the ensuing month, they may have before them the views of the Government with reference to a subject in which they are much interested. I venture to hope that if the House will consent to pass this Bill a subject which has given rise to a great deal of heart-burning between the clergy and the proprietors may be simplified, and that the interests of the Church and the people, which in this matter are not in conflict, may, in some degree, be promoted by the reforms proposed.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*The Lord Advocate.*)

MR. DICK-PEDDIE had heard the statement of the Lord Advocate with great satisfaction that he was willing that the Bill should be allowed to stand over. The Bill was very technical, and dealt with a law of a very complex nature, and one not very well understood even by most lawyers. The Lord Advocate had had no opportunity of making a statement on the first reading, and the statement he had made that night was well worth consideration. He believed it would be satisfactory, not only to the Scotch Members, but to the Scotch community, that time should be given to consider that statement; and, therefore, he moved the adjournment of the debate.

MR. RAMSAY seconded the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned." —(*Mr. Dick-Peddie.*)

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, the main result of the Bill, apart from improving the mode of procedure, would be to compel every landlord to value his teinds at once. As all Scotch landlords were aware, it had been possible for them to value their teinds at any time they might select during the past 200 years. Those who valued them 200 years ago were now liable for a very small fee for the support of the clergy, while other landlords who had not done so were liable up to a fifth of the gross rental. If the proposition of the Lord Advocate were carried into effect all those landlords who had not had their teinds valued must value them at once on the year 1880-1. No Scotch landlord would think of valuing his teinds at this moment, because rents in Scotland were not rising, but falling. The consequence of that might be that in certain estates where the teinds had not been valued the landlord might at some future time be in considerable difficulty. That was a consideration which he should like to bring under the notice of the Lord Advocate, because the Bill might have the effect of doing a practical injustice in some few cases.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. M'LAREN) thought it was rather for the advantages of the proprietor that his teinds should be valued when rents were low, because his object was that teinds to be charged on the estates should be as low as possible.

MR. ORR EWING said, he never knew such a course proposed as to delay a Bill when there was plenty of time for its discussion. The Lord Advocate seemingly had been informed by some hon. Members that the Bill was not agreeable to parties not belonging to Scotland, but to England; and he was prepared, by acquiescing in that dissatisfaction, to give them an opportunity of opposing the Bill. He thought the Bill a very important one. It had no reference to establishment or disestablishment. It was simply meant to get over a cumbrous and antiquated and expensive law. He thought the Lord Advocate would have shown more the spirit of a Scotch Representative if he had opposed this action. The opponents of the Bill would have an opportunity of expressing their views upon it in going into Committee.

MR. DALRYMPLE joined with his hon. Friend who had just sat down in his representations on this subject. The Lord Advocate had made his statement with such lucidity and clearness that it was perfectly possible for anyone, even although perfectly uninformed on the subject, to follow the purpose of the Bill. It had been stated that the Bill was introduced at the instigation of the landed proprietors. Of that fact he was well aware before; but the Lord Advocate, having made that statement, followed it up by saying that the Bill should be discussed by the proprietors. Well, if the Bill was so introduced, what was the use of referring it to the landed proprietors? There was a little more in this than appeared. Along with his hon. Friend he joined in expressing astonishment that the Government should not take the opportunity of getting the second reading of a Bill which they judged to be of importance, and on which there could not be very much debate, partly owing to the Lord Advocate having said all that could be said on the subject, and partly that so many hon. Members were thoroughly ignorant of the subject.

Mr. O'DONNELL suggested that the hon. Member should withdraw the Motion for adjournment.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS expressed his surprise that the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate, after having moved the second reading of the Bill, should have consented to the adjournment of the debate. He thought the present was a most appropriate opportunity for discussing the measure. He wished, however, to draw the attention of Mr. Speaker to the fact that at the head of the Bill, as circulated to hon. Members, there was a statement or a summary of the objects of the measure drawn up on the authority of those who had introduced it. He thought that such a practice was a dangerous one, and that if such a statement was to be drawn up at all it ought to be done by an entirely independent authority. He should like the right hon. Gentleman in the Chair to give the House his views on the subject.

Mr. SPEAKER: As the right hon. Gentleman has called my attention to the statement of objects contained at the head of this Bill, I am bound to say, while not expressing any opinion upon the particular statement with reference to this Bill, that I think the practice referred to is one which is open to abuse. My attention having been called to the matter, I can only say at present that I will look into it and see what course it would be best for the House to pursue. No doubt, to a certain extent, some convenience may result from the practice of accompanying a Bill by such a statement; but, at the same time, I feel the force of the observation made by the right hon. Gentleman that if a statement of this kind is desirable it should be drawn up by some independent authority.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: There seems to be a general feeling, on both sides of the House, that the Bill should be proceeded with. I hope, under these circumstances, that my hon. Friend the Member for Kilmarnock (Mr. Dick-Peddie) will not persist with the Motion he has made for the adjournment of the debate, and that, as time is precious, he will allow the Bill to be proceeded with.

Sir ALEXANDER GORDON said, he rose to express his surprise at the Motion which had been made for the adjournment of the debate. There was a general complaint among the Scotch Members that no time could be obtained for the consideration of Scotch Business. They had now on the Notice Paper two Scotch Bills; and having put one off until after Easter, now that the other was brought on at a reasonable hour, the hon. Member for Kilmarnock proposed to adjourn the debate, but did not bring forward a single argument in favour of adjournment. The Bill, so far as he could judge, was admirably suited to the object the Lord Advocate had in view, and they ought to feel obliged to him for having brought it on at so early an hour, so that it might be sent down to Scotland and discussed by the various Committees in the Recess, just as easily after the second reading as before. He therefore trusted that the Motion for the adjournment of the debate would be withdrawn, and that the House would read the Bill a second time, as he imagined there could be no opposition to it whatever.

Mr. DICK-PEDDIE said, that as the feeling of the House on both sides seemed to be strongly against the adjournment of the debate, he should not feel it right to press the Motion. He had moved the adjournment because he thought the statement of the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate was one that required careful consideration before they proceeded to discuss the Bill. In withdrawing the Motion he had made, he would only say that the hon. and gallant Member for East Aberdeenshire (Sir Alexander Gordon), in stating that he had given no reason for the Motion, was mistaken. He had said that the Bill was of a technical and complicated nature; and seeing that no statement was made by the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate on introducing it, but that this was the first explanation that had been offered, he thought an opportunity should be afforded for considering the nature of its provisions. In withdrawing the Motion for the adjournment of the debate, he wished it to be understood that he reserved to himself the right of taking what action he might think proper at a later stage of the measure.

Mr. RAMSAY merely wished to say that he was not surprised at the course pursued by the Lord Advocate. [" Hear, hear!"] An hon. Member opposite said " Hear, hear!" assuming, of course, that he (Mr. Ramsay) was opposed to the Bill. It was not at all upon that ground that he made this remark; but because the right hon. and learned Gentleman, in answering a Question of his early in the evening, indicated that he intended to take this course, and had promised, after moving the second reading of the Bill, to adjourn the discussion upon the merits of the Bill. His (Mr. Ramsay's) reason for assenting to the proposal was not that he had any doubt as to the principle of the measure, but because he felt it was due to those at whose instance the Bill was drawn up that the Lord Advocate should take that course, in order that those who had the greatest interest in the Bill in Scotland—the landed proprietors — should have an opportunity of judging for themselves whether the principles which they had submitted to the Lord Advocate were fairly and fully embodied in the Bill. What he had felt was, that when they were called upon to vote for the second reading of the Bill, and to express, by so doing, their approval of its principles, that it was necessary that it should be fully understood by those at whose instance it had been introduced. The hon. Member for Dumbarton (Mr. Orr Ewing) had alluded to the course pursued by the Liberation Society of England. He (Mr. Ramsay) had never heard of such a resolution as that which had been referred to; and he had no more idea of it, in seconding the Motion for adjournment, than if it had never occurred. The truth was, he had felt the remark made by the Lord Advocate, in answering the Question which he put to the right hon. and learned Gentleman in the afternoon, might have been the means of inducing some of the Scotch Members who were then present to have left the House without waiting to hear the discussion. He felt, further, that the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate was fully justified in the course he proposed to take. He was quite sure that if the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir R. Assheton Cross), who had brought under the notice of the Chair the statement which appeared at the head of the Bill, had heard the answer which had been given to his (Mr. Ramsay's) Question, he would have felt there was no ground for surprise at the course the Lord Advocate had taken in assenting to the Motion for the adjournment of the debate.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR wished to put a question to the Solicitor General for Scotland. He wanted to know if it was intended to compel any landlord whose rents were falling now, and likely to fall, to have his teinds valued on the rents of 1880-1? That would not be so under the law as it stood; and he wished to know if the landlord would be compelled to accept that valuation under the present Bill, or whether any provision would be inserted in the measure to prevent injustice being done?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for SCOTLAND (Mr. J. B. Balfour) stated, in reply, that if the Bill became law it would necessarily deal with all the teinds of Scotland for as long a period as might be found requisite for the purpose in view; but, certainly, provision would be made that the real value of the land at the time would be the basis. Of course, all teinds would be valued if the Bill passed.

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Thursday* next.

ALKALI, &c. WORKS REGULATION BILL.—[*Lords*]—[Bill 119.]

(*Mr. Dodson.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Dodson.*)

Mr. OTWAY said, he had not been aware that at that hour of the night it was the intention of the Government to proceed with this Bill. It contained very important clauses, which materially affected the interests of persons who had invested large capital in cement works on the Medway. The proprietors of these works were already under considerable disadvantages in the competition they had to meet from foreign makers of cement; and if they were to be saddled with all the restrictive provisions of the present Bill they would be placed under still greater disadvantages, and the particular industry they carried on would be almost entirely destroyed. He regretted very much that his right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Dodson) had not paid more consideration to the position of these persons, and the large amount of capital they had invested in this industry. He (Mr. Otway) did not intend to oppose the second reading of this Bill; but he hoped his right hon. Friend would consider the circumstances to which he had referred, and that when the Bill went into Committee some provisions would be introduced to except the manufacturers of cement, which was a perfectly harmless manufacture, having no sanitary disadvantages attached to it, from the restrictions which it was proposed by the Bill to impose upon other manufacturing works. He trusted that his right hon. Friend would bear in mind the observations he now made, because an injurious interference by legislation of this kind with an important industry was really no light matter; and, certainly, if the Bill were passed in its present form, it would have that effect.

Mr. Alderman LAWRENCE wished to urge upon the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board the same arguments in reference to the cement works on the Thames which had been used by his hon. Friend the Member for Rochester (Mr. Otway) in the case of the cement works on the Medway. These works were threatened with interference, not only by the present Bill, but by another measure. In point of fact, there were two Bills hanging over the heads of the cement manufacturers for the destruction of their interests. It was, however, admitted, he believed, by those who supported the Bill in regard to alkali works that cement works were not of the same deleterious character. Objection might be made to the smoke and the vapour; but, on sanitary grounds, the same objections which applied to alkali works could not be sustained. He would therefore urge upon his right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board the necessity of fully considering that what was suitable and proper in the case of alkali works might be altogether unsuited for cement works.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER was sorry that the Bill had been brought on at so late an hour of the night (12.15), when his hon. Friend opposite, the hon. Baronet the Member for Gravesend (Sir Sydney Waterlow), who had a Motion on the Paper to refer the Bill to a Select Committee, was not in his place. It was unfortunate, under all the circumstances, that the Bill was brought on, for he happened to know that it attracted a good deal of attention. He had himself received several letters in regard to it; and it was, therefore, to be regretted that it should be brought on at an hour of the night when hon. Members who were interested in the matter were absent. As it was highly inconvenient to discuss it in their absence, he begged to move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. R. N. Fowler.*)

Mr. DODSON: I hope that the hon. Gentleman will not press the Motion. This Bill is a Bill which is, in the main, a Bill to consolidate, and to a slight extent to amend, the existing law relating to alkali works, and, speaking generally, the Amendments which are proposed by it, are accepted by the alkali manufacturers. The extensions of the present law, proposed in the Bill are extensions which are founded on the Report of a Royal Commission, which reported on the subject some time ago. It is essentially a Bill of detail, and one which can only be fairly considered in Committee. When it gets into Committee, my hon. Friend the Member for Rochester (Mr. Otway), and my hon. Friend behind me (Mr. Alderman Lawrence), can both be heard in reference to the question of cement works; and, without making any distinct pledge upon the subject, I can assure my hon. Friends that I shall be perfectly ready to pay attention to any objections they may have to make on the subject. I will only add that if the House will now agree, as I trust it will have no objection to do, to the second reading of the Bill, taking into consideration the nature of the provisions of the measure, I do not intend to take the Committee upon it until after the Easter holidays.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: I hope my hon. Friend behind me (Mr. R. N. Fowler) will not press his Motion. I am sure the hon. Members who object to the provisions of the Bill could never have lived in a place where alkali works are carried on. Her Majesty's Government have not brought in the measure without full consideration. The question has been carefully discussed, not only by a Committee of the House of Lords, but by a Royal Commission; and I believe that the proprietors of alkali works are perfectly satisfied with the provisions of the Bill. It would be a positive injustice to the whole country if the Bill were not proceeded with. I hope the Motion will be withdrawn. The hon. Member who has given Notice of a Motion in reference to the Bill ought to be here to move it. If he is not in his place, it is no reason why the Bill should be postponed.

EARL PERCY remarked that, as a Member of the Royal Commission which had inquired into the matter, he sincerely hoped the Bill would be allowed to proceed. It was a Bill of an important nature, as far as its provisions went, and the provisions themselves were of a very moderate character. On several previous occasions, in other years, a Bill for this purpose had been laid before the House. In the last two years a Bill had been introduced by the late Government, which went a good deal further than the present measure; and he thought it would be extremely unfortunate if such a moderate measure of reform as that which was now proposed were not to be adopted. They were constantly hearing of the difficulties which private Members experienced in bringing measures forward; but he could not see that the Government had any further facilities than private Members for bringing forward measures that were not of general and widespread interest. The present Bill was not of general interest, because there were not many parts of the country that were much affected by the operation of alkali works. He could, however, assure the House, from the knowledge and experience he had gained by serving on the Commission, that the provisions of the Bill could not be seriously objected to, even by those who were acting most in the interests of the manufacturers. It would really injure no interest, and would be of the greatest advantage to many of those who were now suffering from the nuisances the Bill sought to remove. He trusted the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board would persevere with the second reading of the Bill, and that some real progress would be made this Session in removing this nuisance.

MR. R. N. FOWLER said, in view of the feeling which appeared to prevail in the House, and the appeal of his right hon. Friend (Sir R. Assheton Cross), he was willing to withdraw his Motion.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Monday* 25th April.

RIVERS CONSERVANCY AND FLOODS PREVENTION BILL.—[*Lords.*]

(*Mr. Dodson.*)

[BILL 120.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. DODSON said, he had to ask the House to read the Bill a second time. A Bill had been founded originally on the Report of a Select Committee of the House of Lords, and had been introduced into that House on behalf of the late Government by the Duke of Richmond. The Bill, however, on coming down to the House of Commons, did not pass, the Session being far advanced The Bill now before the House, like that introduced by the Duke of Richmond, was founded on the Report of the Committee of the House of Lords. It was introduced by the present Government in that House, and was referred to a Select Committee, by whom its clauses had been discussed and considered. The measure was essentially one of detail; and, after it had been read a second time, he should ask the House to refer it to a Select Committee upstairs to go through its clauses. That appeared to him to be the best way of dealing with a subject of the kind. Without detaining the House at length, he would simply point out that this was an Enabling Bill. It recognized the fact that our rivers were so different in their character that it was impossible to lay down a hard-and-fast line for their improvement; and it therefore enabled localities to obtain a Conservancy Board, adapted in each case to the circumstances of their position. His hon. Friend the Member for Bedford (Mr. Magniac) had also introduced a Bill upon the same subject, which was one to which he was known to have devoted great attention, and read a second time. He trusted to have the assistance of his hon. Friend upon the Select Committee, and there might be found proposals in his measure which could with advantage be incorporated with the present Bill. Reminding the House that after it had been referred to a Select Committee there would be opportunity for going fully through the clauses in Committee of the Whole House, he asked the House to agree to the second reading.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Dodson.*)

Mr. A. H. BROWN pointed out that throughout the country very great confusion existed as to the areas of jurisdiction and authority of River Boards. He was perfectly aware that a great difficulty would be found in endeavouring to consolidate a great many existing powers; but the suggestion he had to make presented the least possible difficulty. There were at that time many River Boards throughout the country, specially charged with certain duties in connection with the fisheries of their respective rivers. They had powers relating to the preservation of those fisheries; and, in certain cases, to the removal of river obstructions. The Bill before the House would therefore create, in some cases, a double jurisdiction by the constitution of new Boards. Thus, one authority being constituted for the purpose of diminishing floods, and the other for the purpose of maintaining the fisheries, it required very few words to show that they would shortly come into conflict with each other upon the question of what ought to be done on particular rivers. The alterations in connection with rivers necessary for the purpose of mitigating floods must, in some cases, undoubtedly injure the fisheries. Therefore, he thought that the same authority which was charged with the prevention of floods should also be charged with the settlement of questions relating to the fisheries. He could see no reason why the Boards, which it was proposed to create under this Act, should not undertake the whole of the duties in connection with the Salmon Acts, and he considered the present time a favourable opportunity for carrying that plan into effect. He pressed it upon the House particularly, because he noticed that there had been a Bill introduced in the present Session to consolidate and regulate the Salmon Laws. The convenience of the House would, he thought, be consulted by his not moving at that hour the Motion upon this subject standing in his name. He should, however, move it as an Instruction on going into Committee on the Bill.

Mr. CHAPLIN reminded the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board that, notwithstanding he had described this as an Enabling Bill merely, it dealt with a very important subject, and with interests of enormous magnitude. Under the circumstances, he did not think that it should be read a second time at that late hour without any discussion whatever. He should, therefore, move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Chaplin.*)

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, his constituents had suffered greatly from floods during recent years. The Bill was of enormous importance to the country, and he trusted the right hon. Gentleman would persevere in his Motion that it be now read a second time.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT regretted that his right hon. Friend had not made a more complete and intelligible statement with regard to the Bill, which was the most important of any that had as yet been placed before Parliament. The measure was of enormous importance to the owners and occupiers of land; but the right hon. Gentleman had made no statement as to what was contained within its four corners. It was a Bill that had never been discussed by the House upon its merits, and no opportunity had been given for discussing what might and ought to be its provisions. He agreed with the hon. Member for Salford that there was a crying evil to be dealt with, for he had had meadows of his own 23 times under water during the year 1879; he was afraid to say how many times that had been the case last year. During the whole of the time the meadows had been worth nothing. He said it was impossible to deal with a question of such importance at that hour (12.30). If the Bill had been reached an hour or two sooner, and the right hon. Gentleman had made a clearer statement showing the scope of the measure, there would have been some justification for reading it a second time. The right hon. Gentleman should have stated to the House in what manner he meant to deal with canals, mills, weirs, and other obstructions which now existed. There could be no doubt that great power was required to be placed in the hands of Conservators, for the purpose of controlling the great body of water which came down in the time of floods; and he thought it would have been to the interest of the whole of the localities concerned that some statement should have been made. He felt certain his right hon. Friend would agree with him that it was of importance to have a statement from a Minister in charge of a Bill, setting forth what he intended to do, and how far he intended to go. The right hon. Gentleman had merely stated that the Bill was to be referred to a Select Committee; but it would, in his opinion, have been wiser if he had stated what its provisions were.

Mr. MAGNIAC suggested that it would be for the convenience of the House that the Bill should go to the Select Committee, and then come before the House in the form in which it was intended to be discussed in Committee. His own Bill might be incorporated with this measure and form a single Bill; and, therefore, the course he proposed would, he thought, add to the efficiency of the measure. He hoped the second reading would not be opposed.

Mr. PELL trusted the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill would consent to the adjournment of the debate. The magnitude of the interests involved rendered it impossible to discuss the measure with advantage at that hour. Of course, he was aware that hon. Members were bound to be in their places; still he believed there were many who had not anticipated that the Bill would come on for discussion that evening. He reminded the House that the time of Parliament had been occupied hour after hour, on former occasions, in discussing the very converse of the present question—namely, the storage of water. It had not long ago been the complaint that there was not enough water in the country. Since then, however, there had been three or four exceedingly wet seasons, and great floods had resulted. In his opinion, it would be well to defer the consideration of the Bill until a few months of fine weather had removed the impression which had been produced by the recent downfalls of water. The Bill proposed to do what had never been done by any Act of Parliament—that was to say, to tax people who were not benefited for works constructed exclusively for the benefit of others. There was a paragraph in the Report of the Committee who had considered this question to this effect—

> "With regard to the measures which have been adopted, of raising rates to meet the expense of conservancy, the Committee find there is much variance of opinion. The principle introduced by the Statute of Henry the Eighth, and observed ever since, of taxing in proportion to the benefit conferred, appears to work unfairly, and to be incapable of application in this case."

The Bill embodied a principle which had never been adopted in England before; and therefore the present hour—20 minutes to 1 o'clock in the morning—was not a suitable one at which to introduce it. If the Government really wished the Bill to pass, they would be acting wisely if they consented to the Motion for the adjournment of the debate, to admit of the Bill being thoroughly debated, as Bills of this nature were debated, upon second reading. The present measure involved questions of the utmost moment. They had not heard from the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Dodson) any statement as to how far it would be in the power of the sanitary authority of a rural Union at the head or outfall of a river to incur enormous expenses under the Bill and charge them upon the Union rates. It was a dangerous Bill, and it was not proper that it should be pressed at that time of night. He trusted the Government would consent to the adjournment of the debate, in order that they might have a fuller statement. He appealed to the right hon. Gentleman, in fairness and justice to the large interests involved —not only in respect to the undrained and flooded lands, but to the great districts of the country, some of which Mr. Speaker represented, the great level of the Fens —to allow the merits of the Bill to be considered at a proper and convenient time.

Mr. HIBBERT said, he could assure the House that, under ordinary circumstances, his right hon. Friend would never have thought of pressing the Bill to a second reading at so late an hour; but they were told by him, and it was well known, that it was intended to refer the Bill to a Select Committee, and upon that very ground they might fairly ask the House to agree to the second reading. The whole of the discussion on the second reading might be thrown away, on account of the alteration which it was possible might be made by the Committee upstairs; and when they considered the great importance of the subject, and how pressing a measure of this nature was in every county in England, they would see that time would be saved if the House agreed to read the Bill a second time to-night, in order to allow it to be at once referred to a Select Committee. His right hon. Friend was quite willing to agree that the whole matter should be thoroughly discussed on the Motion for going into Committee. The principle of the Bill might be discussed much more advantageously when the measure had been considered upstairs; and he trusted, therefore, the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin), and other hon. Members who had supported the adjournment of the debate, would now agree to the second reading. If they took the second reading now, and thus enabled the Committee to commence its sittings immediately after the Easter Recess, they would do great service to the country. As to the question of the storage of water, he ought to say that when the Bill was introduced in the House of Lords it contained a provision upon the subject. The clause had been struck out by the House of Lords; but it was competent for this House, if it thought proper, to restore the clause. He trusted that, upon the assurance of the right hon. Gentleman that the discussion upon the whole principle of the Bill should take place at a later stage, the House would now consent to the second reading. His right hon. Friend suggested that, a few weeks ago, the Bill of the hon. Member for Bedford (Mr. Magniac), which was of a very similar nature, was allowed to pass a second reading without discussion, on the understanding that it should be referred to a Select Committee. Considering the very strong feeling which existed in every part of the country in favour of some such measure as the present, no obstacle ought to be thrown in the way of the second reading.

Mr. GORST had never heard a more extraordinary argument in favour of the second reading of a Bill than that just advanced by the Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. Hibbert). It was time the House should put a stop to what appeared to be the principle upon which the legislation of the country was being conducted by Her Majesty's Government — namely, that of reading several Bills, emanating from the Ministerial side of the House, a second time, on the understanding that they were to undergo entire alteration in Committee upstairs. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Local Government Board deprecated any discussion on the second reading of this Bill as pure waste of time. It was a most unsound mode of conducting the legislation of the country to argue that any discussion which took place on the second reading of a Bill would be quite inapplicable to the Bill which would emerge from the Select Committee; but it was, nevertheless, a method which the Government had, during the present Session, shown an extraordinary leaning towards. Several Bills, upon which the Government had carefully avoided pronouncing any opinion, had been read a second time, with the view of having them materially altered by Select Committees. By this course of conduct he presumed the Government meant to please their supporters. It would be far better, and more in accordance with Constitutional practice, if an important measure of this kind underwent discussion on the second reading, because at this stage the views of the House as to the principle of the measure were elicited, and if it were afterwards referred to a Select Committee upstairs that Committee would have the views and opinions of the House of Commons to guide it in the particular way in which they would alter the measure. It was quite a new thing that Committees upstairs were to consider principles of measures; one always used to fancy that the principles were settled by the House of Commons, and that the details were settled by Committees. He should certainly support the Motion for the adjournment of the debate.

Mr. PUGH said, the Bill contained principles of very great importance. The creation of a new authority, empowered to levy new rates, and to carry out objects which had not hitherto been carried out by such a body, must be looked upon with great suspicion and jealousy; and they ought to be assured that the Bill was founded upon justice before agreeing to its second reading. The hon. Member for South Leicestershire (Mr. Pell) was correct in saying that a rate, such as that contemplated, had never been levied in England. If he had included Wales he would have been equally accurate. But the hon. Gentleman was not correct in saying that the principle had never been applied. Many years ago an Act was passed in respect to Cardiganshire, and it contained an exactly similar principle to the present. A defect, however, was discovered in the Bill, and no rate was ever raised under it. The present Bill was one which ought not to be read a second time without a full discussion; and he hoped the Government would consent to the adjournment.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 36; Noes 74: Majority 38.—(Div. List, No. 174.)

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR thought the policy of taking the second reading of an important Bill on the ground that it contained important provisions, which should be considered by a Select Committee, was a very dangerous one. Next on the Paper to this Bill was the River Floods Prevention Bill, which was read a second time some days ago on a similar representation. At the time that Bill was read a second time he had thought the system aws one fraught with danger, which should not be assented to, unless under very exceptional circumstances. At that hour of the night he would not detain the House any longer. It was only right that the measure should be brought before them at a more convenient hour; therefore, he would move the adjournment of the House.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. Arthur O'Connor.*)

Mr. DODSON: I regret that this Motion should be made, notwithstanding the expression of the opinion by the House that this Bill should now be read a second time. As regards the discussion of the measure, the Secretary to the Local Government Board has pointed out that there will be an opportunity for a debate on the Bill as a whole on the Motion for going into Committee. It would be a great saving of time, on a very important subject, if the House were allowed to refer it to a Select Committee, in order that its details may be considered. It is said—"This is an important Bill, and ought not to be read a second time without a full discussion." Well, no one denies that it is an important Bill; but what I wish to point out is, that it is only an Enabling Bill, to enable the localities to take the initiative and help themselves. It is not a Bill in which the House prescribes what shall be done in the case of any particular river; but it is one which enables the inhabitants of a locality, who wish to have adequate power to deal with a river running through that locality, to cause an inquiry to be made by an engineer and inspector of the Local Government Board. It enables them to submit to these officials their own proposals; and it gives the Local Government Board wide powers, after consulting with the inhabitants and considering their scheme, to embody that scheme in a Provisional Order to be submitted to Parliament, and referred to a Select Committee. The Order will have to pass through all the usual stages in

Parliament; therefore, as I have said, the measure is nothing but an enabling one; and, in order that its object may be carried out in such an elastic manner as to give the necessary facilities to the inhabitants of the different localities to obtain the powers they desire, it is requisite to introduce a considerable amount of detail. As it is a Bill of that character it is essential that it should be considered by a Select Committee. It will be more advantageously discussed by the House after the clauses have been considered; and I would, therefore, urge the House not to treat it as if it were a Bill imposing legislation on the localities. I must oppose the Motion for the adjournment, and express an earnest hope that hon. Members will assent to the second reading.

Mr. PELL said, that nothing could be more unsatisfactory than the proceedings now going forward in the House—namely, discussing such a Bill as this by driblets. He and many others agreed with the hon. Member (Mr. Arthur O'Connor), not as desiring to obstruct, but as desiring to obtain that which they believed to be necessary—namely, a statement as to the novel principles contained in the Bill. They had divided the House already, and would continue to do it for some hours more, on successive Motions for the adjournment of the House and the adjournment of the debate. The right hon. Gentleman opposite said this was an Enabling Bill. It was such—it was a measure to enable persons to carry out private improvements at the cost of the public. Under the guise of a very small rate over a large area, it would raise considerable sums of money which, after all, were likely to fail in effecting the purpose for which they were intended. According to the view taken by the House of Lords, the principle of taxing the highlands for the water that came from their property upon the lowlands was a just one; but if that principle were admitted—as it would be by the second reading of the measure — the next step that might be taken might be the taxation of the hill-lands for the shadow they threw into the valleys, and for, in that way, depriving vegetation below of the warming influence of the sun. The hill-lands might be taxed for the purpose of supplying the lowlands with artificial heat. One principle was no more monstrous than the other; and he, therefore, hoped the Government would take the debate on the second reading in the ordinary way. Considering the magnitude of the interests involved, the Bill should not be discussed by driblets, for in that way no adequate amount of information would be given to the public. He must vote for the Motion for adjournment.

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD hoped the Motion would be withdrawn, because he believed that it would be a wise economy of time to refer the matter to a Select Committee. He was very much surprised that the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) should object to the reference of the Bill to a Select Committee, because he could not forget that the late Government had referred everything to a Select Committee, except their foreign policy; and he thought it would have been better for the country if they had also referred that to a Select Committee.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 29; Noes 69: Majority 40.—(Div. List, No. 176.)

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. LONG said, no one could deprecate obstruction more than he did; but he was aware that there were many hon. Members who took a very keen interest in this matter who did not know that the measure would be pressed on at this hour of the morning. He was very sorry it was necessary to oppose the action of the Government; but he was satisfied that in so doing he was not "obstructing," in the ordinary sense of the phrase. [*Laughter.*] Hon. Members might laugh; but they were only anxious to obtain their own ends. He and his Friends were also anxious to obtain their ends. He would move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned." —(*Mr. Long.*)

Mr. DODSON: I will not enter into a discussion with the hon. Member as to what is and what is not legitimate obstruction; but I would point out that we have the half-past 12 o'clock Rule, and by that Rule no opposed Business can be taken after half-past 12. It appears to me that the legislative progress of this House is not likely to be very rapid if we are not allowed to proceed with opposed Business which actually comes on before half-past 12. There is a Notice of Opposition against the secondreading, which would have prevented that stage being taken had that hour been reached; but the Government are entitled to endeavour to get the Bill read a second time, coming on at the time it has, and are not open to the charge of wishing to "rush" the Bill through. A majority of two to one have twice expressed a desire to go on with the Bill; but I have no wish to take advantage of that, and I will, therefore, consent to the adjournment of the debate. The Government will, however, put it down again for to-morrow, considering it a Bill of a character which should be proceeded with.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH thought the right hon. Gentleman had hardly been quite fair in his reference to the motives of hon. Members in objecting to proceed with the second reading of the Bill that night. It had been generally understood that it was the intention of several hon. Members, whose constituents were very much more interested in the matter than those of the hon. Member for Salford, to take a debate on the second reading; and he did not think it was quite fair of the right hon. Gentleman to treat the Bill as one of a comparatively second rate character. It was, or ought to be, one of the most important Bills of the Session; and a debate on the second reading would not only be valuable in itself, but would be valuable to the Committee to which it was proposed to refer the Bill.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR mentioned that the Secretary to the Treasury had stated his intention to take some Votes in Committee of Supply to-morrow, if the debate on the Motion that the Speaker should leave the Chair closed early. It was proposed now that this Bill should also be put down, and he wished to ask whether the Government still proposed to take Votes in Committee?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH replied, that that would depend on the hour. There were no very important Motions on going into Supply, and if they were disposed of at a reasonable hour it would be desirable to make some progress with Supply; and, therefore, Supply would be put down.

Mr. PELL asked whether evidence would be taken by the Committee on this Bill, or whether the Bill would be gone through without evidence?

Mr. DODSON repeated that it was proposed that the Committee should go through the clauses of the Bill, the Bill being founded on the Report of the Select Committee which had gone into the whole question.

Mr. GORST thought it was desirable to have a distinct understanding as to the Business to be provided for to-morrow, as the reply of the Secretary to the Treasury left that open to doubt. It was understood that if the discussions on going into Supply closed at an early hour the Civil Service Estimates would be taken. Was it now to be understood that the Committee would be closed at an early hour to enable this Bill to be brought on, or would the Committee be continued till the usual time, in order that the Government might make progress in obtaining Votes in Supply?

Mr. DODSON said, his noble Friend (Lord Frederick Cavendish) had stated that whether any Votes would be taken or not would depend on the hour. The length of time the House would continue in Committee must depend on what appeared to be the convenience of the House.

Mr. PELL asked whether the right hon. Gentleman would say at what time the Bill would be taken?

Mr. DODSON replied, that he should bring it on at whatever hour he could.

Earl PERCY thought it desirable that the House should understand whether the right hon. Gentleman would bring the Bill on at an hour when he could make a statement, and which would give time for discussion on the second reading, because, otherwise, the House would be in the same position as it then was.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS ACT (1875) AMENDMENT BILL.—[Bill 127.]

(*Mr. Staveley Hill, Mr. Monckton.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. STAVELEY HILL, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, he had allowed the second reading of this Bill to stand over, because of the Bills of the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin), and the hon. Member for North Devon (Sir Thomas Acland), which were discussed a few days ago. But since then he had put it down for second reading, because, in his judgment, it emodied the same principle as the Bill of the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire. What it did was to provide that every tenant should have the same amount of compensation as under the Agricultural Holdings Act, and that for that purpose he should, on giving his notice of claim, state whether he claimed under the Agricultural Holdings Act, or under an agreement, if he had one, or under the Lincolnshire custom, which was scheduled in the Bill. He had added a proviso with reference to any landlord having any loss in consequence of a written agreement. He understood that the Bill was not opposed, and he hoped the House would allow it to be read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Staveley Hill.*)

Mr. BRAND thought it would be very unreasonable at such a time of night to enter upon a discussion of this important measure. It was a measure which dealt with tenant right, and was the first real application of tenant right to this country; and although it might be a desirable measure, he could not consent to enter upon a discussion of it at that hour, and he therefore moved the adjournment of the debate.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR seconded the Motion, and, observing that the hon. Member had appealed to some arrangement with the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire, said he was no party to that; and if the second reading had been put down for the day with the other Bills on the same subject he should have opposed it. It was an extremely bad specimen of an extremely bad Bill; and, while he did not know what principles it embodied, it violated altogether the principle of freedom of contract. It did that in a striking manner, and all the more striking because it contemplated other agreements besides those under the Act of 1875, and, at the same time, so arranged that whenever a tenant disliked an agreement he might treat it as null and void.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned." —(*Mr. Brand.*)

Colonel RUGGLES - BRISE considered it hardly fair to object to the second reading of this Bill after it had been decided to refer the Bills of the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire and the hon. Member for North Devon to a Select Committee. The principle of this Bill was the same, and, that course having been adopted, it was unfair to offer any opposition to the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. CHAPLIN demurred to the supposition that the principle of this Bill was the same as that of his Bill, which he had submitted a few days ago. In his Bill he offered three alternatives, either one of which might be accepted by landlords and tenants upon agreement. As he understood, this Bill offered no alternatives; but left it open to a tenant to break an agreement when he thought fit. He could not accept the statement that the principle was the same; but he did not intend to oppose the second reading.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 54; Noe 1: Majority 53.—(Div. List, No. 177.)

LAND TAX COMMISSIONERS' NAMES BILL.

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Monday* 23rd May.

Ordered, That the Knights of the Shire do prepare lists of the Christian and surnames of Commissioners for executing the Land Tax Acts for their respective counties.

Ordered, That Members for cities, boroughs, and places having Commissioners executing exclusive jurisdiction within the same under the said Acts, do prepare similar lists of Commissioners for executing the said Acts within such cities, boroughs, and places respectively.

Ordered, That the Members for other cities, boroughs, and places do prepare similar lists of Commissioners for executing the said Acts for the counties in which such last-mentioned cities, boroughs, and places are respectively situated.

BRIDGES (SOUTH WALES) BILL.

On Motion of Viscount Emlyn, Bill to enable county authorities in South Wales to take over and contribute towards certain Bridges, and to remove doubts as to the liability to repair the Highways over and adjoining certain Bridges which have been rebuilt, *ordered* to be brought in by Viscount Emlyn, Sir Hardinge Giffard, Mr. Hussey Vivian, Mr. Henry Allen, and Mr. Pugh.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 129.]

House adjourned at a quarter before Two o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 1*st April*, 1881.

MINUTES.] — Public Bill — *Committee — Report*—Local Courts of Bankruptcy (Ireland) (56).

SOUTH AFRICA — THE TRANSVAAL (MILITARY OPERATIONS)—WITHDRAWAL OF TROOPS.

QUESTION.

Lord LAMINGTON: I wish to ask the noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies Questions of which I have given him private Notice—namely, what is the number of troops now under orders to return from South Africa; whether Sir Garnet Wolseley acted on his own responsibility when he sent home a portion of the forces under his command, or under instructions from the Government; and what is the probable force it is intended in the future to retain in South Africa?

The Earl of KIMBERLEY: In answer to the first Question of my noble Friend I will read a statement of the exact number of troops at present in Natal and the Transvaal, and the orders which have been given. My noble Friend appears to be under some misconception as to troops having been ordered from the Cape, as he will see from my statement that certain regiments on their way have been directed not to proceed, and no regiments have been withdrawn. When the agreement with the Boers was concluded by Sir Evelyn Wood there were in Natal and the Transvaal eight regiments of Infantry, two regiments of Cavalry, and three batteries of Artillery. The numbers we have decided on retaining there for the present are 10 regiments of Infantry, four regiments of Cavalry, and three batteries of Artillery, with other branches of the Service, making altogether a force of about 12,000 men. What has been done in consequence of the conclusion of the arrangement with the Boers is to intercept two Infantry regiments on their way from the Mediterranean, and one on its way from Ceylon—three altogether—and a battery of Artillery on its way from this country. On the other hand, we have strengthened the garrison at the Cape by one more battalion. There are thus 12 regiments of Infantry, four regiments of Cavalry, and four batteries of Artillery in the two South African commands, besides Engineers, Army Service Corps, and Army Hospital Corps. The answer to the second Question of the noble Lord is that I have not been able since I received his letter to ascertain the precise instructions that were given to Sir Garnet Wolseley; but I feel absolutely certain that he could not have sent home regiments at his own discretion, but must have had the usual orders sent him from home. As it will be interesting to the noble Lord to know what regiments were sent home by Sir Garnet Wolseley, I will read a statement on the subject. There were sent home one regiment of Cavalry—the 17th Lancers—two garrison batteries of Artillery, and 10 regiments of Infantry. Four regiments of Infantry which remained in Natal and the Transvaal, and were there at the time of the outbreak; a Cavalry regiment also remained; but it had been partly, or almost entirely, withdrawn at the time of the outbreak. I think that is a complete statement with reference to all that has been done.

The Marquess of SALISBURY: What are the dates at which the troops were sent home by Sir Garnet Wolseley?

The Earl of KIMBERLEY: I cannot tell the exact dates. They were sent home after the Zulu War. The last Question of the noble Lord (Lord Lamington), as to how many troops we may be obliged to retain in South Africa, is one I cannot answer. That must, of course, depend entirely on circumstances, and it would be perfectly impossible for me to give any opinion whatever on the subject at the present time.

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL—SLAVERY.

OBSERVATIONS. QUESTIONS.

Lord BRABOURNE said, he wished to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies a Question of which he had given him private Notice. He very much regretted that indisposition should have prevented him from addressing their Lordships in the course of the Transvaal debate last night. He wished to know whether his noble Friend could refer to any Parliamentary Paper, or to any Paper that he proposed to lay upon the Table, which would corroborate the statement he had now twice made during the present Session that the system of slavery has ceased to exist amongst the Transvaal Boers during recent years? On February 21 he might observe that he called their Lordships' attention to this matter; and he thought that he then laid before them an unbroken chain of evidence that slavery had existed in the Transvaal from the first trekking of the Boers in 1834 down to the year 1877, when annexation took place. He (Lord Brabourne) had quoted from authentic documents which had all been laid before Parliament—he had quoted the solemn Resolutions of the Natal Legislature in 1868, the opinions of British officials as late as 1875 and 1876, and the continuous complaints of the Native tribes—one in December, 1876, only three or four months before the annexation—wherein they said—"The Boers treat us like money, they sell us and our children." No answer had been made to that speech, which he attributed to no merit of his, but to the fact that he had quoted from authentic documents which it was impossible to answer. On the other side, there stood only the statement of his noble Friend (the Earl of Kimberley), unsupported at present by any reference to any Papers in their Lordships' possession. It was a matter of great importance, for this reason. For several months past certain itinerant orators had been going about the country endeavouring to excite sympathy for the Boers, and advocating the independence of the Transvaal. This he (Lord Brabourne) supposed was what his noble Friend would call awakening the conscience of the country. Hitherto, he believed, they had had comparatively little success; but it might be different if their denial of the existence of slavery among the Boers received the impress of the authority of the Secretary of State for the Colonies. He (Lord Brabourne) was very ready to defer to the opinion of his noble Friend, if that opinion could be shown to be founded upon authentic documents; and, therefore, he asked him, in justice to himself and to all who took an interest in this question, whether such documents did actually exist, and whether he could refer their Lordships to any Papers which justified his opinion. He also wished to ask a Question upon another point—namely, whether there was any foundation for the report in the daily papers that the British troops had been driven into Pretoria, and that those who did this were assisted by reinforcements from Potchefstroom, and aided by the two guns captured at that place? He need scarcely say that if this were so it constituted another *primâ facie* case against the Boers of having violated the conditions of the armistice; but upon this point he would express no opinion until the information was before their Lordships, and he merely asked whether such was in the possession of the Government? He should like to know also whether, upon the re-establishment of the South African Republic, it would be called upon to repay the whole or any part of the £100,000 voted by Parliament when we annexed the Transvaal and found the Exchequer empty; and also whether they would repay any portion of the war with Secocoeni and with the Zulus, which, if not actually undertaken in consequence of the annexation, had, at least, given the Republic its only chance of existence, by subduing its two most powerful enemies?

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: As to the Question of what is due from the Transvaal State to this country, that will be considered by the Royal Commission. The question of a contribution by the Transvaal to the Zulu War most certainly will not be considered by the Commission. I think that a demand of a contribution from the Transvaal towards the expenses of that war would be most extraordinary and unjustifiable. With regard to the reported attack on Pretoria, I have seen the Press telegram to which the noble Lord has referred; but Her Majesty's Government have no information whatever on the subject. As to the Question of the existence of slavery in the Transvaal, I can only say that, so far as I know, all the Papers relating to the subject have been presented to the House. I am not aware of the receipt of any other Papers since those which have been laid on the Table. The noble Lord asks whether I can refer to Papers which would confirm the statement made by me last night, that during the last few years slavery had practically ceased to exist in the

Transvaal Republic? I have before stated to your Lordships that it might have existed in some remote districts; but if your Lordships refer to the Papers of 1875, you will find a very interesting Memorandum, delivered to Lord Carnarvon in June of that year by the late President of the South African Republic, who was then in this country. The following is an extract from that Memorandum of President Burgers:—

> ". . . . . However good the intention of the Government, experience soon proved that something more is required in a country than good laws in order to prevent evil practices, and with their best endeavours the Government could not always prevent abuses of the apprenticeship system. As the different parties, however, in course of time gradually amalgamated, and law and order were better established, the cause which produced those unfortunate apprenticeships—namely, war and its evil consequences, gradually became of less force, and the evil subsided in proportion. These facts not being understood or known gave rise to the misapprehension which has thrown the stain of slavery upon the Government of the South African Republic. In a late inquiry made by that Government to ascertain the truth of this accusation, it was found that not a single instance could be named in which slavery was carried on in the Republic with the sanction of the Government. No doubt, as is always the case in new and sparsely populated countries, the intentions of the Government were frustrated, and, in spite of all precaution, the system of apprenticeship in many cases was abused. Since the memorable civil war of 1865, however, in which the Pretorius party finally triumphed, such abuses have been fairly put down."

Of course, if Lord Carnarvon had considered it necessary to deal with the question of slavery in the Republic, having that Memorandum before him, he would have drawn attention to it; but on the 15th of June, 1875, he wrote this despatch to Sir Henry Barkly—

> "Sir,—I enclose a copy of a very interesting Memorandum, which has been prepared at my request by President Burgers, on the present condition of the Natives in the South African Republic.
>
> "I have received this communication with much satisfaction, indicating, as it does, a disposition to adopt those sound and humane principles of Native government without which the agreement on a common policy would be impossible; but as to which I entertain the hope that a complete and satisfactory understanding may be arrived at in the conference which I have proposed in my despatch of the 4th of May. "I am, &c., "CARNARVON."

It would appear from that despatch that there was then no question of slavery, and that Lord Carnarvon acquiesced in the Memorandum of President Burgers. My noble Friend (Lord Brabourne) shakes his head. I know that there was the system of apprenticeship, and the Government of the South African Republic admitted that there had been abuses of that system; but the same system exists also in the Cape Colony. After the war in the Transkei complaints were made when the late Government was in Office of the way in which it was applied; but I never heard that they asserted that slavery was allowed in the Colony. I maintain that I was quite justified in saying that slavery, in the true sense of the word, had practically ceased to exist in the Transvaal.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: Do I understand the noble Earl to say that he relies on the Memorandum from which he has quoted to prove that slavery did not practically exist in the Transvaal during the later years of the Republic? Is this the only proof he has of that, in contravention of all the facts and testimony on the other side?

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: What I say is, that the President presented the Memorandum to Lord Carnarvon, who pratically acquiesced in its truth, and that there is no evidence in the Colonial Office during the last few years of the existence of slavery. I have asserted that slavery had practically ceased in the South African Republic, and this assertion has not been disproved.

LORD BRABOURNE reminded his noble Friend, that when he brought this subject forward on a former occasion he quoted from Reports made by resident British officials in 1875 and 1876, which stated distinctly that slavery did exist.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I do not say that there were no individual instances of White slavery; but what I do say is, that no system of slavery such as that described last night, when it was said that we were turning hundreds of thousands back into slavery, existed in the later years of the Transvaal Republic.

LOCAL COURTS OF BANKRUPTCY (IRELAND) BILL.—(No. 56.)

(*The Lord O'Hagan.*)

COMMITTEE.

House in Committee (according to order).

LORD DENMAN referred to the operation of the 16th and 17th clauses as preferable to the short time in which Parliament dealt with the abolition of the Chiefships and Divisions of Courts, without dealing with the patronage.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said, that the arrangement with regard to the abolition of the Chief Judgeships of the Common Pleas and Exchequer Divisions of the High Court of Justice had thus far proved successful, and that the Courts had never been freer from arrears than since that arrangement had been adopted.

Bill *reported* without amendment; and to be read 3ª on *Monday* next.

PRIVATE BILLS.

Ordered, That no Private Bill brought from the House of Commons shall be read a second time after *Tuesday* the 14*th day of June* next:

That no Bill originating in this House authorising any inclosure of lands under special report of the Inclosure Commissioners for England and Wales, or confirming any scheme of the Charity Commissioners for England and Wales, shall be read a first time after *Thursday* the 7*th day of April* next:

That no Bill originating in this House confirming any provisional order or provisional certificate shall be read a first time after *Thursday* the 7*th day of April* next:

That no Bill brought from the House of Commons authorising any inclosure of lands under special report of the Inclosure Commissioners for England and Wales, or confirming any scheme of the Charity Commissioners for England and Wales, shall be read a second time after *Friday* the 17*th day of June* next:

That no Bill brought from the House of Commons confirming any provisional order or provisional certificate shall be read a second time after *Friday* the 17*th day of June* next:

That when a Bill shall have passed this House with amendments these orders shall not apply to any new Bill sent up from the House of Commons which the Chairman of Committees shall report to the House is substantially the same as the Bill so amended:

Ordered, That the said orders be *printed* and *published*, and affixed on the doors of this House and Westminster Hall. (No. 58.)

House adjourned at half past Five
o'clock, to Monday next,
Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 1*st April*, 1881.

MINUTES.]—NEW WRITS ISSUED—*For* St. Ives, *v.* Sir Charles Reed, knight, deceased; *for* Northampton Borough, *v.* Charles Bradlaugh, esquire, who, since his election, has vacated his seat in Parliament by sitting and voting in this House without having taken and subscribed the oath prescribed by Law.

PRIVATE BILL (*by Order*)—*Second Reading*—London and South Western Railway.

PUBLIC BILLS—*Ordered—First Reading*—Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) * [130].

Report—Inclosure Provisional Order (Beamsley Moor) * [112]; Inclosure Provisional Order (Langbar Moor) * [111].

Third Reading—Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Clonakilty, &c.) * [103], and *passed.*

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

LONDON AND SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY BILL (*by Order.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. W. B. BEACH, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that it was a Bill which proposed various projects for the improvement of the South Western Railway system in various parts of the country; but, as most of them were practically unopposed, it was not desirable that he should trouble the House with any detail on the subject. It was sufficient to say that the projects in question were considered essential for the good working of the line in future. But there was one portion of the line which proposed to give increased accommodation between Surbiton, Cobham, and Guildford; and, to a considerable extent, the Bill in that respect would be in competition to the line proposed by another Bill, the second reading of which received the sanction of the House yesterday, and which had been referred to a Select Committee. All that he now asked was that the House would consent to the present Bill being referred to the same Committee, so that there might be a full opportunity afforded for judging of the merits of the measure. The only objection to the second reading of the Bill, so far as he was aware, was on account of some interference with a common land. It was pointed out yesterday that it would be extremely difficult to touch the county of Surrey at all without interfering in some way with commons. So far as the present line went, from Surbiton to Cobham and Guildford, it only proposed to interfere with two commons. Goose Green would not be interfered with at all; but Ockham Common, and Great and Little Bookham Common, would be interfered with to a certain extent, although the interference would be very small indeed. There was no act of severance whatever, but the line would merely skirt these commons; and the Company gave an undertaking that the same amount of land that was taken away from the common in one direction should be added to it in another. Therefore, he was bound to say that, as far as this portion of the line went, there was very little substantial objection on the score of the commons. But, with regard to railroad number two, which proposed to go to Leatherhead, there was also, no doubt, some interference with common land; but the same course was proposed to be taken by the Company who were promoting the Bill. As he had already stated, it would be difficult to make that or almost any other line in the county of Surrey without interfering with common lands to some extent; but, at the same time, there was this to be said in regard to the second part of the scheme, that the common which it was proposed to interfere with was situated on very low land, a great deal of it being upon marshy ground. The portion of the common through which the proposed line would pass was upon land that was of a particularly low and marshy description. That the interference with the common land was not great was proved by the fact that the majority of the inhabitants of the district, and of those who possessed the common rights, had presented a Petition to the Secretary of State for the Home Department in favour of the line being made—because, as they said, it would tend to promote good drainage, and render the rest of the common more useful for other purposes. There was, therefore, a strong feeling in the neighbourhood in favour of the line being made, provided that when the sanction of Parliament was given to it, or before that sanction was given, an undertaking was given by the Railway Company that they would abide by the decision of the Secretary of State for the Home Department as to the execution of such works in the nature of planting, draining, or providing accommodation for getting from one side of the line to the other, as he, or any other properly constituted authority, might prescribe. Such an undertaking might, he thought, be extended to any other commons which the Railway Company might desire to touch. Such an undertaking would, he thought, render any interference with common land much less injurious than it might otherwise be; and, considering that the inhabitants of the neighbourhood were in favour of the Bill, he did not think the objections which were raised against it, on the ground of its interference with common lands, was an objection of a very valid description. All the promoters asked was that the Bill should be referred to a Select Committee upstairs, so that there might be a full opportunity afforded of considering it and deciding it upon its merits. What they desired was that the Committee, to whom a Bill upon the same subject had already been referred, should also have the present measure referred to them. Such a Committee would have an ample opportunity for judging of the merits of the respective schemes, and of arriving at a fair and impartial decision. He begged, without further preface, to move the second reading of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. W. B. Beach.*)

MR. BRYCE, who had a Notice on the Paper of his intention to move that the Bill be read a second time on that day six months, said, the reason why he had given Notice of a Motion for the rejection of the Bill on the second reading was that the measure proposed to inflict very serious and permanent injury on some of the most valuable Surrey commons. It proposed altogether to interfere with five of them; and as regarded two of the five, it would take no less than 11 acres, and would not only intersect and sever them, but would most prejudicially affect pieces of scenery which were among the most beautiful in the county of Surrey. The case against the Bill in respect of these commons was so strong that, if the matter rested merely on that point alone, he would feel much confidence in asking the House to reject the Bill. He was, however, bound to say that the matter did not rest there. There was another scheme before the House for the construction of a railway in this district. The Guildford, Kingston, and London Railway Bill was discussed yesterday, when the House gave it a second reading, and sent it to a Select Committee. It might be said, with some force, that, under those circumstances, it would be unfair that the rival scheme of the London and South Western Railway Company should not be referred to a Select Committee at the same time; and, therefore, he did not think it right that he should press his opposition to the Bill. At the same time, he believed that the decision of the House yesterday was not arrived at in any spirit of indifference to the preservation of these commons, but because large concessions were proposed to be made by those who brought the measure forward, and because the House believed that if the suggested improvements were made the railway would be useful in the way of opening up the common lands in Surrey for the recreation and enjoyment of the great masses of the people of London. He should certainly insist upon his opposition to the present Bill, if it were not for the fact that the two schemes which had been submitted to the House ought, in fairness, to be heard and tried together. He was fortified by the speech of the hon. Member who had just sat down (Mr. W. B. Beach) in the supposition that the South Western Railway Company were also ready to do something to remove the objections which those who were interested in the preservation of commons took against the Bill. At the same time, he thought he ought to say that if the present measure passed, and came back to the House containing provisions so objectionable as those which now appeared in it, it would be the duty of those who valued these commons for the benefit and enjoyment of the people to offer to the measure the most strenuous opposition on the third reading. He certainly hoped, if the Bill was read a second time now, that such provisions would be inserted in it as would render it unnecessary to take that course on a future stage.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed.*

QUESTIONS.

POOR LAW (IRELAND) — OUT-DOOR RELIEF TO WIVES OF PRISONERS.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been called to the following paragraph in the "Daily Express" of 21st March:—

> "At the meeting of the Ballina Guardians on Saturday, 19th March, the relieving officer presented an application from Mrs. Daley, of Crossmolina, the wife of Thomas Daley, who was last week arrested and lodged in Kilmainham. It was shown that she had five children, the youngest being an infant of one month, and that she had fifteen acres of land in cultivation. The clerk said the Act provided for the granting of out-door relief. The Board finally decided on granting 3*s.* 6*d.* per week;"

and, whether, in view of the fact that the family are deprived of the father's help to work their holding, the Government could influence the Local Government Board to take steps to have the grant increased, say to a pound a-week?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that the Local Government Board would take care that if the Guardians thought this woman ought to receive extra out-door relief, that the necessary order should be given empowering them to grant it. The Local Government Board had no power to order the Guardians to give out-door relief beyond what the Guardians thought right, and the grant might be given either in food or fuel.

Mr. HEALY asked, whether he was to understand that the Local Government Board had already communicated with the Board of Guardians on the subject?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that his information stated that they had; but there appeared to be some doubt as to whether the Board had power to make the grant. The Local Government Board would take care, if the Guardians had power to give the out-door relief, so far as the order required was concerned, there would be no difficulty.

ORDNANCE SURVEY—THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OF HERTFORD.

Mr. ABEL SMITH asked the First Commissioner of Works, When the Ordnance Survey of the parishes adjoining the town of Hertford will be completed?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE, in reply, said, the Survey had been completed with reference to the parishes in question, and might be obtained in the Survey Department.

SOUTH AFRICA—SEKUKUNI.

Mr. SUMMERS asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether he can give the House any information as to the condition of Sekukuni, and as to the kind of treatment that he has received during his imprisonment at Pretoria?

Mr. GRANT DUFF: I regret, Sir, that we have no information about Sekukuni's life in Pretoria; but as soon as communication with that place is re-established, we will call for a Report.

AFGHANISTAN (POLITICAL AFFAIRS) —YAKOUB KHAN AND ABDUR RAHMAN.

Mr. O'DONNELL asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether an opportunity will be given to the people of Candahar of expressing their preference between the Ameer Yakoub Khan, now a prisoner in India, and Abdur Rahman, previous to the town and district being handed over by Her Majesty's Government to the latter; and, whether, as Her Majesty's Government have declared their intention of refraining from further interference with the domestic politics of the Afghan people, the imprisoned Ameer, Yakoub Khan, will be forthwith set at liberty and enabled to return to his country and supporters?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON, in reply, said, it had been considered proper, at the end of the year 1879, by the then Government of India that Yakoub Khan, upon his abdication, should be transferred to India. He was not, as stated, a prisoner, but was kept there under surveillance. There was no intention of, in any way, assisting in his return to Afghanistan. While the Government had, as stated in the Question, declared their intention, as far as possible, to refrain from further interference with the domestic politics of the Afghan people, they had also declared their intention to assist, if possible, in the restoration of a settled Government in Afghanistan. Certainly they had no intention of taking a step which would have the result of increasing the calamities from which Afghanistan was suffering.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—KILMAINHAM GAOL — THE PRISON FARE.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that the persons detained in Kilmainham under the Coercion Act have come to a resolution to use only the prison fare; and, if he will give instructions for a better kind of bread to be supplied to them than that of which he has been sent samples?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: Sir, with respect to the last part of the Question of the hon. Member, I may say that I did receive a sample of bread; but, as no letter accompanied it, I could not tell who it came from. With regard to the first part of the hon. Member's Question, I have to say that I have seen a statement to that effect in the newspapers. I do not know whether it is true or not, and it is not my business to inquire. As regards the second part of the Question, all I can say with respect to it is, that if there is reasonable ground of complaint as to the bread, or any other article of food, I have not the slightest doubt that, on its being represented either to the doctor or to the Governor of the Prison, it would be inquired into.

MUTINY ACTS—CORPORAL PUNISHMENT.

Sir JOHN HAY asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether Members of both Houses of Parliament, like all other male subjects of Her Majesty, are liable to corporal punishment, if convicted of committing offences punishable under the 7 and 8 Geo. 4; 14 and 15 Vic.; 24 and 25 Vic.; and 26 and 27 Vic.; and, whether Her Majesty's Government have any intention of repealing these Acts?

CAPTAIN PRICE, before the Question was answered, wished to know, Whether the punishment of the pillory had not been abolished as a relic of a barbarous age, and whether the proposal to attach a soldier to the tail of a cart was not equally barbarous?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES), in reply, said, the right hon. and gallant Admiral had unintentionally added to the labour of answering the Question by not giving any chapters, and so rendering it necessary to refer to many hundreds of Acts of Parliament. He (the Attorney General) supposed the offences punishable under the statutes would be acts of violence, and his answer to the first portion of the Question would be in the affirmative—that Members of Parliament, in common with all other persons, were equally liable to corporal punishment. He was not aware that any Member of Her Majesty's Government had any apprehension that in consequence of the existence of these laws, any Members of Parliament were likely to be subjected to corporal punishment; and he did not understand that there was any intention to repeal them. He did not know whether the putting of the Question had any reference to legislation affecting our soldiers and sailors; but the Government had no intention of repealing the Acts mentioned in the Question, because they did not see any analogy between garotting and the offences against Army and Navy discipline. In reply to the Question of the hon. and gallant Member for Devonport (Captain Price), he could see no such connection between the pillory and the summary punishment now proposed in the Army as would render the latter a violation of the Act which abolished the pillory.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR asked, Whether it was not a fact that Acts existed for Ireland allowing the infliction of corporal punishment and other barbarous punishments for crimes other than those in the Act referred to?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) suggested that the hon. Member should give Notice to his right hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General for Ireland.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR thereupon addressed his Question to the latter.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. LAW): I understand the hon. Member to ask, are there Acts in force in Ireland providing corporal punishment? Yes; there are.

AFRICA, WEST—THE GOLD COAST.

MR. SUMMERS asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether there is any foundation for the statement of the Gold Coast correspondent of the "Manchester Guardian," to the effect that the Lieutenant Governor has demanded from King Mensah an indemnity of 500 ounces of gold in order to recoup to some extent the expenses incurred in the recent war preparations; and, whether it is intended, as stated by the same correspondent, that a demonstration of the Colonial forces shall take place at Prahsue?

MR. GRANT DUFF: Sir, neither of these statements is confirmed by any information which has reached Her Majesty's Government.

INDIA (FINANCE, &c.)—THE BUDGET STATEMENT.

MR. E. STANHOPE asked the Secretary of State for India, What is the estimated rate of exchange for 1880-81 in the recent Budget Statement of the Government of India; and, if he will lay the Budget Statement upon the Table of the House as soon as it arrives from India?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Sir, the rate of exchange estimated in the present year is 1*s*. 8*d*. I may mention that the average price paid for the Secretary of State's Bills during the year which has just expired has been within a very small fraction of that amount. There will be no objection to lay the Budget Statement on the Table as soon it is received.

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL (MILITARY OPERATIONS).

SIR JOHN KENNAWAY asked the Secretary of State for War, What is the total strength of Her Majesty's Forces of all arms now serving in Natal and the Transvaal; and, whether, in view of the state of affairs subsisting there at present, the Government will consider the advisability of delaying the departure of troops from thence until the Royal Commission has made its Report?

MR. CHILDERS: Sir, in reply to the hon. Baronet, I have to inform him that he is entirely in error in assuming, as the second part of his Question does, that we are withdrawing troops from South Africa. When the peace negotiations were concluded, there were in Natal and the Transvaal eight regiments of Infantry, two of Cavalry, and three batteries of Artillery. The number which we have decided to retain there for the present is ten regiments of Infantry, four of Cavalry, three batteries of Artillery, and other branches of the Service, making up a force of above 12,000 men. What we have done in consequence of the conclusion of the arrangemets is to intercept two Infantry regiments on their way from the Mediterranean, one on its way from Ceylon, a battery of Artillery on its way from this country, and some drafts. On the other hand, we have strengthened the garrison at the Cape by another battalion. There will be thus 12 regiments of Infantry, four of Cavalry, and four batteries in the two South African commands, besides Engineers, Army Service, and Army Hospital corps.

SIR JOHN KENNAWAY asked, whether any regiments had been sent from Natal?

MR. CHILDERS: I have stated that we have intercepted two regiments from the Mediterranean, neither of which had arrived at its destination, one from Ceylon, which had reached Durban a few days after the negotiations had taken place, and a battery of Artillery which had arrived at St. Vincent. But the forces in South Africa have been increased by the regiments I have mentioned.

MR. R. H. PAGET asked, if the intercepted regiments were on their way home?

MR. CHILDERS: One is on its way home, another is relieving a regiment from the Mediterranean which will come home, and a third has gone back to Ceylon, which is its present station.

LORD JOHN MANNERS asked, whether the 7th Hussars were to be brought home?

MR. CHILDERS: No, Sir; I forget how many squadrons have actually arrived; but the whole regiment will be retained.

SOUTH AFRICA — THE TRANSVAAL (STATISTICS)—NATIVES AND EUROPEANS.

MR. W. H. JAMES asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether, having regard to the proposed delimitation of the boundaries of the Transvaal, it would be possible for Her Majesty's Government to include in the next issue of South African Papers a map showing the number of Natives and Europeans residing in the several districts of the Transvaal?

MR. GRANT DUFF: Sir, in reply to my hon. Friend, I have to say that we cannot give such a map in the next South African Paper, which is nearly ready; but we will in a subsequent one give a map which will show what we believe to be the numbers.

ARMY — MILITARY OPERATIONS IN THE TRANSVAAL—DESPATCH OF FORCES.

COLONEL NORTH asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is the case that certain Regiments which ought to have gone to the Transvaal were not sent in consequence of the notorious incompetency of their commanding officers?

MR. CHILDERS: I saw this statement in a weekly paper; but I am happy to say that it is absolutely without foundation. I am much obliged to my hon. and gallant Friend for asking me the Question.

CRIMINAL LAW (IRELAND)—CASE OF JOSEPH B. WALSH.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Under what statute Joseph B. Walsh, at present detained in Kilmainham Prison, could be sentenced, if convicted of the charge of which he is now said to be reasonably suspected, to seven years' penal servitude or three years' imprisonment; and, whether the statute applies to England?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. LAW): The sentence would be under the statute 1 & 2 *Will.* IV. c. 44, s. 6, if imprisonment were awarded in the punishment of the offence, or under that enactment and the 20 & 21 *Vict.* c. 3, if it was a sentence of penal servitude. The former Act does not apply to England. The latter is, of course, applicable to the whole United Kingdom.

Mr. A. M. SULLIVAN: Is the first Act which the right hon. and learned Gentleman mentioned one of those known as the Whiteboy Acts?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Law): Yes.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR: I beg to give Notice that I shall, on Monday, ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether the offence of which J. B. Walsh is said to be reasonably suspected, and for which he is liable to be detained in Kilmainham Prison for 18 months, would not, if committed in England, come under the picketing section of the Conspiracy Act, and if the maximum penalty for that offence is not three months' imprisonment, and if the Whiteboy Acts, under which J. B. Walsh would be liable to the heavy sentences mentioned by the Attorney General for Ireland be not one of those statutes which, among other barbarous penalties, enforce periodic floggings?

THE CENSUS, 1881—THE HOUSEHOLDERS' SCHEDULES.

Sir HARDINGE GIFFARD asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether there is any objection to delivering the Census papers to the enumerators in a sealed envelope; and, what directions have been given to prevent the papers in question being used for the gratification of private curiosity?

Mr. DODSON: Sir, there is no objection to the delivery of Census schedules to the enumerator in a sealed envelope, other than the delay and trouble which the opening will cause. The enumerator, in order to carry out his instructions, must examine the schedules and see that the required particulars are properly entered. Among the illiterate classes, the enumerator, it is found, has himself to fill up 50 per cent of the schedules. With regard to privacy, the apprehension of individuals that the contents of the schedule will become known in the neighbourhood is, I think, unfounded. The enumerator is for this purpose a Government officer, and page 20 of his book of instructions contains this warning to him—

> "You will bear in mind that the householders' schedules are to be regarded as of a confidential character, it being expressly stated upon each that the facts will be published in general abstracts only, and strict care will be taken that the returns are not used for the gratification of private curiosity. It will be highly improper, therefore, for any Census officer to give publicity to any portion of their contents, or to allow them to be examined by any unauthorized persons for any purpose whatever."

CRIMINAL LAW—ARREST OF THE EDITOR OF "THE FREIHEIT."

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If he will state under what Law or Statute the editor of the "Freiheit" newspaper was arrested, deprived of his watch, money, bank book, and letters; and under what Law or Statute the police were authorised in forcibly ejecting the compositors from the premises, seizing the keys, and locking up the house?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James): Sir, the editor of *The Freiheit* newspaper was arrested under a warrant issued by Sir James Ingham; that warrant was granted upon sworn information that an indictable offence had been committed, and was a perfectly legal warrant. I am informed by the police authorities that upon his arrest the defendant voluntarily divested himself of all property on his person. He was requested to retain possession of it, but declined to do so, wishing a friend to hold the articles for him. The police then took possession of the articles, which are, I believe, with a slight exception, correctly described in the noble Lord's Question. The watch, money (amounting to £2), and a loan, not bank, book have been restored to the accused person. No one was forcibly ejected from the premises. When a person is arrested on a criminal charge the police doubtless would, in the execution of their duty, take possession of any documents or property from which evidence bearing upon the case might reasonably be expected to be obtained. It is necessary for the administration of justice that this should be done. If the police exceed their duty in this respect, anyone injured would have a right of action. The room which was occupied by the accused has been temporarily locked up for the sake of the protection of his property; but the rest of the house and the workshop are occupied.

CONTROVERTED ELECTIONS — THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS ACT, 1868, AND THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS AND CORRUPT PRACTICES ACTS, 1879 AND 1880—THE REPORTED BOROUGHS.

Mr. MORGAN LLOYD asked Mr. Attorney General, If he can state what prosecutions he has instituted or intends to institute against persons reported to have been guilty of corrupt practices by the Commissioners appointed to inquire into corrupt practices at the last general election?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James), in reply, said, he had considered the desirability of instituting legal proceedings upon the Reports of seven of the Bribery Commissions. In the case of Knaresborough it was not suggested that any prosecutions should be instituted. In the cases of Canterbury and Chester, although the Reports were silent on the subject, the Commissioners had reported officially to the Secretary of State for the Home Department and himself that they purposed granting certificates of indemnity to all persons whom they had examined; and as all who were implicated in corrupt practices were examined, everybody was protected from prosecution. In the case of Gloucester, the Commissioners stated that certificates had been, or would be, granted to all, except one or two, who, however, could not be prosecuted. The Boston Commissioners reported that corrupt practices had been committed by certain persons whom they had refused to examine, and, as the evidence appeared sufficient to support a prosecution, proceedings had been instituted against them and also against four persons for perjury. The Macclesfield Commission had reported that two persons, whom they had not examined, had been guilty of corrupt practices, and proceedings would be taken against both. In the case of Sandwich, nine persons were scheduled as guilty of corrupt practices and unprotected by certificates; but the Commissioners had since intimated that two of them, Mr. Wylie and Mr. Ginnell, had been placed in the schedule by mistake, and it was intended to give them certificates of indemnity. The evidence against the other seven persons was under consideration, with a view to taking proceedings against such of them as the evidence would justify. Perhaps the House would allow him to give an explanation with reference to a statement that all the persons ordered to be prosecuted in the Boston case entertained one particular political opinion. On reading the evidence he thought that was the fact; but he hoped he might be allowed to explain that the question who should be prosecuted must be governed by the Report of the Commissioners. To the names given by the Commissioners he could not add one, nor had taken one away. He had, practically, but little discretion in the matter, and he was sure the House would believe that the question of the political views of any individual had not in the smallest degree influenced him.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS inquired what course it was proposed to take with regard to those gentlemen who were scheduled as guilty of corrupt practices, and who happened to be justices of the peace?

Mr. ONSLOW asked what course would be taken in the case of aldermen and town councillors reported as having been guilty of bribery?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James), in reply, said, that the question, so far as it affected justices of the peace, was peculiarly within the province of the Lord Chancellor, who had already, in the case of two Commissions, had the names of justices of the peace brought before him, and after reading the evidence affecting them, his Lordship thought it right to call upon them to show cause why their names should not be moved from the commission of the peace. As far as he knew, it was the intention of the Lord Chancellor to adopt the same course with regard to every scheduled justice of the peace. With regard to aldermen and town councillors, they were an elected body, and the only way of dealing with members of that body who were scheduled as guilty of corrupt practices was by special legislation.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS: In the event of aldermen or town councillors acting as justices of the peace by virtue of their office, will the Lord Chancellor have power to prevent them so doing?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James), in reply, said, he thought that the only case of the kind would be a mayor, who acted as a magistrate for his term of office, and *ex officio* for one year after; and if it should turn out that such a person was scheduled, he would call the attention of the Lord Chancellor to the case; but he doubted his power to interfere in such cases.

STATE OF IRELAND—SPEECH OF MR. DILLON AT THURLES.

Mr. WARTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the following language, reported to have been used by the honourable Member for Tipperary in a recent speech at Thurles:—

> "He warned them to keep up the system of hunting down the land grabber, and pulling down land grabbing—to let the land grabber know that, no matter what Mr. Justice Fitzgerald or Lord Justice Fitzgibbon might say, he would be Boycotted and Boycotted worse than ever he was before Coercion;"

and, whether it is the intention of the Government to take any steps in respect of such language?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, he had been furnished with an official report of the language used by the hon. Member for Tipperary (Mr. Dillon) on the occasion referred to, and he had seen other reports, but no report similar to that given in the Question, which differed very materially from the official report.

ARMY—HALF-PAY CAPTAINS.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, looking at the peculiar circumstances of the case, he would provide that captains who, through their regiment being disbanded or being compulsorily placed on half-pay, had not attained the rank of major, should not be retired at 42 years of age without some special consideration, such as an extension of time equal to that lost by such disbandment or compulsory half-pay, and that the same advantages should be given as have been given to other purchase officers?

Mr. CHILDERS: Sir, I cannot hold out any expectation to my hon. and gallant Friend that I shall be able to make any change in the existing Regulations so far as they affect captains on half-pay who have been placed there either permanently or, some years ago, without any right or prospect of re-employment. But there may possibly be some cases of the latter, with which I am not acquainted, deserving inquiry; and, without holding out any hope in the matter, I have directed the subject to be carefully looked into by the Committee now sitting.

CENTRAL ASIA—ADVANCE OF THE RUSSIANS.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether his attention has been called to a letter in the "République Française" of March 14th, from its correspondent in Central Asia, in which he affirms the accuracy of his previous statements with regard to the rapid advance of the Russian railway from the Caspian towards Herat, and especially to the fact stated by the correspondent that no obstacle now intervenes to prevent its immediate completion throughout the whole of the Akhal region, and that measures are being taken by the Russian commanders to dominate Khorassan and secure the trade of Herat; and, whether under these circumstances Her Majesty's Government will complete the British railway to Candahar, in order to prevent the whole trade of Afghanistan, Norther Persia, and the Turcoman Country from falling to Russia? Before the noble Lord replied to the Question, he would ask permission of the House to read two extracts. ["No, no!"] They were extracts from the article in question, and they were of great interest and importance. ["Oh, oh!"] And if it was necessary for him to obtain the privileges of a Member of that House, he would conclude by making a Motion. [*Laughter, and* "Oh, oh!"] He would not read those extracts until he obtained a fair hearing. ["Order, order!"] He should conclude by moving the adjournment of the debate. The correspondent complained that his statements—[*Loud cries of* "Order!"]——

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member proposes to put the Question of which he has given Notice. He is not entitled to enter into any extraneous matter, excepting so far as may be necessary for making his Question plain.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: That is precisely my object, Sir. These extracts are not extraneous, but are made from the correspondent's letter, and they will make the Question perfectly plain. I have refrained from putting them on the Paper, because they would occupy so much space; but I am quite able to read them within five minutes. I am within my right in asking to read them. [*Cries of* "Name him!" *and Laughter.*]

MR. MONTAGUE GUEST: Mr. Speaker, I rise to Order. I would ask you, Sir, if any Member of this House is entitled, when he asks a Question, to read an extract from a written document which will occupy five minutes in reading?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is entitled to do so, if the extracts are necessary to make the Question clear. I must say, however, that the Question of the hon. Member on the Paper appears to be quite plain, and it requires no elucidation with regard to matter of fact.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: If I understand you, Sir, to rule that I am out of Order in reading these extracts, I shall not do so; but, at the same time, I wish to protest against the way in which, the moment I rose, and before I had the opportunity of saying two words—["Oh, oh!" *and cries of* "Name him!"]—I wish to protest, Sir, against the manner——

MR. ALDERMAN LAWRENCE: Mr. Speaker, I rise to Order. I wish to ask whether it is in Order for any hon. Member to protest against your decision?

MR. SPEAKER: I do not understand the hon. Member to protest against my decision.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: I am not protesting against your decision, Sir, but against the organized interruption from the other side of the House. [*Opposition cheers.*] It has been too common of late with the Party opposite. I wish to ask you finally, Sir, whether these extracts, which are very important, and will only take a very short time to read, and which are necessary to illustrate my Question, are out of Order? I wish to ask, distinctly, whether I am out of Order?

MR. SPEAKER: I must inform the hon. Member that it appears to me the Question which he has put on the Paper is quite plain. The document which he proposes to read seems to me to be unnecessary.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: In deference to your wishes, rather than to your ruling—[*Loud cries of* "Order!" and "Name him!"]——

MR. SPEAKER: I must point out to the hon. Member that he must act upon his own responsibility; but I am bound to tell him that his reference to certain Papers seems to be unnecessary to make his Question clear. The Question is perfectly plain.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: I shall not read the extracts then, Sir. What I meant to say was, that I understood you to express a wish rather than a ruling; I did not mean that I would not obey your ruling. I protest, Mr. Speaker, against this organized interruption, which prevents me from enjoying the rights and privileges of a Member of this House. From the first moment that I opened my mouth, and before a word was heard, I have been subjected by the Radical Benches below the Gangway to a deliberate clamour, instances of which have been too common in the House of late. I shall refrain from reading these extracts, not owing to that interruption—for, if necessary, I am prepared to remain here till I am heard—but solely in deference to your wishes. I beg now to ask the noble Marquess the Question which stands in my name.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I regret very much that the hon. Member should not have had an opportunity of reading the statements he has referred to. I am of opinion, however, that the Question which he asks is perfectly plain without them. I think that, on a former occasion, he called the attention of the House to the statements of the correspondent of *The République Française*, and it is, no doubt, perfectly correct that the correspondent, in a subsequent statement, affirmed the substantial accuracy of the statement he previously made. As to our information on the subject, the information which has been received by the Foreign Office is that *The Golos* published a telegram of the 8th of February, stating that the railway had been extended in the direction of Akhal a distance of 106 versts, or about 75 miles. I am not aware that there is any obstacle to the continuance of the railway through the Akhal territory; but I am not aware that the Foreign Office is in possession of any information which leads us to suppose that measures are being taken by the Russian commanders to dominate Khorassan and secure the trade of Herat. In regard to the latter part of the Question, Her Majesty's Government have not any intention of completing the railway to Candahar for the purpose of preventing the trade of Afghanistan, Northern Persia, and the Turcoman country from falling to Russia.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Mr. Speaker, I shall, at the earliest possible moment, bring this question again before the attention of the House.

SOUTH AFRICA — THE TRANSVAAL (MILITARY OPERATIONS)—BLOCKADE OF PRETORIA.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH begged to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies a Question, of which he had given him Private Notice —namely, Whether his attention has been called to certain telegrams which have appeared in the morning papers to the effect that—"The Boers around Pretoria, having been reinforced by the beseigers of Potchefstroom with the two guns captured at that place, have repulsed a sortie of the British garrison, pursuing them into the fort and inflicting upon them considerable loss?" He wished to ask whether the Government have received any information corroborating that statement; and, if so, whether they will state what instructions have been sent to Sir Evelyn Wood on the subject? If no such information has been received, he would like to know whether the Government will telegraph as to the accuracy of the statement?

Mr. GRANT DUFF: Sir, no such information has reached Her Majesty's Government; but I understood from my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for War, that he has to-day received a telegram from Sir Evelyn Wood, who makes no reference to the circumstance reported in the newspapers. Therefore, we assume that he has received no information of the kind; for he surely might be expected to mention such an event, if it was known to him. I presume there will be no difficulty in telegraphing to him to inquire into the matter.

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL—POLICY OF THE GOVERNMENT.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I wish to ask a Question of which I have not given private Notice. It is very desirable, Sir, that the course of the Government in respect to the Transvaal should be discussed in this House on an early day. It is the intention of my right hon. Friend the Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) to give Notice of a Motion on the subject; but it would clearly be desirable, before any such Motion was discussed, that the House should be in possession of all the information which the Government can communicate to Parliament. As I understand, the Secretary of State for the Colonies stated last night that the Instructions he is about to address to the Commissioners are likely to contain fuller information than it has been possible to give hitherto by telegram, and will deal with the whole policy of the Government. I wish to ask, When those Instructions will be laid on the Table of the House?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I will communicate with my noble Friend (the Earl of Kimberley) on the subject. I have to a certain extent discussed the Instructions with him, and, undoubtedly, there are parts of those Instructions which it will not be convenient or desirable, having regard to the interests of the Public Service, to lay before Parliament; but I will confer with him to see what further we can lay on the Table, with the view of giving fuller information to the House.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked, whether it was expected to receive full despatches from Sir Evelyn Wood of all that had passed from the time he was appointed to the supreme command in South Africa to the date of the preliminaries of peace with the Boer Leaders; and, if so, whether they would be laid at once on the Table of the House?

Mr. GLADSTONE: This, also, has been a matter of communication between me and my noble Friend, and I hope that before the Easter Recess we shall be able to communicate to the House fuller information which will have been received by mail.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH asked, whether the Government would communicate by telegraph with the authorites at the Cape in reference to the reported outrage at Pretoria?

MR. CHILDERS said, he had always been chary of telegraphing to inquire as to the truth of reports in newspapers, of which they had had no official intimation; and in every case but one where he had done so the reports proved to be inaccurate. He had received telegraphic despatches from the General commanding of as late a date as the telegram contained in the newspaper referred to; but the matter had attracted so much attention in the House that he should, within half-an-hour, telegraph to Sir Evelyn Wood for information regarding it.

STATE OF IRELAND—EVICTIONS IN THE WEST OF IRELAND.

MR. SEXTON gave Notice that, on Monday, he would ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the accounts in the newspapers of the evictions taking place in the West of Ireland since the passing of the Coercion Act; and, whether, in view of that state of things, pending the introduction of the measure to strengthen the legal position of the Irish tenant, Her Majesty's Government will continue to use the armed forces of the Crown to assist in perpetration of barbarities of that kind?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that he would be surprised if the statements referred to by the hon. Member were correct; if so, the matter should be inquired into. He would send the Question over to Ireland to-night for inquiry, and if the hon. Member would put in on Tuesday, he would give as full an answer as he could get.

STATE OF IRELAND — THE LAND LEAGUE MEETING AT MIDDLETON.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has received any further information as to the riot at Middleton on the 21st ultimo; and, whether he is prepared in the circumstances to forbid a general meeting of the Land League which has been advertised for next Sunday?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, there could be no doubt that on the 21st ultimo there was a disturbance at the place alluded to in the Question of the hon. Member; but the report in the newspapers was somewhat exaggerated. As to the meeting, the Irish Government, so far as he was aware, had not got positive information as to whether it was to be held on Sunday or not; and they certainly had not got such information as would warrant them in prohibiting it. He stated yesterday that the borough of Middleton was in a disturbed state, aud a special meeting of the Council in Ireland was held to-day for the purpose of proclaiming that barony and the rest of East Cork.

POOR RATE (METROPOLIS) — GRAY'S INN.

MR. GRAY (for Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR) asked the President of the Local Government Board, If he can state what sum was recovered last year by the Honourable Society of Gray's Inn from the tenants of their Inn on account of Poor's Rate, and what amount was paid by the said Society to the parish in which the said Inn is situate for and in respect of the same?

MR. DODSON: Sir, all I can say in reply to the Question is that Gray's Inn now forms part of the Holborn Union, and that the amount of Poor Rates raised in respect of the property within the limits of the Inn for the year ended March 25, 1880, was £980.

AFGHANISTAN—GENERAL SIR FREDERICK ROBERTS'S MARCH—VOTE OF THANKS.

MR. ONSLOW asked, Whether the Government had yet come to a determination to propose a Vote of Thanks to General Sir Frederick Roberts and the Army under his command for their gallant and memorable march from Cabul to Candahar? When he last put the same Question, the noble Marquess said he was only waiting for despatches from India on the subject.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I hope very shortly to be able to state what the views of the Government are on this subject; but until I can name a day on which I can bring forward such a Motion, it is no use of giving an answer on the subject.

MR. ONSLOW asked, whether the Government intended to propose any Vote of Thanks at all?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: If the hon. Member will give me Notice of the Question, I will answer it.

MR. ONSLOW: I beg to say that I will repeat the Question on Monday.

FRANCE—THE FORTHCOMING MONETARY CONFERENCE IN PARIS.

MR. PULESTON asked, Whether it is true that the Government have decided not to send a Representative to the forthcoming Monetary Conference in Paris?

MR. GLADSTONE, in reply, said, that he was unable to give a positive reply. When he last heard on the subject the question was not closed. The hon. Member knew that the invitation which was sent us entirely pledged us to bi-metallism.

MOTION.

PARLIAMENTARY OATH (MR. BRADLAUGH)—NEW WRIT FOR THE BOROUGH OF NORTHAMPTON.

Moved for—

"New Writ for Northampton Borough,—*in the room of* Charles Bradlaugh, esquire, who, since his election, has vacated his seat in Parliament by sitting and voting in this House without having taken and subscribed the oath prescribed by Law."—(*Mr. Labouchere.*)

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, that before that question was decided, the House ought to hear from Her Majesty's Government what was their opinion upon that matter. Hon. Members would probably remember that some time ago his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) gave Notice of a similar Motion to that just made by the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Labouchere), and afterwards objected to Mr. Bradlaugh presenting Petitions on the ground that he had vacated his seat by reason of his having sat and voted in that House without having taken and subscribed the Oath or Affirmation required by law. At that time, if his (Sir R. Assheton Cross's) memory served him correctly, the hon. and learned Attorney General stated to the House that the matter was still *sub judice*, and that although it was true that one of the learned Judges of the High Court of Justice had decided against Mr. Bradlaugh, that as long as it was open to that Gentleman to appeal against that decision to the Court of Appeal, no new Writ could be issued, and that, until it was decided, Mr. Bradlaugh must be considered a Member of the House. He wished to ask the hon. and learned Attorney General how the position of the case, as it stood at the present moment, differed from that which it occupied when that statement was made? As he understood the matter, Mr. Bradlaugh had still the right to appeal to the House of Lords, and was indeed appealing, or had expressed his intention of appealing, to that House. It might be said that Mr. Bradlaugh intended to appeal to the House of Lords against one part only of the judgment of the Court of Appeal—namely, that which related to the right of a common informer to bring the action against him for penalties without the consent of the Attorney General, and did not intend to appeal against that part of it which related to his right to make an Affirmation in lieu of taking an Oath. He wished to ask the hon. and learned Attorney General whether an appellant had the power of appealing against one part only of a judgment, without the House of Lords being able to go into the whole of the judgment appealed against? He should like to know from the hon. and learned Attorney General how one point in a cause could still be *sub judice*, while the decision of the Court was final with regard to another point in it? Unless the hon. and learned Gentleman told him to the contrary, he should believe that the position of Mr. Bradlaugh at the present moment was precisely that which he occupied when the Law Officers of the Crown declared that the matter was still *sub judice*, at the time the hon. and learned Member for Chatham asked the House not to receive the Petition presented by Mr. Bradlaugh. As matters had turned out, it was a satisfaction to those who had thought fit to object to Mr. Bradlaugh making an Affirmation, that the Courts of Law had determined, hitherto, at all events, that their objection was well founded; and he thought that the House should express their acknowledgments to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Spencer Walpole), who, as Chairman of the first Committee appointed to consider the question, had, against the opinion of several hon. and learned Gentlemen, unhesitatingly given his casting vote in favour of the law as decided by the Courts of Law. In justification of the course they had taken, he could not help reminding the House of the Motion brought forward by the hon. and learned Attorney General on the Committee, and supported by the hon. and learned Solicitor General in these terms—

> "In the opinion of the Committee persons entitled under the provisions of 'The Evidence Amendment Act, 1869,' and 'The Evidence Amendment Act, 1870,' to make a solemn declaration instead of the Oath in courts of justice may be permitted to make an Affirmation or Declaration instead of the Oath in the House of Commons."

That, he presumed, was the expression of the opinion of both those hon. and learned Gentlemen, supported, he would admit, by lawyers of great authority, among them two friends of his own, who had since been appointed Judges, the death of one of whom the House had recently to deplore. An Amendment was proposed by his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Preston (Sir John Holker) to leave out the word "may," and insert the word "cannot;" and the Judges had just decided that the word "cannot" ought to be inserted in that Resolution instead of the word "may." They did not stop there. A second Committee was appointed, on which he (Sir R. Assheton Cross) sat himself, and, after a long argument, and a great many votes and resolutions, it was decided by an enormous majority that Mr. Bradlaugh had no right to take the Oath; but the Committee recommended that should he again ask to make an Affirmation, he should not be prevented from doing so. But that was precisely what the Courts of Law now held that he had no right to do. The hon. and learned Gentlemen the Attorney General and the Solicitor General, however, voted in both Committees in favour of the Resolution. The result, so far as the trial had gone, therefore, had amply justified the course they thought fit to take, and showed that they were not so far wrong at that time as many supposed them to be. He did not know what might happen now, until the hon. and learned Attorney General gave them his advice upon the two points which he had just raised. But he thought the House would see that they had got into all that difficulty from beginning to end by the Government not coming forward in the first instance to give the House some advice, because that was really what the Prime Minister absolutely refused to do. He (Sir R. Assheton Cross) believed that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster had a very firm opinion upon one point only—namely, that, as Mr. Bradlaugh had been elected by the electors of Northampton, he ought to be allowed to take his seat either one way or the other—that was to say, either by affirming or by taking the Oath. That was, that if it was not the law that he could affirm, he ought to be allowed to take the Oath; and if, on the other hand, it was decided that he could not take the Oath, he ought to be allowed to affirm. That would certainly be carrying the principle of local self-government by the people of Northampton a very long way. He was not going to enter upon the question whether Mr. Bradlaugh, holding the opinions he did, ought to be allowed to have a seat in that House, because that would be a matter for future discussion; but the question was, whether any steps should be taken to relieve him, and others holding the same opinions, from the difficulties in which they found themselves placed? It might be that persons holding the same opinions as Mr. Bradlaugh might present themselves at that Table again, openly professing those opinions. He sincerely hoped it would be a long time before that did take place; but if it did take place, as had happened in the case of persons not only holding no religious opinions, but holding religious opinions, the Legislature must take cognizance of the difficulty and deal with it. The Government should have come forward and stated whether, in their opinion, this Gentleman ought to take his seat, or ought not to have a seat. If it required legislation, legislation ought to have been proposed; and though he hoped such legislation never would be proposed—for, if it was, he could promise it his most uncompromising opposition—yet the Government must say one thing or another, when they come to the difficulty again, aye or no should this Gentleman have a seat in the House of Commons. He rose for the purpose of asking for the opinion of the hon. and learned Attorney General, for the guidance of the House, as to how they stood now in a position different from that which they stood in when he himself objected to any question being raised as to Mr. Bradlaugh being a Member of the House.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, it seemed to him that in this matter right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite were exceedingly difficulty to satisfy. The right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir. R. Assheton Cross) first complained that the Law Officers of the Crown gave certain advice last year, and now he complained that the Law Officers and the Government had given no advice on the question——

Mr. W. LOWTHER asked the right hon. Gentleman in the Chair, whether the hon. Member (Mr. Labouchere), having moved for a Writ, was now entitled to speak upon the subject?

Mr. SPEAKER said, the hon. Member was entitled to speak to the Motion he had proposed.

Mr. LABOUCHERE resumed, by observing that what had happened in Mr. Bradlaugh's case practically amounted to this—that lawyers differed, as lawyers generally did, the hon. and learned Attorney General taking one view and the Judges taking a different view. The right hon. Gentleman (Sir R. Assheton Cross) complained that hon. Gentlemen sitting on the Ministerial side of the House had objected to the course taken by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst), when he urged—he (Mr. Labouchere) might almost say clamorously urged—that a new Writ should at once be issued. At that time, a decision had been given against Mr. Bradlaugh by one Judge. Judgment against him had now been given by three more Judges; and, in all probability, the House of Lords would decide the point of law against him. The right hon. Gentleman wished to know what course Mr. Bradlaugh would take in the matter. He must ask the right hon. Gentleman not to look at the matter from a purely legal point of view. Mr. Bradlaugh had been sued by Mr. Clarke as a common informer. He (Mr. Labouchere) was authorized by Mr. Bradlaugh to say that he fully accepted the law laid down by the Court of Appeal as to his position in that House; but upon the minor issue, whether Mr. Clarke had a right to sue without suing through the Crown, and whether the penalties were to go to Mr. Clarke, Mr. Bradlaugh wished to take the opinion of the House of Lords. Whether or not Mr. Bradlaugh would be obliged technically to submit the whole matter to the House of Lords he knew not; but, assuming that Mr. Bradlaugh would be, he (Mr. Labouchere) was authorized by Mr. Bradlaugh to engage that he would in no case raise the point as to his right to sit in that House. That being so, it seemed very desirable to move for a Writ instead of waiting for a year, until the House of Lords had settled the appeal, because, as he understood, hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House would oppose Mr. Bradlaugh's sitting and voting in that House during that year. He spoke not only for Mr. Bradlaugh, but also for the electors of Northampton; and he thought it would be most unfair to the electors to deprive them for a year of one of their Members because one of the Gentlemen whom they elected, on being declared to have vacated his seat by one Court of Appeal, chose to appeal to the House of Lords. Let the Writ be issued at once. The people of Northampton claimed that they had a right to be represented by two Members in the House of Commons. If one of those whom they had elected was not entitled to sit, then they demanded the issue of a new Writ. Under these circumstances, he appealed to the Leader of the Opposition—was it necessary to drag the House through another of those unhappy Bradlaugh debates? The election might be got over before the Easter holidays, and then hon. Gentlemen and right hon. Gentlemen would have an opportunity of considering what course they would take should Mr. Bradlaugh be re-elected. It was not for him (Mr. Labouchere) to express an opinion as to whether he would, or would not be, re-elected.

Mr. NEWDEGATE said, that, having had some experience in these questions, he hoped the House would proceed carefully in the present resistance, because he was quite sure that, while there was a general desire not to inflict any avoidable hardship upon Mr. Bradlaugh, the House was in danger of being placed in a very complicated position. Mr. Bradlaugh wished to continue his appeal against the penalties he had incurred for having sat and voted in the House without having taken the Oath, or made the Affirmation permitted in some cases in lieu of the Oath. The law declared the penalty to be the avoidance of his seat, he being disqualified. Let the House, then, consider its position, if it consented to the issue of this Writ whilst an appeal to the House of Lords was pending. What assurance could the House have that the House of Lords would allow Mr. Bradlaugh to raise only the issue relating to the penalty? He (Mr. Newdegate) submitted that the House of Lords could scarcely, was not likely to do so. It seemed impossible to adjudge the penalty without testing the offence. In illustration of what he was saying, perhaps the House would permit him to quote a short extract from an authority which was generally recognized in that House—namely, the work of Sir Erskine May *On the Law, Privileges, Proceedings, and Usage of Parliament.* Sir Erskine May adduced the case of Baron Rothschild, who remained a Member of the House, without attempting to sit or vote in the House; but, when wishing to attend, sat below the Gangway for several Sessions, and he served on Committees, without rendering himself liable to the penalty. At page 203 of his work, Sir Erskine May used this expression—

> "It is usual for Members, who have not yet taken the Oath, to sit below the Bar, and care must be taken that they do not inadvertently take a seat within the Bar, by which they would render themselves liable to the penalties and disqualifications imposed by the statute."

Now, he (Mr. Newdegate) held that the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), who had made this Motion, was not acting fairly by his constituency, if he had not informed them that disqualification followed the penalty, and that, if they elected Mr. Bradlaugh again, he would be still more incapable of taking his seat within the Bar of this House without incurring penalties and disqualifications than before the issue was tried at law. This information might not reach or be understood by the constituency before the Election. In fairness, therefore, as he (Mr. Newdegate) thought, to the constituency of Northampton, the House ought not to issue the Writ while an appeal was pending in the House of Lords on the question which it had pleased Mr. Bradlaugh to raise. The constituency ought not to be placed in the position of being tempted to elect a man who could not sit, and who, it might be, meant to use the Election for the purposes of future agitation. He put it, then, to the House whether it was prepared to lend itself, by deciding on the issue of the Writ, to an agitation against the law, when the clear course for Mr. Bradlaugh to take was to await the result of his appeal to the House of Lords? He (Mr. Newdegate) hoped the House would forgive his interposition; because, as one of the oldest Members of the House, he felt that the course proposed, this premature issue of the Writ while an appeal was pending, was a course scarcely worthy of the House of Commons. If Mr. Bradlaugh chose to abandon his appeal, he (Mr. Newdegate) did not see what could prevent his presenting himself again to the constituency of Northampton. The issue which the constituency would have to try in that case would be clear; and he repeated that he hoped that the House would not lend itself to that which appeared to him to be an indirect mode of propagating an agitation; and he, for one, deprecated the idea of the House of Commons lending itself to any such contrivance.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir R. Assheton Cross) had asked what was the difference in the position of matters now from their position when the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) interfered with respect to the presentation of a Petition by Mr. Bradlaugh, and had given Notice of his intention to move that a Writ be issued for the election of a Member for Northampton. When the matter was before discussed, the decision of the Court of First Instance was that Mr. Bradlaugh was not entitled to sit and vote in that House. But Mr. Bradlaugh claimed the right belonging to every suitor of asking a Court of Appeal to decide whether the judgment of the Court of First Instance was right or not. The House would remember that, in connection with the subject, the example was given of a person, who might have had a decision against him in an action of ejectment and wished to appeal, would not be deprived of his estate until a Court of Appeal pronounced upon the matter. That was the right then claimed on Mr. Bradlaugh's behalf. He had appealed, and the decision of the Court had gone against him; and Mr. Bradlaugh now said that he was satisfied with the decision that had been come to. ["No, no!"] He said he was satisfied so far as the decision given as to his right to sit and vote in that House, a matter which was perfectly distinct from the right of the informer to sue. He was willing to give up his seat, and that the judgment of the Court of Appeal should determine the right. The second question which he understood the right hon. Gentleman to ask was, whether, if this case went to the House of Lords upon Mr. Bradlaugh's appeal, the House of Lords could determine only the second part — namely, as to the right of the common informer to sue, or whether the case would not be decided upon both issues. Without hesitation, he (the Attorney General) would say that the House of Lords would be entitled to determine only one point, and could determine only one point—the point appealed against. The question had been raised by two separate demurrers. The first point was raised upon the demurrer as to Mr. Bradlaugh's right to sit in that House; the second point upon the demurrer as to the right of the informer to recover the penalties for Mr. Bradlaugh's sitting and voting. To the House of Lords there would be an appeal upon one point alone, the right of the informer to sue. Mr. Bradlaugh, in giving notice of that appeal, would have to give his ground of appeal, and would have to state that he appealed on that ground only, and the House of Lords would not be entitled to go outside the ground of appeal. He was sure he would have the concurrence of the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) when he said that unless Mr. Bradlaugh broke his word and the pledge he had given the House of Lords would only determine one point. They had Mr. Bradlaugh's assurance in the matter, and he hoped the House would agree that they had seen nothing in his conduct while he had been a Member of the House to cause them to believe that he would break his word. That being so, he would ask the House to consider not only the position which the constituency and its Representative, but the position which the House itself would be placed in if they refused to sanction the issue of the Writ. Here was the case of a person who said he accepted the judgment, who did not intend to exercise the right of appeal; and would the House, in those circumstances, take upon itself the responsibility of saying that he had the right of appeal; and during the time an appeal to the House of Lords might run, which he thought was one year, but was told by a right hon. Friend was five years, they would not let the constituency be represented, the only alternative being that Mr. Bradlaugh coming to the House, sitting on the Benches, and incurring a penalty of £500 a-day? He asked the House whether he was not bound, in justice to the constituency and to Mr. Bradlaugh himself, to say that the Writ should go? The hon. Member for North Warwickshire (Mr. Newdegate), as he understood, indicated an opinion that, because the Act said that the seat would become vacant as if he were dead, Mr. Bradlaugh was, therefore, disqualified from being again elected.

Mr. NEWDEGATE said, he never made such a statement. What he said was that Mr. Bradlaugh was subject to the disqualification enacted by law.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, he must have misunderstood the hon. Gentleman. He could not assent to that view. The judgment did not put Mr. Bradlaugh to death. He could sit for any other constituency; and, if he could sit for any other constituency, he could sit for Northampton. He (the Attorney General) would not enter into any acrimonious debate regarding the past, and he did not grudge the right hon. Gentleman (Sir R. Assheton Cross) the Party triumph which he was justified in claiming. He would only say that on the second Report of the Select Committee they came to the conclusion that Mr. Bradlaugh, or any other Member, might come to the Table and affirm, and that opinion was justified by the Resolution of the House on the 1st July last. By virtue of that Resolution, Mr. Bradlaugh did affirm and take his seat. He (the Attorney General) had been attacked by the right hon. Gentleman for the opinion which he gave last year. It was quite true that the opinion expressed, not only by himself, but by many learned Members of the House, of eminent ability as lawyers, and whose honesty could not be impeached, was that the Resolution of the House was justified. It was his lot every day of his life to be asked to interpret words upon which different constructions might be placed. That was not the first time that the weight of authority had been against him, and if the hon. and learned Member for Preston (Sir John Holker) and the hon. and learned Member for Launceston (Sir Hardinge Giffard) were present, they would say that sometimes one was right and sometimes one was wrong. When they were right they did not triumph, and they only regretted when the balance of opinion was against them. He knew that the Judges, at least one of them, had expressed his opinion with the greatest possible confidence. Speaking with all respect of that Lord Justice, he would say he was so good a Judge that whenever he expressed an opinion he was entitled to express it with confidence. The right hon. Gentleman opposite also had a right to say that the course he recommended had been justified. But he was unwilling to enter upon this matter with reference to what might occur in the future, or had occurred in the past. The time of the House would be better occupied in examining what would be the just course to pursue, both to the constituency of Northampton, and also the Gentleman whom it had sent to the House. He would conclude by expressing a hope that the House would agree to the Motion.

MR. GORST said, he was glad that the hon. and learned Attorney General had spoken, because, in doing so, he had made it perfectly clear that the case as it stood now was very different to what it was three weeks ago. The hon. and learned Gentleman scarcely recognized the respect paid to his opinion on that (the Opposition) side of the House. It was true he (Mr. Gorst) said on a former occasion that he would move the issne of a Writ for Northampton; but that was before he had the advantage of hearing the reasons given by the hon. and learned Gentleman why the Writ should not be moved. The difference between the present case and the former was quite clear. It was this—that, in the course which was taken, Mr. Bradlaugh was the supreme judge. He was the guide of the Government and their own familar friend; but he had now come to the conclusion that he must give up his position, that it was useless to fight any longer, and he confessed that he had no right to be a Member of the House. He might remind the Government that they apparently paid no attention either to the decision of their own Select Committee, which resolved that Mr. Bradlaugh was not entitled to make an Affirmation, or to the House itself, which had endorsed that opinion by a considerable majority, or to the judgment of the High Court of Justice, pronounced by Mr. Justice Matthew. But, according to the hon. and learned Gentleman, it was not to the judgment of the Court of Appeal that they now paid attention, but to the fact that Mr. Bradlaugh himself, who had advised them throughout in the matter, admitted that he was wrong, and that ever since July 2, when he had taken his seat without subscribing the necessary Oath, he had taken part in the proceedings of the House without having more right to do so than any stranger who might be introduced into the Lobby. He wished to notice the eagerness with which the hon. and learned Gentleman had expressed his opinion as to the re-eligibility of Mr. Bradlaugh at Northampton. The statement, perhaps, was not quite in order; but it was easy to understand that the hon. and learned Gentleman had been glad to make it. The truth was that it might be useful in "another place" and on another occasion, though, of course, even his hon. and learned Friend was not infallible, and differences of opinion might be found to exist whenever the matter was *sub judice.* With all possible respect for the legal opinions of his hon. and learned Friend, which he (Mr. Gorst) did not wish to attack, he wished to improve the occasion by pointing out to the House the extreme untrustworthiness of what might be called political legal opinions. It would be remembered that last year, when a Select Committee was appointed, consisting of eminent lawyers from both sides of the House, every Member of that Committee, excepting only the hon. and learned Member for Stockport (Mr. Hopwood), gave his opinion in strict accordance with the exigencies of the political situation, the Liberal lawyers asserting, and the Conservative lawyers, with equal confidence, denying, Mr. Bradlaugh's right to affirm. The matter had now come before the Court of Appeal, and an independent non-political Judge, Lord Justice Bramwell, immediately pronounced it one of the clearest cases he had ever known. He ventured to say that no lawyer outside the House had ever had any doubts at all on the subject. To pass to another point, to which the hon. and learned Gentleman had referred—namely, the Resolution of the 1st of July last—he wished to know what would become of that Resolution? A few days after the passing of that Resolution, the late Lord Chief Justice of England had said to him—"I see that in the House of Commons you have been passing a Resolution to allow people to do that which you yourselves have declared to be illegal." Now that the High Court of Justice and the Court of Appeal had condemned as illegal the course recommended by that Resolution, did the Prime Minister intend to allow the Resolution to remain among the Standing Orders of the House? It was strange that the hon. and learned Gentleman should have referred to it with some degree of pride, as most people would have expected the Government to be ashamed of it, and to particularly desire it to be buried and forgotten.

Mr. MORGAN LLOYD thought that hon. Gentlemen opposite, looking at the views expressed, ought to move an Amendment to the effect—

> "That Mr. Bradlaugh was a Member of the House, and therefore this Motion for a New Writ should not be agreed to."

Were they prepared to do that? If they were not, their conduct was inconsistent, and the only excuse that could be given for it was that the issue of the Writ was now opposed on account of the change in the attitude of the Government. Last Session the right hon. Member the Leader of the Opposition had supported a Resolution to the effect that Mr. Bradlaugh was not entitled to affirm; and what had happened since? The Courts of Law had decided that the Resolution was right; and now the Government had also adopted that view. He (Mr. Lloyd) had always been of opinion that Mr. Bradlaugh was not entitled to make an Affirmation; and for that reason he had refrained from voting against the Resolution of the 1st July last. In that opinion he differed from many hon. and learned Friends near him, and agreed with hon. Gentlemen opposite. But he was surprised to find that those who supported the Resolution of July should hesitate in supporting the Motion before the House.

Mr. LEWIS said, that the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General had promised to lay on the Table of the House the pleadings and the judgment of the Courts in this case; and he (Mr. Lewis) would suggest that, until the House had had time to receive and peruse that document it would be prudent to adjourn the consideration of the question. At present they had no official knowledge of what had been done, for they were still without any authoritative information as to how the judgment of the Court of Appeal had been obtained, or on what points it had been given. On that ground alone the House would have difficulty in coming to a conclusion. No one doubted the assurances given by the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) and his late Colleague; but the notice of appeal to the House of Lords would only take a few days, and the proper course to pursue was not to decide this question until they had the actual Motion on the Table of the House. That would not involve any disfranchisement of the electors of Northampton for five years, and no one would wish for such a thing; but, by adjourning the debate till after Easter, they would be enabled to know the real issues raised on the appeal. A week or two ago they were told to hold their hand because there was the possibility of an appeal; but now there was the certainty of an appeal. The House of Lords might open the whole question, and that would place the House again in a difficult position, for it might involve not only the question of penalties, but the right to sit in that House. He, therefore, put it to the Premier whether it would not be more fair to the House to wait?

Mr. Serjeant SIMON said, he wished to say a few words in reply to his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst), who had so ungraciously charged those who supported the view of the Attorney General in the Committee with having been influenced by political bias. As a matter of fact, his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Stockport (Mr. Hopwood) voted in the first Committee the same way as the Conservatives, against Mr. Bradlaugh's right to make an Affirmation. In the second Committee, the hon. and learned Member for Stockport was of opinion that Mr. Bradlaugh was entitled to take the Oath, and in that opinion he was opposed to the Attorney General, the Solicitor General, and other Liberal lawyers, who agreed with the Conservative Members on that point. They had thus the hon. and learned Member for Stockport differing from the other Liberal lawyers on both Committees, and voting with the Conservatives on one, but the Liberal lawyers on the second Committee, with the exception of the hon. and learned Member for Stockport, voting with the Conservatives. The hon. and learned Member for Chatham was, therefore, wrong in his facts, as well as ungracious in his imputations, even if the facts had been as he stated them.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE said, he did not see why the Writ should not be issued. It was important, however, that they should have a clear statement from the Government on the subject, and for this reason — that the course which was taken with regard to Mr. Bradlaugh's right to sit in the House was a course which was taken on the responsibility of the Government. The view that was taken by the great body of hon. Gentlemen on that side of the House was that the House was able to assert that Mr. Bradlaugh had not complied with the requisitions of the law, and that, therefore, the seat might be declared vacant. But the Government, in opposition to that view, pressed upon them the necessity for adopting the Resolution which was passed, but of which those for whom he (Sir Stafford Northcote) spoke did not approve, to the effect that Mr. Bradlaugh had a right to affirm, subject to the decision of a Court of Law. That course having been adopted at the suggestion and on the responsibility of the Government, certain proceedings had taken place in the Law Courts, and a certain result had been arrived at. Now, Mr. Bradlaugh's Colleague, speaking on his behalf, declared that Mr. Bradlaugh thought the time had arrived when the matter was practically concluded by the Law Courts, and that a new Writ might issue. He (Sir Stafford Northcote) and those on his side of the House were anxious to know whether the House would be landed in a difficulty by adopting that suggestion. If it should turn out that another Gentleman should be elected for Northampton, and if the House of Lords should afterwards reverse the decision which had been taken on the first of the two questions raised—namely, Mr. Bradlaugh's right to affirm, they would, no doubt, be in a difficulty. But the Government had led them in the matter, and were responsible for the position in which the House was placed, and they had now assured the House, through the mouth of their legal exponent, the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General, that they would run no risk in the peculiar circumstances of the case of any such difficulty arising. He (Sir Stafford Northcote) and his Friends perfectly understood and entirely accepted the assurance given by the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) on Mr. Bradlaugh's part that that Gentleman did not intend to raise his right to sit in that House in his appeal to the House of Lords. A suggestion had been made, however, that it would be possible for the House of Lords to take the whole question into consideration, and to reverse the decision of the Court of Appeal on that question of his right to sit in the House. [The Attorney General (Sir Henry James) dissented.] He noticed that the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite shook his head. He did not say it was so; but, the suggestion having been made, it ought to be stated on authority that it was not so. The hon. and learned Gentleman assured them that there would be no risk of that kind, and that they need not fear that the House would be placed in a position of difficulty. In these circumstances he thought it was desirable to issue the Writ.

Mr. GLADSTONE said, that as regarded the point raised by the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis), he thought the House felt that there was no necessity to see the absolute letter of the documents referred to before they decided this question. Being in substantial possession of the facts, the House appeared generally to think it was not worth while to prolong the turmoil of election proceedings on account of the text of the documents not being before them. He, therefore, thought it might be assumed that the House was prepared to decide the question. Next, he accepted the proposition that the Government were responsible for the position in which the House now stood, and for advising the House, by the mouth of his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General, to go forward and to issue a new Writ. He might observe that even if there were an imaginable risk in the case, it would be right to consider what alternative was before them. The right of appeal to the House of Lords remained open for five years, and it was not possible for Mr. Bradlaugh absolutely to divest himself of his right. Therefore, if the issue of the Writ was to be postponed on the ground that there might be an appeal to the House of Lords, which might conceivably result in a reversal of the judgment of the two Courts below, the logical upshot of that argument would be that the postponement should be for five years. Of course, nobody would accept that proposition. It appeared to him (Mr. Gladstone) that for minds so peculiarly constituted as that of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst), these questions connected with Mr. Bradlaugh had an astonishing attraction. For his own part, he (Mr. Gladstone) did not find that the subject, although they had been willing to face it as a matter of duty, was one so particularly savoury that they should extend their observations upon it further than the necessity of the case required. He was only going to dispose very shortly of one or two allegations which had been made. It had been complained that the Government ought to have said one thing or another in this matter at the outset. What the Government did was to propose that the matter should be referred to a Committee, and he believed that in so doing they pursued a course which was supported by uniform precedent, and, he thought, by reason also. Then the hon. and learned Member for Chatham had his imagination so stimulated that he introduced into the debate propositions which had no foundation whatever. He said, for instance, that Mr. Bradlaugh had been, throughout the whole controversy, the adviser of the Government. [An hon. Member: Hear, hear!] That "Hear, hear!" showed exactly what he said, that to some hon. Members this subject was the most catching in the world. One hon. and learned Gentleman made a complaint about it, and another found himself in the same condition. That statement proceeded entirely from the imagination of the hon. and learned Gentleman. All he could say was that he had never, directly or indirectly, had any communication with Mr. Bradlaugh on the subject, nor had any other Member of the Government, unless that might be called a communication, to which no answer was required and none made—namely, an intimation given a few days ago that Mr. Bradlaugh was willing, if it were thought best for the public convenience, to make an application for the Chiltern Hundreds. The hon. and learned Gentleman seemed to think also that the Government had great reason to be dissatisfied with the Resolution which had followed upon his (Mr. Gladstone's) Motion adopted on the 1st of July last. The effect of that Resolution had been stated, not quite accurately, by his right hon. Friend opposite (Sir R. Assheton Cross). His right hon. Friend had stated that the Resolution was an affirmation of the right of Mr. Bradlaugh to affirm, subject, of course, to the judgment of a Court of Law. If he remembered the Resolution perfectly, it made no affirmation whatever of the right; but it simply asserted a negative proposition that the House would not interfere. Of course, that was a very different thing. If he were asked individually about the Resolution, he should say he was very well satisfied with it. It was not for him to presume to give an opinion whether Mr. Bradlaugh should swear or not. The wisest course to pursue was to leave the matter to a Court of Law. It had been left to a Court of Law, and the principle had been laid down that the result should be left to a Court of Law. With the result he was perfectly satisfied, and he had no doubt that it had been decided according to the law.

Sir JOSEPH M'KENNA said, he regretted very much that the question had not been postponed. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General had alluded to the point that it was probable that this matter might be open for five years; but he (Sir Joseph M'Kenna) did not think that was possible. The appeal to the House of Lords would, doubtless, be tried as rapidly as it could be tried. After two Courts had decided against Mr. Bradlaugh, now it was quite open to the House of Lords—and he challenged any loyal subject to say otherwise—to give a decision on what was called "Point No. 1," in Mr. Bradlaugh's favour. Point No. 2 had been given up by Mr. Bradlaugh. Their Lordships could go into any question which appeared to them proper in connection with the whole matter affecting their decision. From first to last, he had held the opinion that Mr. Bradlaugh had not a right to sit in that House by taking an Affirmation and withholding from taking the Oath; and he thought the House of Lords would maintain the same thing. He could not help thinking it would have been better if the decision upon the issuing of the Writ had been postponed until the information with respect to what had passed in the Court of Law and Court of Appeal was before them. At present they only knew through the ordinary channels that the question was *coram judice*. Of course, he was not going to move an adjournment upon the matter; but he desired upon the present occasion just to express his own views upon it, and to say that he thought it would have been much more in accordance with the formalities of this House if they had waited for information.

Mr. WARTON said, he was one of those persons for whom that question, as had been said by the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, had an irresistible attraction; and he felt it to be his duty, for the benefit of the Liberal Party, to remind them of what took place last Session. They must remember that they had a powerful Government. Counting the Home Rule vote, the majority of the Government was 168; giving the Conservatives the Home Rule vote, the majority of the Government over the Opposition was 45; but when the question was put to the House, and the vote of the House was unfettered, there was a majority of 45 against the Government—275 to 230, on the Motion of the hon. and learned Member for Launceston (Sir Hardinge Giffard). What he wanted to call attention to was this—that the Prime Minister wanted to have that vote reversed, and he brought forward a Resolution, and it had been demonstrated that the Premier was a Leader who did not care for the legitimate expression of the opinion of the House, but carried out his own determined will. For his part, he (Mr. Warton) had no feeling whatever for the constituency of Northampton. They knew what Mr. Bradlaugh was. He did not come before them for the first time. They knew what risks he ran. If that constituency was punished he was not there to regret it. In his opinion, the constituency was one which deserved far more to be disfranchised than other constituencies from which representation had been taken.

Motion *agreed to.*

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE inquired, in the event of the House being able to go into Supply, whether it was the intention of the Government to take as much of the evening as they could for Supply; or, whether they meant to stop the Committee of Supply at any hour in the course of the evening, in order to take any of the Bills on the Paper?

Mr. GLADSTONE, in reply, said, the Government would confine themselves to Supply.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY.—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

BUTTER (SPURIOUS COMPOUNDS).

RESOLUTION.

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL, in rising to call the attention of the House to the effects of the unrestricted importation from the United States of various spurious compounds resembling butter, which exposes British dairy farmers to an unfair competition, and consumers to imposition unavoidable under the present system; and to move—

> "That it is desirable that such steps shall be taken by the Legislature as will insure, as far as possible, that such of these compounds as are harmless shall only be sold under distinctive names, and that the importation and sale of those which are hurtful or dangerous to health be prohibited altogether,"

said, he regretted that he should have to bring that subject forward immediately after the debate just concluded, for some hon. Members might think it was not a very important one; and he believed also that there existed outside the House a certain feeling that the subject of butter was not worthy the attention of the House. That morning he had received a cutting from what seemed to be one of the so-called Society journals, in which it was stated that politicians were making merry over the proposed debate in the House of Commons on the subject of butter. Well, he was very glad to have been able to afford any subject for the legitimate mirth of politicians. He did not know what the nature of the mirth might be; but he knew that his constituents, who were interested, to a considerable extent, in dairy farming, were inclined to regard it, if as a joke at all, as rather a grim one. But it was not to be supposed that he introduced this subject in the interest of any particular class. He had no desire or intention of posing as the farmers' friend. It was quite true that the question did intimately affect the profits which the farmer drew from his occupation; but he felt that he was also acting for a very much larger interest. The hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold) claimed the other day to represent specially the great consuming bulk of the population of this country, those who were, in a literal sense, *fruges consumere nati,* and so did he (Sir Herbert Maxwell) now, in this matter. But take the lesser interests of the farmers first. It would be admitted that there was no source of food supply more important than the supply of milk and its products. His hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) the other day quoted the Earl of Derby as saying that the agricultural produce of this country was capable of being doubled. His hon. Friend said he could not agree with Lord Derby, and thought such a statement showed considerable ignorance of fact. Well, he (Sir Herbert Maxwell) agreed with that criticism, so far as arable produce was concerned, and so far, perhaps, as feeding cattle was concerned; but as regarded the dairy produce of the country, it was not only capable of being doubled, but trebled, and multiplied almost infinitely. Not only was that the case on account of the physical capabilities of this country; but there was an enormous demand for dairy produce. He spoke from memory; but he believed that the expenditure of the country upon imported dairy produce during 1879 amounted to no less than £11,000,000. In conversation not long ago with a firm of importers in the City, he was informed that upon consignments from one firm in France they received last year upwards of £5,000 commission. That was to say, that that sum, representing a commission of £5 per cent, showed that there had been imported by one firm alone dairy produce amounting to £100,000. He thought those figures showed that the question was of sufficient importance to merit the consideration of hon. Members on both sides of the House. Taking next the larger question of the consumers of the supply, the Legislature had already recognized the importance of purity and of genuineness in the supply. By the provisions of the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act, 1878, powers were given to inspectors of markets and police constables, acting under the authority of the municipal authorities and justices of the peace, to inspect milk *in transitu* between the purveyor and the purchaser—that was to say, that anyone who sold milk was bound to hand over a sample to the officer who asked for it at any time during business hours. That imposed a very irksome restriction upon our home trade, though he quite recognized the necessity for it; but he wanted to point out that there were no similar powers given for the inspection or testing of similar articles coming from abroad. The terms of the Resolution he had put on the Paper were of the most general kind. All that he asked for was an extension of these regulations which at present affected our home trade, so that they might also affect the foreign producer. It was mainly in consequence of the unsatisfactory answer which he received from the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, at an early period of the Session, in reply to a Question in reference to this matter, that he had brought the subject forward that night. The right hon. Gentleman appeared to regard with equanimity and tolerance a state of matters with regard to this traffic which he (Sir Herbert Maxwell) could not but look upon as altogether objectionable and lamentable. He held in his hand a drawing or caricature which did not unfaithfully represent the nature of this traffic. It was published as a Supplement to *The Provisioner*, on the 18th October. It contained two pictures. One was labelled "Butter-making as it used to be," and the other "Butter-making as it now is." The former represented a dairymaid, neatly dressed, churning butter in a beautiful dairy all in order, a cow looking in at the window, and a pastoral landscape in the background. "Butter-making as it now is" was represented by a personage who was intended to represent the father of lies, who was stirring up all sorts of compounds—lard, tallow, soap, grease, slush, butterine, fat, and axle grease in a huge cauldron, from which were pouring forth volumes of noxious smoke.

Well, he did not consider that an exaggeration of this industry. He did not, of course, mean to say that the individual represented in one of the drawings was personally occupied in the manufacture; but he must say his impression was that he might, consistently with his other duties and avocations, preside over that manufacture. The materials of the butter imported from America were not of a genuine character. He believed the trade in dairy produce with America began at the time of the Civil War in that country. The consignments at that time were of prime quality. Since then, adulterations had obtained to a large extent in America as elsewhere. Exception might be taken by some persons to his classifying one of the substitutes for butter, which was imported in large quantities, as an adulterated article, for it was a product of remarkable ingenuity and chemical skill. It was imported either as oleomargarine—that was, in the state of raw oil or extract of fat, or in the ultimate form of butterine or margarine, which he believed were synonymous terms. To such an extent had the traffic increased in America that the farmers themselves had approached Congress to protect themselves against the injury done by the sale of this article as a substitute for butter. The consequence was that the American Legislature passed a law by which it was rendered illegal to export oleomargarine or butterine except in casks branded with the real name in full. But that order had been evaded. Nothing was easier when the casks were shipped than to erase the brand, and it was found that other names bearing a distinct commercial value in the butter trade were substituted. The penalty inflicted upon persons exporting this substance without branding, or fraudulently exporting it, was so very slight as to make it worth while running the risk of incurring that penalty, and accordingly the risk was run constantly. He might be asked to show the extent to which oleomargarine or butterine was taking the place of real butter in importation from America into this country. It was very difficult for a chemist or an expert to detect the difference between butterine and butter. He had a letter from a gentleman who had been engaged in Glasgow for the last 35 years in the butter trade, and he told him he had practically inspected hundreds of casks of American butter sold to his customers, and found that 40 out of every 100 were not genuine. In the casks one or two layers were found of a darker colour than the genuine article. There was no doubt about the enormous consumption of it in this country. The exports from America had largely increased during the last few years. In 1879, taking Glasgow as the nearest port to his own constituency, there were only 274,000lbs. exported from New York to that city; but in the nine months of 1880 there were nearly 1,500,000lbs. imported into Glasgow. The same rate of increase held good throughout all our other ports. Now, he wanted to know whether that was sold as butterine? He must confess he had not seen it advertised as such. They had all seen popular and wholesome articles of food, such as Epps' Cocoa, Horniman's Tea, and Colman's Mustard advertised so much as almost to cause one sometimes to wish the advertisers in the bottom of the sea; but he had never seen anything like—"Try our celebrated rich Oleomargarine," or "No breakfast table should be without butter on a Soapstone basis." His suspicion was therefore aroused, and the facts he had elicited had justified this suspicion—that this article was not sold under a distinctive name, but sold as genuine butter. This nefarious traffic, as he considered it, was encouraged by the action of our carrying system in this country. Oleomargarine was carried from New York to London at the same price that genuine butter could be brought from Liverpool to London. For that, of course, we had only ourselves to blame. He might be told that if they insisted upon oleomargarine and butterine being sold by their proper names nobody would buy them. He did not think they need show any tenderness for spurious and base articles sold under false names. Then it might be said that the Sale of Food and Drugs Act was sufficient. He knew the good that had been done by that Act; but it did not meet the case, not from any fault in the Act itself, but because the machinery was wanting to carry out that Act in these instances, and its evasion was so easy. Section 6 prohibited any article being sold that was not of the nature, substance, and quality of the article demanded by the purchaser. That was comprehensive enough; but, as a matter of fact, it was frequently evaded. Could it be expected that a working man, or his child, perhaps, sent to buy half-a-pound of butter, would draw a nice distinction between what seemed to be butter and what really was butter; and if the good wife was the purchaser, would she not be tempted to prefer an article that could be offered her at 4*d.* or 6*d.* per pound cheaper than genuine butter? This compound called butterine was frequently filled into Irish cases. It was made up into rolls of the same size as Irish butter, and he had seen himself in shops quantities of these rolls with really no distinction between the genuine article and what was confessedly the spurious one. Beyond that there was this to consider. Without dwelling on the damage that had been inflicted upon the British producers by this traffic, he might inform the House that last week he had a letter from a gentleman of great experience and standing in the butter trade, stating that whereas last year at this time good Irish butter was selling at 134*s.* to 140*s.* a cwt., the highest price obtained for the best brand now was only 90*s.* a cwt., while 2nd and 3rd qualities could not be sold at all, and this fact was entirely owing to the manner in which the markets were glutted with spurious compounds. An objection which might be raised to interference with this traffic was that oleomargarine was not in itself an unwholesome compound. He was ready to admit that if it could be taken as a scientific fact that raw animal fat could be swallowed without any injury to human constitutions; but what guarantee had they as to the sources from which the fat was drawn? In America so great was the sale of oleomargarine that a sufficient quantity of fat could not be obtained from proper sources to supply the demands of the trade. Of course, the proper fat for the manufacture of this composition was the best caul fat of healthy animals; but statements had been made that fat was taken from diseased animals, and they had no safeguard against that. The manufacture of this compound was not confined to America; it had taken root in this country. He cut from a newspaper the other day some details of a rather interesting trial which took place before the magistrates at Birkenhead. The summons was for a nuisance caused by butterine works, and during the hearing of the case it was sworn by several witnesses that various vapours and sickening smells emanated from this establishment; that the residents in the neighbourhood had to leave their dwellings in consequence; that, on one occasion, during the visit of an inspector, a cask of nasty fat was smuggled away from his notice; and the magistrate, being of opinion that the nuisance was fully proved, fined the defendant £5. Well, then, if this article, in favour of which so much had been said as a wholesome, cheap, and economical substitute for butter, was drawn from such sources as that, and went through a process which caused a nuisance to the community, it was not asking too much that the article should be sold under its proper name, and that the public should know that they got butter when they asked for butter, and not oleomargarine. That was all he asked in regard to oleomargarine; but there were two compounds of a quite different nature, with respect to which he asked to have more stringent regulations. He could not say that he was practically acquainted with either; but about the first he had made every possible inquiry, and he believed it was made from the fat of pigs, and was called suene. It was not made from cooked fat, but from raw fat; and in the case of the compound, as well as in the case of oleomargarine, he was told that heat in excess of 95 degrees spoiled the manufacture, as it imported it a tallowy flavour. Therefore, any germs of parasite or poison which might be in the fat of these animals was not subjected to sufficient heat to destroy them. No less than 700,000 swine died in Illinois from hog cholera; and, to show the possible effects of these things, he mentioned the case of one man who died with worms in his flesh, that were actually eating him up, and who was supposed to have caught the disease from eating sausages. He had no wish to make his statement too highly coloured; but this fact was described in a letter to the Home Office from the British Consul at Philadelphia. He had also heard that the winter cholera, which caused so much mortality in Chicago, was attributed by physicians to the use of that sort of butter. He therefore urged that every possible precaution should be taken to prevent the introduction of hog-fat butter into this country. The third substance was of a curious nature. It was called soapstone, and was a mineral which could be ground into the finest impalpable powder. It was used for the purpose of adding weight to almost every article of food sold, and could be added in a manner which rendered detection difficult. He asked, in regard to these two substances, suene and soapstone, that steps should be taken entirely to prevent their introduction into this country. It was not alone from America that they received supplies of bogus butter, but from France and other Continental countries. There were also manufacturers of the articles in this country—he knew two or three of them — and he thought some system of inspection and regulation should be carried out in their cases. He had brought forward the subject in no polemical spirit, but rather to direct the attention of the Government to a matter which seemed to him of great importance, not only to the farming interest, but to the whole community; and he hoped the fact he had adduced would suffice to show that he had not raised it without cause. He was not asking for protection for the farming interest, for the British farmer had already shown himself able and willing to meet all competition fairly brought against him; but he asked that the Legislature would no longer connive at the production and sale of spurious and base articles under false names, articles whose very baseness enabled them not only to compete unfairly with the production of the farmers, but tempted the ignorant and unsuspicious purchaser to prefer them to the genuine article. He could not regard with approval legislation that had for its object the cheapness of our food supply, if it did not take sufficient precaution against the too frequent corollary of nastiness. He would conclude by moving the Resolution of which he had given Notice.

Mr. A. MOORE, in seconding the Resolution, said, it would not be easy to bring before the House a matter of greater importance to the agricultural interests of this country and Ireland than that was. They came before the House that night, not asking for protection for a specific interest, as the hon. Baronet (Sir Herbert Maxwell) had clearly pointed out, but with a request for, at least, fair play. A few words would give the House an idea of the important interest with which they had to deal. The export of butter from Ireland had been a staple trade for many years, the quantity sent over last year from Cork being 400,000 casks; from Limerick, 200,000 casks; and from Tipperary, 200,000 casks, making a total of 800,000 casks from these three places alone, the sum represented by these exportations being from £2,500,000 to £3,000,000 annually. A great deal of this butter was of such high quality that it was absolutely above all competition on the part of spurious vendors; but, at the same time, there were many poor farmers who were unable to produce the high-class butters, and who, in consequence of the unfair competition to which they were subjected, could not dispose of their butter as readily as their neighbours, and who, consequently, required some measure of protection. What they had a right to complain of was that the spurious articles that had been spoken of should be sold under false names; and, not only that, but that they should be sold greatly above their value to British tradesmen, to the manifest robbery of the workmen and persons of that class who were induced to purchase them. He might state that he had himself gone among the dealers in the articles, and had purchased what was called butter at 1*s.* per pound, and the article purchased was not value for the money. Therefore, unless they took steps to prevent that, this spurious article would continue to be sold at a price greatly above its value, and under a false name. Though some of these products were not deleterious to health, they had no possible guarantee that they got an article sound and wholesome, neither could they say what they were going to receive, seeing that these compounds sold under any other name than their own. It was not easy to get information as to the exports of these spurious articles. The British Customs and Board of Trade had not yet got their statistics tabulated under heads that would be sufficient guide. The United States gave no information, and we on this side of the Atlantic had no means of watching the imports of these substances; but he would give the House a few figures he had been enabled to obtain, and they were of a somewhat remarkable character. From the year 1869 to the year 1879, he found that the exports of butter from the United States increased 38 times its original quantity—namely from 1,000,000 to 38,000,000lbs. Butter was the name under which these spurious articles were first exported from America. None of them came from America under the name of oleomargarine. There was also the name of lard. Well, although the export of American butter increased from 1,000,000 to 38,000,000lbs in 10 years, the cows did not increase in anything like the same proportion. There had been a certain increase in the number of cows in the United States; but, taking the years 1875-6-7-8, the figures showed only a steady and gradual increase among the cattle, and a more rapid increase in the pupulation, the increase in cows being only from about 10,000,000 to 12,000,000, while the increase in butter exports went on by leaps and bounds. Besides this, the statistics only mentioned "cows," they did not specify "milch cows;" so that, in these figures, he had given the American producers the benefit of whatever the difference might be. With regard to the exportation of lard from the United States, the increase had been enormous. In the 10 years he had mentioned, the exports of this article from America had increased from 41,000,000lbs. to 326,000,000lbs. He had obtained these figures from the Report of Mr. Bateman, of the Board of Trade. In 1880 the exports of this article, from the port of New York alone, were 15,750,000lbs., of which 12,250,000lbs. went to Rotterdam, and it was from Holland that the larger portion of the butterine sold in England was imported. They naturally expected during the same period a great increase in the Dutch exports, because it was from Holland that we obtained our principal butter supply; and, accordingly, we found that the imports from that country had jumped at one bound from 28,000,000 kilos, to 36,000,000 kilos, a kilo being about equal to two English lbs. weight. Consequently, we had the means of tracing the sources from whence these products came. Since the Notice of the Motion before the House had been given, he had made it his business to visit some of the poorer districts of the West End of London. He went out one Saturday afternoon, when the wives of the artizans were visiting the provision dealers and grocers to make their weekly purchases, and he found that there was being sold—and he had purchased some himself—under the name of butter an enormous quantity of the spurious products that had been spoken of. These substances were on the same counter with the genuine butter, without any label to show the difference. In many places the butter dealer confessed that that was so; but there were no means by which the ordinary customer could obtain any knowledge as to the real nature of what he was buying. The butterine was actually side by side with the genuine butter, and the same wooden knife that was used for severing the one was used immediately afterwards for severing the other. The spurious article was, he found, being sold in large quantities, and at very excessive prices. In his opinion there were not many of the very inferior butters in the shops he visited, the general price being 1*s.* 4*d.* per lb. for the butter and 1*s.* for the butterine. In some cases where he had made purchases the vendor confessed to him, possibly under the fear of the Adulteration Act, that they were butterine. Some of the samples were very offensive, others were by no means offensive; and to give an idea of how far the competition in this substance was carried, all were beautifully done up, in muslin rolls, and packed in boxes, just as if they had just arrived from Normandy, like the finest French butter. There was an absence of odour in this class of so-called butter, and an absence of definite taste, except that there was a strong taste of salt; but in one shop he saw a cask of most beautiful butterine of perfect fragrance and absolutely indistinguishable from the ordinary butter. The cask, he was told, had just arrived from Holland. Well, then, he thought there was not the slightest doubt that these spurious substances were being sold as butter; and if the Legislature allowed these things to be sold under false names, there was no guarantee to the purchaser as to what sort of article he was buying. This country was being flooded by enormous quantities of these spurious products, of the purity of which there was no guarantee. Some of these substances were not injurious to health; but they were being sold by a class of tradesmen such as the Commercial Manufacturing Company of New York, and who were themselves the loudest in begging for legislation that should provide for the enforcement of a distinct brand on the exports from foreign countries, so that the spurious articles should not be mixed up with the genuine, so as to detract from the good names of our dealers or subject them to unfair competition. What was now asked was that butter should be sold under its own name. He held in his hand a circular issued by a Company started in London, offering butter at 50*s.* per cwt., which would be about 5½*d.* per lb. It was simply robbing the working man to allow such a product to be sold except under its proper name, for there was very little doubt that for this material the working man was charged 1*s.* per lb. The gentleman who offered this "butter" at 5½*d.* per lb was rather drawn out by one of his (Mr. A. Moore's) constituents, who happened to be in the trade, and who wrote to ask on what conditions he could have the oleomargarine, and the answer was—"In reply to your letter, our present price is 50*s.* for oleomargarine." The tradesman described the different modes and weights in which the substance was packed, and added—"If you wish to have it packed in Irish firkins it can be done." Unless the Government took some steps to protect the community they would leave no chance to the farmer, who could not produce butter at such a price, nor to the respectable dealer, who was undersold by the man selling a spurious, and perhaps unwholesome, article. It was time for them to be up and doing. He did not ask for what was termed Protection, and if he thought he was depriving the teeming population of this country of one pound of wholesome food he should hesitate to do what he had done in seconding the Resolution; but he thought he had a right to ask fair play, which he did not think the honest producer had at present. He hoped the Board of Trade or the Local Government Board would let the House have all the statistics of the exports and imports of these products, and that the Adulteration Acts would be put in force, so that the substances referred to, if injurious, should be prohibited, and, if not deleterious, should be sold under their proper names. He thought that the name "Butterine" ought to be abolished, as it was misleading to the artizan, who probably thought the substance going by that name had some connection with butter, whereas it had none. He thought that the thanks of the House were due to the hon. Gentleman who had brought the question forward. It was one of the greatest importance, and concerned one of the chief staple productions of Ireland. The discussion that had taken place on this subject could not but have a salutary effect, as it must have taught the Irish farmers a lesson that they would all lay well to heart—namely, that the true remedy for the competition to which they were subjected in this particular trade was to be had by setting themselves with renewed energy and redoubled vigour to the task of producing the very highest class of butter.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "it is desirable that steps be taken by the Legislature to ensure that of the spurious compounds resembling butter, which are imported from America, those only which are harmless shall be permitted to be exposed for sale under distinctive names, and that the importation and sale of those which are hurtful or dangerous to health shall be prohibited altogether,"—(*Sir Herbert Maxwell,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. A. H. BROWN said, that he sympathized with the object of the Resolution the hon. Baronet (Sir Herbert Maxwell) had brought before the House; but it was not so easy of achievement as he seemed to suppose. It would be difficult to strengthen the laws dealing with this question of spurious butter; and one illustration given of the American Government showed that they had found a difficulty in carrying out laws which they had made to put down the imposition complained of. He had been a Member of a Select Committee which sat in 1875 to inquire into the law relating to the sale of food and drugs. Previous to 1872 there had been a considerable stir in the country in regard to the fraudulent sale of articles of food and drugs, and that led to the passing in 1872 of the Adulteration of Food and Drugs Act. That Act, having been in operation for three or four years, was found to have worked most grievous and great injustice, and a Committee was appointed in 1875 to take into consideration the whole of the law relating to that subject. In 1875 the Sale of Food and Drugs Act was passed, and by Clause 6 of that Act it was provided that no person should sell to the prejudice of the purchaser any article of food or drugs which was not in its nature, substance, or quality the article demanded by such purchaser, under a penalty of £20. Now, anybody who sold butterine or oleomargarine under the name of butter sold an article which in substance, quality, or nature was not the article demanded by the purchaser; and, therefore, if anybody went to a shop to buy butter, and was served with butterine or oleomargarine instead, the seller was liable to a penalty of £20. The Act also provided for the appointment of skilled analysts in every county and borough in England and Ireland, by whom samples of articles could be examined; and there were officers to watch whether the law was carried out or not. By such means the Legislature had done a great deal to check the improper adulteration of food and drugs; and it was scarcely possible, unless they prohibited the sale of those compounded articles altogether, to go any further. He understood that the hon. Baronet, by his Resolution, did not propose altogether to prohibit the sale of butterine and oleomargarine, provided they were sold under their proper names. The whole question was one of considerable difficulty, and he could not well see how they were to amend the law, or to make it stronger than it was at present, without going the length of total prohibition, and it was hardly desirable to go so far as that in the case of articles which were not hurtful to health and were expressly sold under their true names. The more stringent Act of 1872 had to be repealed after three years' working. What the Act of 1875 practically laid down was the principle that nothing should be sold under a false name and character. What, therefore, was sold as butter must be butter; and if it was butterine, the purchaser must be expressly told that the article was a compound. In those circumstances, he hoped that the hon. Baronet would not press his Resolution to a division, but rest content with the discussion he had raised, which might do some good in warning the public.

Mr. BIDDELL said, he also thoroughly approved the object of the Resolution; and he believed the hon. Baronet (Sir Herbert Maxwell) had, by introducing the question, done good service to the poorer classes in this country. Hardly a day passed without the prosecution of some dairy proprietor for mixing water with the milk he sold. They did not so much complain of that; but it was an innocent transaction compared with the selling of adulterated butter, which, as they had heard, was often made of raw and bad pork. He wished the authorities were as zealous in putting down the injurious adulterations of beer as they were the comparatively harmless adulterations of milk. The feeling outside the House was that the beer interest was too great a one for the magistrates to punish; at the same time, they apparently delighted in prosecuting the poor milk sellers. He trusted that, in the interests of the poorest class of butter consumers, the Government would accept the Resolution of the hon. Baronet, and do something to stop the importation of the article.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN, in supporting the Resolution, said, he thought it was really too bad to the farmers of this country and of Ireland to allow such things to be sold. He could not imagine what position the Government had taken up in opposing the Motion, which was simply one for inquiry into the matter, and for taking steps to prevent injury by the sale of such stuff. When it was sold as a compound merely, and as long as it was pure and not injurious to the health, there was no harm in it, and there could be no objection to its sale; but it was clearly often sold to deceive, and to make people believe they were buying butter. It was made up, not of butter, but of fat; and now the Americans could not get the price they wanted for their pork, they had lowered the price of the butterine, and increased the quantity they sold. He had drawn attention some time since to the sale of silent spirit as genuine whisky; but the Government of the day protected the persons who sold the silent spirit in working out their fraud, and the result was that the trade in the article was much injured. There was no attempt to interfere with free trade in the matter; the only aim and object of the Resolution seemed to be to detect fraud. Let them make and sell the butterine as a compound; but what he objected to was its being called butter. If they allowed a spurious article to come from the United States which was made up of lard and beef fat to be sold as butter, they were doing an injustice to the manufacturers of the genuine article, both in this country, in Ireland, and in Scotland. He hoped the Government would not oppose such a Motion, which was simply to detect fraud. There could be no doubt that these compounds now thrown upon the market were highly injurious to the health of the people; and for that reason, as well as to protect the farmers against a most unfair competition, he should vote in favour of the Resolution of the hon. Baronet.

Colonel COLTHURST said, as the Representative of a constituency which was largely interested in the making of butter, he rose to join in the appeal to the Government to accept the Resolution of the hon. Baronet (Sir Herbert Maxwell), and to return the thanks, not only of the Irish consumers, but of the great mass of the consumers of butter in that country, to him. His hon. Friend the Member for Wenlock (Mr. A. H. Brown), in opposing the Resolution, had enumerated the provisions of the Act of 1875, and showed that those provisions, if carried out, would have been very effectual. The fact remained, however, that in spite of the provisions of the Act, those spurious substances were sold under the name of butter; and that conclusively proved that the hon. Baronet was justified in calling the attention of the Government to the subject, and to ask that the Board of Trade and the Local Government Board should take steps to prevent such substances from being sold as butter. He (Colonel Colthurst) did not think the farmers, either of England or Ireland, would stand up against anything like fair competition; but this was a most unfair competition. The farmer had now to compete with an American article which was not butter at all. He hoped the Government would see their way to give the subject the benefit of a Parliamentary inquiry by a Select Committee; and, if not by that, at least by a Departmental inquiry, in order to see how the Act of 1875 was carried out for the object for which it was passed.

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, he much desired, as the Representative of a large constituency, to show cause why the Government should not accept the Resolution of the hon. Baronet (Sir Herbert Maxwell). There were two ways of approaching this question, one in which the people have a deep interest. There was the Protectionist way, and the mode applicable to the general system of free imports adopted in this country. It seemed to him that the hon. Baronet had adopted the Protectionist view of the matter. He (Mr. Arnold) had risen for the purpose of calling the attention of the Government to an important amendment of the law which he thought it would be necessary to make, and which he hoped would meet, to a considerable extent, the views of those who supported the Resolution before the House. He had himself seen in Holland and elsewhere the manufacture of this oleomargarine butter, and he could only say that the result of his observations of the process of manufacture was not such as to make anyone unwilling that the product should form a part of the food supply of the people of this country. His own opinion was that these products afford the supply to the poor of this country of an article of food which was of very considerable value. The hon. Baronet proposed to deal with the matter at the ports of this country, and in doing so his Motion exhibited, at least, an affinity to that of the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) with reference to our supply of meat. There was a dangerous affinity between these two Motions. He (Mr. Arnold) could not conceive that any interference with the imports of this country at the ports could be anything but of a more or less Protectionist character. He yielded to no hon. Member in desiring to protect the consumer in regard to articles of food purchased for consumption. It was, in this matter, desirable that every precaution should be taken in the locality where the article was consumed to protect a person from buying an article which was not butter. He was told that the law was protective as regards real butter. He could show that that was not the case. In the Public Health Act of 1875 butter was not mentioned at all. If sufficient care was taken in the markets of this country to protect the people from buying an article under an assumed name, then, he thought, all that could be done would have been done for the protection of the people. But that was not the case at the present moment. He held in his hand a letter from the Superintendent of the Manchester Produce Market, in which it was stated that that market was one of the largest centres for food distribution to the working community in the world. The gentleman in question had turned his attention particularly to the article of butter, and he said in the letter—

> "In 1875, I seized 13 tubs of butter at a wholesale confectioner's bakery. It was the most filthy stuff imaginable, stunk fearfully, and was of many colours. It was admitted for the defence, when I brought the owner before the magistrates, that the stuff was intended for use as food, but that as it was butter, and butter did not come under the heads mentioned in the Act, the case must be dismissed, and the butter returned to the owner. The case was dismissed, the butter was returned to the owner, and I know that it was by him used in his pastry. Tons of this stuff is used by many of the wholesale confectioners in all the large towns. I believe it consists of the scrapings of butter from the grocers' shops, mixed with the inevitable dirt, and such as has become rancid, and altogether too bad to be used in the ordinary way."

Thus a valuable public servant was unable to interfere, not only in that case, but in others of a similar character. Public officers were unable to deal as they ought to with this question of butter, because in the Public Health Act of 1875 the word butter, in the long enumeration of articles of food, was omitted. He presumed that omission was attributable, perhaps, to the fact that when the Act was framed oleomargarine and substances of that nature were not invented. At all events, the 116th and 117th clauses of that Act—and he would direct the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade to the fact—dealt with this matter in the following words:—

> "And the person to whom such animal, carcase, meat, poultry, flesh, fish, fruit, vegetable, &c. (no mention of butter), belongs at the time of the exposure for sale, or in whose possession or on whose premises the same were found, shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding £20 for every such article so condemned, or at the discretion of a justice of the peace, without the infliction of a fine, be liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding more than three months."

He (Mr. Arnold) had shown that by the simple omission of the words the officer whose duty it was to look after the health of the people in matters of food could not apply the law in regard to bad butter. He begged of his right hon. Friend (Mr. Chamberlain), who, he presumed, would take part in the debate, to give his particular attention to this matter; and he would ask him, or anyone representing the Government, whether opportunity would not be taken to introduce such an amendment of the Public Health Act of 1875 as would protect the people's interests in this concern? Instead of adding the word butter to the long enumeration of articles contained in the 117th clause of the Act in question, they should strike out from the clause the whole of the list of articles, and simply insert words making it applicable to any article sold, or exposed for sale, for the food of the people.

Mr. GREGORY thought that the suggestion just made by the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arnold) was worthy of the attention of the Government, as this was a matter which affected the producers and consumers in this country. The farming interest was not fairly treated when this spurious article was allowed to be imported and sold as butter. He should support the Resolution of the hon. Baronet (Sir Herbert Maxwell) on the ground that it would be in the interest alike of the producers and the consumers that all articles of food sold should be sold under their proper names. He did not object to the importation and sale of these articles sold as butter as long as they were of pure manufacture; but it was only fair to ask Government to make provision that the people of the country, when purchasing their food, should know what they were buying.

Mr. LYON PLAYFAIR: Sir, the hon. Baronet the Member for Wigtownshire (Sir Herbert Maxwell) is naturally alarmed at the competition which British dairy farmers experience by the great development in the manufacture of oleomargarine. This increase arises from various causes, but especially from two, the first being the greatly increased consumption of butter among our population, and, second, from the improvements made by chemistry in the manufacture of those fatty bodies which are known to us under the name of butter. The increased consumption leads to an increased supply, and the augmented demand naturally stimulated invention as to new sources of supply. These alarm the hon. Baronet and others interested in dairy farming. The quantity of butter consumed per head of the population is rapidly growing. Even the consumption of foreign butter increases quickly. Not many years ago the foreign butter imported was only 1½ lb. per head of the population; now it is about 6 lb. The exports of butter from Holland were 20,294,000 kilogrammes in 1869; but in 1879 they had increased to 36,451,000 kilogrammes. During that time Holland has been largely importing oleomargarine from America. Her imports of fats were only 9,374,000 kilogrammes in 1869, while in 1879 they amounted to 37,461,000 kilogrammes. I understand that 12,000,000 lbs. of oleomargarine were imported into Holland last year from America; and, in all probability, a good deal of this oleomargarine comes to us in the excellent butter which we get from Holland. This oleomargarine, no doubt, comes to us directly under its own name as a butter substitute, though also in concealed admixture with American, French, and Dutch butters. The acknowledged oleomargarine exported from New York is already half the declared value of butter, though doubtless there is a good deal of concealed oleomargarine in the butter which is imported as dairy produce. The declared value of butter exported last year from New York was $5,179,071, and that of oleomargarine was $2,581,317. But the manufacture is not confined to America, for France, Holland, and England are actively engaged in making oleomargarine. Undoubtedly, this artificial butter is rapidly pushing inferior butter out of the market. But this sort of competition is not new to agriculture or to industry generally. Let me give an illustration. Both Turkey and Holland used to grow large crops of madder as a dye stuff for calico printing. For centuries these crops were most valuable; but a few years ago chemists learned how to make the colouring matter of madder from one of the products of coal tar, and these agricultural crops of Turkey and Holland have greatly fallen off in demand. Yet the hon. Baronet would not think it a fair subject of complaint that the artificial production of alizarine, the colouring matter of madder, should in any way be restricted to favour the agriculturists of Turkey and Holland, who suffered so seriously by the competition of this coal-tar product. I think I shall be able to show that his present complaint in regard to butter is precisely of a similar character, except that, in the present case, the competition is not so severe, because oleomargarine simply consists of butter fats got from an ox, instead of butter fats from a cow, and, therefore, is simply one form of agricultural product interfering with another agricultural product. The fats which constitute butter, for the main part at least, can be got from different sources, and are not even restricted to animals, for such fats are found abundantly in plants as well as in animals. The chief solid fat in butter is the principal ingredient in palm oil, while the chief liquid fat of butter abounds in olive oil: even the soluble aromatic fats which give to butter its peculiar taste and flavour are found abundantly in cocoanut oil. If we could extract butter fats economically from vegetable oil, and give a sound, healthy butter from them at a cheap rate, it would be a matter of indifference to the public whether the butter came from the cow or from the vegetable. Let me give an illustration of my argument. Milk contains 4 lb. of cheese for every 100 lb. of milk. But pease and beans contain nearly 20 lb. of cheese for each 100 lb. The Chinese, who are a great experimental nation, actually do make cheese from peas, and sell them in their markets. These cheeses are highly esteemed in China; but to our palates are insipid, because they do not contain butter fats. But I look forward to the day when cheeses will be made from beans, peas, and lentils, and after being mixed with good oleomargarine may form palatable and very economical cheeses. Would the hon. Baronet stay the progress of chemical invention, and prevent the manufacture of such cheeses from peas, simply because they would interfere with dairy produce? Now, to come to oleomargarine—that substance is prepared by purifying the more fusible parts of beef suet, and separating from it the less fusible fats and cellular tissue, which exists in all fats. The product consists of true butter fats, with the exception of about 5 per cent of aromatic soluble fats, which give to good butter its delicious flavour. But that 5 per cent makes all the difference as regards flavour and taste between good oleomargarine and good butter. The two cannot come into competition any more than inferior American cheeses can compete with our best Cheddar and Cheshire cheeses. The American cheeses do knock our bad cheeses out of the market, and so certainly good oleomargarine will and ought to drive our bad qualities of butter out of the market. Much of the butter sold to the poor is reduced in nutritive value by salt and water; and readily becomes rancid. Such inferior butter ought to be substituted by oleomargarine, which, if carefully prepared, has little tendency to rancidity. Although oleomargarine cannot compete with good butter, yet I am sure it will so thoroughly compete with bad butter that dairy farmers will be compelled to improve the quality of their butter. Unless thorough cleanliness is observed in the treatment of the milk, in the churning, and in the washing of the butter, the aromatic fats, which give superiority to good butter, become the source of rancidity to inferior butter, and render it positively unwholesome. But even when butter is not rank, it is so often brought into the market adulterated with so much salt and water that its nutritive value is much deteriorated. Natural butter may contain from 12 to 16 per cent of water, and from 1 to 2 per cent of salt. But many of the inferior butters contain 20 to 25 per cent of water, and from 5 to 10 per cent of salt. Such butters are a fraud upon the poor, and are far inferior in nutritive value to well prepared oleomargarine, which rarely contains above 12 per cent of water. It is with poor butter of this kind that oleomargarine will and ought to compete. Bad rancid butters are quite as unwholesome as bad specimens of rancid oleomargarine. Only it is rare to see oleomargarine rancid, because it is manufactured on a large scale, and with the care which large operations receive by skilled superintendence. There are other butter substitutes called "suine" prepared from the fat of hogs. I have no personal acquaintance with their mode of preparation, and reserve my opinion in regard to them. The hon. Baronet is afraid they may contain trichinæ; but I do not think probable, as they lodge in the muscular and not in the fatty tissues. As to the relative wholesomeness of good butter and good oleomargarine, I do not think there is anything to choose between them. It has been said that, as oleomargarine is not heated above 120 degrees Fahrenheit, it may contain the germs of disease in the animals; but so may the fats constituting butter which have not been heated above 99 degrees Fahrenheit in the body of the cow. So far as we know, when the fats derived either from the cow or the ox are not rancid, they are equally wholesome. In both cases, when they are rancid, they are equally unwholesome. Surely, carefully prepared wholesome butter fats called oleomargarine are much better to the poor at 1*s.* per lb. than badly prepared and dirty butters at 1*s.* 3*d.* or 1*s.* 6*d.* per lb. How does the hon. Baronet propose that Government is to carry out his Resolution? The law already provides that an article of food sold under a name to which it is not entitled is punishable at law. Oleomargarine should certainly be sold as an artificial butter, and not as dairy butter. But how are you to enforce the law in this case, when the products of the cow and of the ox only differ in five parts out of the 100? I should be very sorry to decide upon a sample of artificial butter, whether it was from the cow or the ox. And when it is used for admixture with dairy butter the case is still more difficult. Very few chemists would be prepared to swear that a butter made half from the cow and half from the ox was unquestionably an adulterated article. It is not like chicory and coffee, for chicory is chicory and coffee is coffee. But oleomargarine and butter are practically identical, except as to their source and the absence of 5 per cent of aromatic fats, which probably before long may be added from cocoanut oil or other sources. The Resolution goes on to say that such artificial butters as are hurtful or dangerous should be prohibited altogether. Certainly rancid oleomargarine is a nasty and hurtful compound; but not any more so than nasty and rancid butter which abounds in many markets. Both are unfit for human food, although both may be purified by well known processes. The farmer has a much better method than legislation to protect his dairy produce from cheap substitutes for butter. Let him cultivate improved methods of preparation, strict cleanliness, efficient washing of the butter, and fair treatment.

Let him send such butters to the market without being laden with salt and water to increase the weight; and his superior and well flavoured butter, with little tendency to rancidity, will keep its own position in the markets in spite of the equally salubrious but less well flavoured oleomargarine, which will certainly drive bad butters out of the field, but cannot compete with really good butters.

VISCOUNT FOLKESTONE thought the House had been rather carried away from the question. The Resolution of his hon. Friend (Sir Herbert Maxwell) was to the effect that it was desirable that such steps should be taken by the Legislature as would insure, as far as possible, that spurious compounds resembling butter should only be sold under distinctive names. That it did not appear to him (Viscount Folkestone) would be a very difficult thing to do. They had been informed that there were Acts which provided for that necessity; but those Acts did not do what was required in that direction. The Resolution went on to say that the importation and sale of those compounds which were injurious to health should be prohibited altogether. It was all very well to say that good oleomargarine, or whatever it might be, was as good or better than bad butter; but that was not the question before the House. The question was this—that the butterman or the shopkeeper who sold oleomargarine or butterine in place of butter should call it by a distinctive name, and not sell it as butter. His hon. Friend who brought this Motion before the House said he did so in favour of the consumers, and he put aside the agriculturists altogether. His hon. Friend, he (Viscount Folkestone) thought, was right in doing so; but this question was of very great interest to the producer of butter. What was happening now in England? On account of bad seasons, bad weather, and for other reasons the agricultural interest was at a very low ebb. It was a curious fact that in the last few years a vast quantity of arable land in this country had been turned into pasture, for, in 1879, there were about 30,000 acres more of permanent pasture than in 1878. He presumed that had been done for the purpose of growing cattle and cows, and of making butter and cheese, and producing milk, and beef, and mutton. He did not believe that the increase of butter making corresponded with the increase of permanent pasture. He believed, on the contrary, that the making of butter had decreased in this country. But what was the reason for that decrease? He thought we might fairly say that one reason, at any rate, was the importation of butter, and butter substitutes that were sold as butter, which made it impossible for any agriculturist to compete with the foreign market. The Report of Mr. Bateman, of the Statistical Department of the Board of Trade, said it was almost impossible to obtain accurate figures of oleomargarine and butterine; but it appeared that the present production of oleomargarine and butterine in the Eastern States was, at any rate, nearly 10,000,000 lbs. per annum. The increase of the production of oleomargarine, in the past year, was owing to the higher price of natural butter. By the supply of the market with these spurious substances, the manufacture of real butter was being gradually driven out. A cry of Protection had been raised against the Resolution by the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arnold); but the hon. Member, though intimating his intention to oppose the Resolution, really used words which supported it. He acknowledged the public needed protection, and that was exactly what the Resolution proposed. He (Viscount Folkestone) claimed the support of the Government for butter against oleomargarine and other compounds like butter in appearance—'tis grease—but living grease no more. In conclusion, he would only say that the majority of the speeches that evening had been in favour of the Resolution, which, he could truly assert, was in the interest of the consumer, as much as of the producer, inasmuch as it left him free to buy, according to his taste, either good butter or the adulterated article.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN thought that, except on a few points, it was not necessary for him to supplement the interesting and conclusive speech of his right hon. Friend (Mr. Lyon Playfair). The hon. Baronet who had moved the Resolution wished to avoid any impression of seeking to re-introduce Protection, and was animated by a desire to protect the consumers of the country against deleterious products, which were being forced upon them. Without in the least doubting his good faith, he must say it was somewhat curious to find assurances of this nature coming from those who represented the producers. Within the last few days there had been two or three questions raised, all from the other side of the House, all running in the same direction. There was a Motion that, if accepted, would have led to the absolute prohibition of all imports of live cattle; and there had been questions put pointing in the direction of absolute prohibition of all pork from the United States, and now here was another proposal which would lead to the absolute prohibition of butter imports from foreign countries. How enormous was the trade with which it was proposed to interfere might be gathered from the statement of the hon. Baronet himself that 11,000,000lbs. of dairy produce were annually imported into this country. Well, that showed the enormous importance of the trade with which he proposed to make so great an interference; and though he declared he was so much interested in the consumer, the noble Lord who had just spoken contemplated with some alarm the effect these productions would have on farming industry. Well, he could not help thinking that he and his constituents were alarmed without reason. There was not the slightest proof that these things had any effect in lowering the price of butter. At present, probably the price of good butter was higher than it had ever been before; and if the price was the only stimulus required for the production of good butter that stimulus existed. Now, as to the nature of the foreign butter products, although the hon. Baronet had given an almost thrilling account of the dangers he apprehended, there was no evidence of any real danger from their use. The hon. Baronet seemed to rely chiefly on a caricature he exhibited contrasting the artificial with the natural production. Mr. Bateman, of the Board of Trade, had shown that, as regarded oleomargarine, it was, at least, as wholesome as butter itself; but, of course, as his right hon. Friend had said, the product was unwholesome when bad, just as bad butter was unwholesome. Mr. Bateman said he had visited the manufactory of the largest Company for the manufacture of the article rather late in the afternoon, so as to see the premises in their least attractive aspect, when the day's work was over. Beyond the floor being very slippery in places where oil was spilled, there was nothing to disgust the eye, and all possible care was given to the cleanliness of the plant and manufacture. Scientific witnesses had given evidence in its favour in the United States, where, by the way, the competition of this material with butter had been felt as keenly as in our own country. In reply to an application of the Health Department of New York City, Professor Chandler had said—

> "I have satisfied myself that it is quite as valuable as butter from the cow. The material is fresh suet; the processes of manufacture are harmless, and are conducted with great cleanliness."

An official Report had also been made to the Legislature of the State of New York that "there was no objection to the manufacture and sale of this substance." He could quote many more passages to the same effect, all of them conclusively proving the wholesomeness and utility of good oleomargarine, and it would be most unjustifiable to interfere with the importation of this article of food of so great importance. Another matter which had been referred to was the substance known as "suine," which was made from the lard of pigs instead of from the suet of oxen. The special danger supposed to attach to pork arose from the presence of a parasite in the muscles of the animal, and not in the fat. At the present time hog's lard was an article of common food to large numbers of the working classes, and sold as hog's lard, and not as butter. In the poorer parts of Birmingham, and in many of the districts around, there were poor people who never saw butter on their tables from one year's end to another. They found hog's lard a good substitute, and bread covered with hog's lard was common food at every meal. Were they to prohibit the importation of lard of all descriptions? ["No, no!"] But the hon. Baronet proposed to prohibit the import of these articles that were injurious. [Sir HERBERT MAXWELL: As butter?] As articles of food. He stated that suine was only hog's lard under another name; but was it injurious as food? It would be monstrous to prohibit this article of food so largely consumed without much more complete evidence than had been offered. There was another substance referred to—butter on a soapstone basis. If the hon. Member was of opinion that the Americans were able to manufacture butter out of stone he would find himself mistaken. As he understood it, soapstone or steatite, a very heavy substance, was used to adulterate butter, and to add to its weight. To a certain quantity of genuine butter a certain quantity of this substance was added entirely for the purposes of fraud. This was neither less nor more than akin to the practice which was adopted in this country of sanding the sugar, and it was carried out precisely for the same purpose. But it was not true that soapstone was in any way injurious to health. It was, no doubt, a fraud to pass it off as butter; but Professor Church informed him that if they were going to eat minerals at all they might as well eat soapstone as anything else, and they would not suffer any bad consequences from it. However, the fraud on the purchaser was admitted; but it should not be forgotten that on that subject they had already very stringent laws. The hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold) raised a rather different issue, and seemed inclined to turn the tables upon the agriculturists, and assumed that there was as much adulteration with the natural as the artificial butter, by reason of there being no such power of seizing butter bought for food, as was the case with milk, meat, and other articles of food. He had spoken of what was an undoubted defect in the law, the omission of butter in the Public Health Act, as an oversight; and whenever that Act came up for consideration that omission would probably be supplied; but the hon Member referred to rancid butter, which, though unfit for food, was still butter, and could not be the subject of prosecution as an adulteration; but the Sale of Food and Drugs Act gave every protection. Section 30 prohibited any person from mixing injurious ingredients with any article of food with the intent to sell under a liability of £50 for the first offence, and subsequently he would be liable to be convicted of a misdemeanour, and to a punishment of six months' hard labour. By the 6th section, if anything was sold to the prejudice of a purchaser which was not of the proper substance and quality, the vendor was made liable to a fine of £20. He thought the subject more properly belonged to his right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board. But from what he personally knew, he believed the Act had proved efficient when properly put in force. There was thus power to punish fraud in such cases. He thought, therefore, with reference to the first point mentioned by the hon. Baronet—namely, that such compounds as were harmless should only be sold under their proper names—sufficient security already existed. With reference to the second question, which concerned importation and sale, he would say, in the first place, that it was not proved to the satisfaction of any reasonable person that any of the compounds in question were dangerous to health. There was no evidence to that effect; secondly, the compulsory examination of those articles at the Custom House, in order to determine their character, could hardly be carried out, as they were of a perishable character; and to insist on such an examination would amount to the prohibition of the importation of foreign butter. Such a measure would really be prohibitive; and its effect would be to raise the price of an article of daily universal consumption. He could not, therefore, support the Resolution of the hon. Baronet.

Mr. PELL said, he had hoped that some suggestive comments would have been made by the right hon. Gentleman on the subject before the House. But it appeared that in the Returns of the Board of Trade those articles were not tabulated, and no satisfactory entry was made of the large importation of butterine and oleomargarine. He trusted steps would be taken to tabulate those substances. He thought it was hardly fair to insinuate that his hon. Friend intended his Motion to be of a protective character. His hon. Friend knew, as everybody knew, that an attempt of the kind would be utterly hopeless. He would advise his hon. Friend to make an alteration in his Resolution by leaving out the last two lines, which referred to the importation of these articles. He would be sorry to prevent the importation of all articles that were dangerous to health. In that case many kinds of dyes, drugs, and medicines would be excluded. He would say one word on behalf of butterine. When he was in America, he had visited a manufactory of butterine. It would have been impossible to distinguish the different processes—all of which were perfectly open to the inspection of anyone—from those carried on in the case of real butter. The compound consisted of 45 per cent of cream, and 55 per cent of animal fat. It was, after mixture, churned, made up into pounds, stamped, and sold as butterine. It was sold under its proper name, and was very popular among the people; and when the price of butter fell ruinously in America towards the close of 1879, butterine maintained its price of 22 cents—11*d*. a pound. He should be sorry to see that excellent article excluded from the English market. As to chemical examinations, no analysis would be really efficient where the differences were so subtle. If a chemist were to take a pound of his flesh and analyze it, and then take and analyze a pound of the flesh of the hon. Member for Salford, no such difference would probably be detected as to indicate that one was a Tory and the other a Liberal. He hoped that the President of the Board of Trade would see his way towards practically giving effect to the purpose of the Resolution, and that his hon. Friend would agree to the modification which he had suggested.

Mr. SHAW said, he hoped the hon. Baronet would accede to the suggestion of the hon. Member for South Leicestershire (Mr. Pell). He did not wonder that the Government had some suspicion of Protectionist tendency in the Motion; but he did not think that the hon. Baronet had any purpose of the kind in his mind. The subject was one of great interest to Irish Members, as butter was a main staple of industry in that country, especially in the South. The value of the butter passing through the Cork market equalled the value of all the butter and butterine which, according to the statements made in the debate, were exported from New York. In that part of Ireland the making of butter was an extensive domestic manufacture, and employed a class of people who would otherwise not be employed. If the Mover of the Resolution acceded to the suggestion which had been made, and omitted all reference to prohibition, he hoped it would be accepted by the Government. Everything should be sold for what it was, and not for what it was not. He knew that in England a large quantity of butterine was being sold as butter, and that was a fraud on the consumer. It was all very well to say that there were certain clauses in an Act of Parliament under which this might be prevented; the question was why they were not enforced, and why there was not machinery for detecting the fraud on the consumers? Chemists might find it difficult to distinguish between natural and artificial butter; but there were experts who could do it without hesitation. He had not the slightest fear of American competition. It had been beneficial in cheapening food when prices were becoming exorbitant; but, still, he always told his constituents that if they would produce the best butter, and the best beef and mutton, they could hold their own. In this competition, however, people should be able to know exactly what they were buying.

Mr. SCLATER-BOOTH said, he thought that the Mover and the debate had scarcely been treated with fairness by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, who imported into it the suggestion of Protection, which was not justified by the facts. The right hon. Gentleman had pointed to the Sale of Food and Drugs Act as containing stringent provisions, which were effective so far as they enabled the consumer to require that the retailer should guarantee the genuineness of what he sold subject to penalties. It would be an additional safeguard to the public if the system could be more widely recognized and adopted, and if care could be taken that in wholesale importation oleomargarine and butterine should not be admitted under the name of butter.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: But the Resolution asks us to prohibit importation altogether.

Mr. SCLATER-BOOTH replied, that all he wished was that only those articles should be prohibited which were injurious to health. He did not say that oleomargarine was injurious to health; what he said was that it should not be sold as butter. He could not see why Government should hesitate to accept the Resolution. These articles should not be imported with a view to defrauding and imposing upon the public.

Mr. PELL said, he should desire to move an Amendment to the Resolution when he was in Order.

Mr. SPEAKER said, the Resolution was an Amendment, and if the House consented to its being withdrawn, another could be moved.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, that the country was under a considerable obligation to the hon. Baronet (Sir Herbert Maxwell) who had brought forward the Resolution. The subject was one of deep interest to two important sections of the community. It closely affected the great dairy farming interest, which must, together with that of market gardening, greatly devolop in this country as the production of corn decreased. It was also of vital importance to the whole of the labouring classes. They were, as it had already been clearly shown, seriously injured in two ways by the pernicious compounds which were sold under the name of butter. In the first place, they paid a price for these articles which was two or three times their worth, because they imagined they were purchasing butter; and, in the second place, they and their families were injured in health by the effects of the deleterious substances. The Government were asked to take a very simple and necessary step—namely, to cause all such manufactured compounds that were not butter to be sold under their proper names, and to prohibit the sale of suine and soapstone, which were pernicious to health. But this the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain), most unreasonably, refused to do. In opposing the Motion of the hon. Member for Wigtownshire, the Government had acted as they generally did in their foreign policy—as the friends of every country but their own.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 75; Noes 59: Majority 16.—(Div. List, No. 177.)

Main Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

TECHNICAL EDUCATION.

OBSERVATIONS.

Mr. ANDERSON, who had the following Notice of Motion on the Paper, which the Forms of the House prevented him from moving—namely:—

"That, in the opinion of this House, a Royal Commission to visit the Technical and Agricultural Schools of France, Belguim, Germany, and Switzerland, and to report upon them, would be of great benefit in bringing before Parliament and the Country, in the accredited form of a Blue Book, the great advantages the industries of these Countries are deriving from such schools, and that the House pray Her Majesty to appoint such a Commission,"

said, the House would recognize that they had already had a very excellent illustration of technical education in the speech of the Chairman of Committees (Mr. Lyon Playfair). He was very sorry that he was not able to give the House anything half so interesting; but he wished to bring forward this question of technical education—one in which our country was very greatly interested, and in which its prosperity was very greatly concerned. The idea underlying it was that every career required some special training—that it ought to get whatever amount of knowledge and of science, whatever was best fitted to develop its utmost capabilities in every way, so that it might be able to do the very best work that was attainable. In the old time that was recognized as regarded our learned Professions; but not in others. As regarded industrial art it was not recognized. Those educated like himself in the pre-scientific era got a classical education or nothing at all. It was supposed in those days that a classical education was that which fitted anybody, and that if that did not succeed in bringing out a young man's brains nothing else would do it. It was effectual in cultivating a great many splendid intellects, no doubt; it produced a great many scholars, but also a marvellous crop of dunces; and the strange thing was that a great many of those who in youth were pronounced dunces at the school turned out to be the most capable men in the practical business of life. No doubt, that largely occurred through the fact that the proper chord was never struck—that the right education never was given them to develop the intellect that was waiting to be developed. Well, we were now finding out our deficiencies in this matter, but we were finding them out very slowly; whereas other counties found out their deficiencies much quicker than we had done, and did a great deal more to remedy them. Our education was still, to a large extent, classical. We had our primary schools, our secondary schools, and our Universities; but the latter were all more or less classical, and the result was that young men intended for business life probably dropped out of the primary school and got very little other education whatever. In consequence we found our business marts overrun with mercantile men from foreign countries cutting us out of our own trades, and that foreign goods were beating ours not only in the foreign markets, but also in our own. We had foreign engineers, foreign draughtsmen, foreign designers, foreign foremen in our factories; and, on inquiring the reason, we were forced to the conclusion that, whatever the subsidiary causes, the great cause was the superior technical education that was given in those other countries—France, Germany, Belgium, Switzerland, Austria, and America. Whatever difference in detail there might be in these countries, they all had this thing in common—they recognized the necessity of a sound, primary education as the substratum for technical education to be built upon. Those intended for the learned Professions went to gymnasiums and Universities; those for practical life went to practical schools. The training of a young man in this country for business life was to send him to sweep out the office. That was the first beginning of every business man, and it was supposed that there was a great deal of virtue in that training; but, in reality, he was left to pick up a training in any way he could. In Germany, a boy would go to a technical middle school, where he would learn all the arts and sciences bearing on the various trades, probably also to a trade school, where the processes to manipulative skill were taught, and then to the Polytechnic, where the highest science bearing on the industries were taught. Thus the Continental schools played into each other and formed a system. There was nothing of that kind in this country; but he believed we should have to adopt that system. In France and Belgium, which were remarkable for manipulative skill, that had been promoted by the schools; and in France there was one school containing about 1,000 boys who were learning carpentry, carving, gilding, engraving, clock and watch making, and the making of mechanical and philosophical instruments. In that way, the French were able to beat this country in all those articles. Manual dexterity and handicraft skill were greatly in need of encouragement in this country. We had gone in too much for cheapness at the cost of quality, and that had tended very much to degrade our handicraft skill. The sub-division of labour had, perhaps, also had the same effect. If a boy was always set to one kind of work, he might attain great skill in that; but he would not become generally a skilled workman. The action of trades' unions also had something to do with it. They had promoted average wages. Average wages meant an average of work, and average of work did not mean excellence of work, but generally mediocrity of work. The breaking down of the apprentice system also tended to degrade handicraft skill. A boy no longer, as in the old time, went to a master who employed few hands and superintended all the work himself, so that the apprentice could become an excellent workman. Now he was, as a rule, sent to a large factory, where there was no such supervision, and he was left to pick up his skill as best he could. When he got out of his apprenticeship he received the average wage; but there was nothing in that to encourage excellence of work. Another cause was the absence of craftsmanship from our educational training. Boys were scorned for having soiled hands, and they thought it more genteel to sell tea, or copy letters, or anything of that kind, than to follow a mechanical employment, although the latter required three times as much brain as the other pursuits did. He should like to see that superstition in favour of genteel employment exploded. He believed it was an open secret that the Prime Minister, for instance, felt more pleasure when he was attacking a tree with his axe than in leading the House of Commons or in translating Homer. Mentioning two or three instances of landed proprietors taking pleasure in handicraft pursuits, the hon. Gentleman suggested the creation of degrees in our schools for such skill, the acquisition of which should entitle the bearers to higher wages than those who had no degrees. In that way, he thought, British work might yet again assert its supremacy over the world—a supremacy it had unfortunately lost, lost at least for a time. On this point he would appeal to the Chairman of Committees (Mr. Lyon Playfair), who went to the Paris Exhibition of 1867 to investigate everything there. He reported that there was a singular accordance of opinion that our country had shown little inventiveness, and had made little progress in the peaceful arts and industry since 1862, and that out of 90 classes there were scarcely a dozen in which preeminence was unhesitatingly awarded to us. The one cause upon which there was the most unanimity of conviction was that France, Prussia, Austria, Belgium, and Switzerland possessed systems of industrial education for the masters and managers of factories and of workshops, while England possessed none. In 1878 there was another Exhibition in Paris, and the same inferiority of British work was shown. A deputation from the Bradford School of Arts went over, and they were obliged to confess that the result of the training workmen received in foreign countries was such that we were defeated on all hands. A short time ago he was in one of the largest shipbuilding establishments on the Clyde, and in one of the departments he saw a large number of American-made machines, which they said they could buy one-fourth cheaper than in this country. That meant that the American machine maker was able to come to this country, buy our steel or iron, carry them across the water, pay 33 per cent for bringing them into America, pay higher wages, and carriage back to this country, and yet undersell our manufacturers. He had gone into different shops to inquire the price of articles, and on one occasion he saw a beautifully worked steel-barrelled gun, which, if manufactured in England, would cost £12, but which could be made at Liége to sell for £4. If it were asked why America and Belgium were able to make things so much cheaper than England, the explanation would be found in the fact that those two countries had very liberal Patent Laws, while we had not. They were thus able to obtain all the best appliances in the world for their manufactures, and we could not. Another reason was that they possessed an excellent technical system of education, which we did not. With a view to showing that our imports of manufactures were diminishing enormously in those very articles which technical education would improve, while, at the same time, our imports of the same articles were increasing, the hon. Member selected, for the purpose of contrast, the years 1872 and 1879, observing, in anticipation of an objection that he had selected a year of depression, that as he quoted both exports and imports that circumstance did not affect the case. From 1872 to 1879 our exports of British products decreased from £256,257,000 to £191,531,000, or not less than 25 per cent. But the figures, which would best prove his case, were these—

Cotton manufactures exported—

1872	£63,466,000
1879	51,867,000

A decrease of 18 per cent.

Woollen manufactures—

1872	£32,383,000
1879	15,871,000

Decrease, 51 per cent.

Silk manufactures—

1872	£2,190,000
1879	1,697,000

Decrease, 23 per cent.

Glass manufactures—

1872	£1,122,000
1879	783,000

Decrease, 30 per cent.

Iron manufactures (excluding bars and pigs, and ordinary block material—

1872	£13,596,000
1879	11,400,000

Decrease, 16 per cent.

The aggregate result of these articles was—

1872	£112,759,000
1879	81,608,000

Decrease, 28 per cent.

Then, as to the imports, the figures were these—

Cotton manufactures—

1872	£1,489,000
1879	2,286,000

Increase, 54 per cent.

Woollen goods—

1872	£4,038,000
1879	5,637,000

Increase, 40 per cent.

Silk goods—

1872	£9,429,000
1879	12,841,000

Increase, 36 per cent.

Glass goods—

1872	£1,206,000
1879	1,574,000

Increase, 30 per cent.

Iron—

1872	£158,000
1879	£1,721,000

Increase, 49 per cent.

The aggregate results were—

1872	£17,321,000
1879	24,062,000

Increase, £6,740,000, or 39 per cent.

Thus it appeared that not only foreigners, but our own people, were becoming dissatisfied with our manufactures. Passing for a moment to the question of agriculture, the hon. Gentleman complained that whereas in France and in America there were large numbers of schools in which agriculture was taught, we had only two such schools—at Cirencester, and Glasnevin, in Ireland—which were doing good work, but were very inadequate; and he contended that until we adopted some such system, we should not be able to compete with those countries in this respect. In Glasgow they had a very good Weaving Institute. They also had a Mechanics' Institute, which was subsidized by £700 a-year, and they had an endowed school, which it was intended to convert, by a Private Act of Parliament that had been obtained, from an old elementary endowment into a purely technical school; and at present it was half technical and half elementary. At present the people of Glasgow did not recognize the need of technical education. They did not see the advantage of it, and, consequently, did not keep their children at school long enough to render them fit for receiving technical education. Then, again, the Board schools did not turn out their pupils with that amount of primary education that would enable them to take advantage of the first rudiments of a technical school. There was thus a great want in Glasgow, and it was a very unfortunate state of matters that their elementary education was such that it was not sufficiently good to build technical instruction upon it. In that respect they were not better off in England, because the primary instruction of the Board schools was not sufficiently good to enable them to put technical education upon it; and that was one of the things that would have to be considered in introducing any foreign scheme of education. The reason that primary education was better in foreign countries was that, for the most part, it was free. In Switzerland education was free, and in France and Germany it was to a large extent free, while in America education was entirely free. He believed that as long as they had school fees they would have an inferior education. School fees made it to the interest of the schoolmasters to have as many scholars as possible without reference to their capacity for teaching them. That would go on as long as they had fees. He believed London, owing to its magnitude, was the only place in this country where they might hope to find a sufficient number of trained scholars to get the benefits of good technical schools. He rejoiced at the efforts the City Guilds were now making, and he hoped they would persevere. It was intended to have a technical University at South Kensington, for which ground, at a nominal rent, was to be given by the Great Exhibition Commissioners. The cost of the building would be £76,000, for which £30,500 had been subscribed by the Fishmongers, Goldsmiths, and other City Companies. Instruction would be given in applied physics, applied mechanics, and applied arts, fitting the students to become technical teachers all over the country. That was a principal object of the College. Leaving the City Guilds Institute to provide the University, and also to manage the technological examinations, for which latter object the subscriptions were likely to be increased to £3,000, he thought that the Government might fairly take up and assist those examinations in some way. It ought not to be expected that that sum of £3,000 would be very greatly exceeded without some Government help if it were found necessary. The Institute had given grants in aid for other useful purposes, its efforts not being confined to London alone, but benefiting, to some extent, the country at large. London was thus about to do a very good work; but it must be remembered that every fourth-rate town on the Continent now did quite as great a work as that. The Swiss town of Zurich, 20 years ago, spent £100,000 on a Polytechnical University, which was kept up at a cost of £18,000 a-year. That was done 20 years ago, and was a larger thing than we were going to do now. In that University at Zurich they had 6,000 students, and in Germany there was a debate about a year ago, the universal opinion being that what had been done up to the present was only the beginning of what ought to be done. If that was only a beginning on the Continent, he would ask what position we were in who had hardly begun the work? Until lately all our education in this country was pretty much voluntary effort, and a great deal of it eleemosynary effort. They had lately taken to make their primary education a national system; but they would have to do a great deal better yet, because, on the Continent, not only was primary education national, but technical science was national. They were supported by the States and Municipalities; and unless they copied the Continental system they would not be able to carry out the work as it ought to be done. It was for that reason he had troubled the House with this too long speech; and he felt he had been unable to do justice to this important subject, which was a subject on which the future prosperity of our country depended. The information was in the country, but not sufficiently general; and, therefore, he wished it to be in the accredited form of a Blue Book, in order that the people might be led to understand their future living depended upon something being done in the direction he had indicated.

Mr. COCHRAN-PATRICK hoped the important subject brought forward by the hon. Member for Glasgow would receive the consideration from the Government which its merits deserved. He did not think it would be denied that our national greatness had depended to a large extent in the past, and must depend in the future to a still greater extent, on our national prosperity; and it followed that the Government should do all in their power to assist our commercial and manufacturing classes to keep in the front rank in the contest with other competing countries. One of the most important factors in the element of success was to know what other competitors were doing. It was highly necessary that the attention of the manufacturers in this country should be prominently directed to the progress of foreign industries, and to the causes on which that progress depended. It appeared to him that the Motion of his hon. Friend was exactly calculated to meet the object. The very appointment of a Royal Commission in itself would attract the attention of the country to those important matters; and the evidence which the Commission would have it in its power to put before the House in an accurate, authentic, and authoritative form, would constitute a most perfect basis for consideration, and, if necessary, for future legislation. One of the objects of the Motion of his hon. Friend was to lay before the country, and those who were likely to be benefited by the information, the result of what was being at present done in other countries. Some years ago we had an encouraging example in the same direction. In 1867 or 1868 a Member of the House laid before Parliament a very instructive and important Paper on this subject of technical education abroad; and that was followed by a Circular addressed by Lord Stanley to our Representatives in foreign countries. The answers to that Circular formed a very important body of evidence. There was also laid before the House a translation of the highly important evidence laid before a French Commission appointed to inquire into the subject of technical education. These matters stimulated inquiry; and the result was so advantageous that we could not do better than repeat the example at the present time in the way proposed by the hon. Member for Glasgow. The hon. Member (Mr. Anderson) also proposed to get information with regard to the systems of technical instruction which existed in other countries, and which existed very imperfectly, if at all, in our own country. They had a strong argument in favour of this by what was to be seen in other countries, and most notably in Prussia, Austria, and Hungary, which had lately very largely increased their systems, showing that in these countries technical education had been felt to be a practical success. One of the results, especially in Austria, where within the last three or four years a very marked increase had taken place both in the quality and the quantity of the instruction, was shown by the practical result at the Paris Exhibition of 1878. In the reports of the artizans who were sent over by the Society of Artizans, it would be found that Austria, in almost all the chief manufacturing arts, had made a very great increase compared with what her manufactures exhibited at the Exhibition immediately preceding. On the last occasion we had of making international comparisons—namely, the Paris Exhibition of 1878—the general opinion of the Artizans' Committee, and other skilled persons who investigated the subject, was that while great improvement had taken place since 1867 in our artistic taste and skill, our progress in the mechanical and constructive arts had been by no means satisfactory. It would be interesting to ascertain, by means of the Royal Commission, the cause of this state of things. In reference to the practical break down of the apprentice system, he said it would be a very important matter for the Commission which it was desired should be appointed to investigate this subject, especially by the light of the experience gained in France, where the same evil was keenly felt some years ago. He hoped Her Majesty's Government would accede to the proposal of his hon. Friend the Member for Glasgow, and appoint a Commission. He was perfectly certain that the results of such a Commission would be most important, and most interesting, and most valuable in everything relating to the commercial and manufacturing interests of the country.

Mr. MUNDELLA: I think I should best consult the convenience of the House if I say that Her Majesty's Government recognize to the full the importance of the subject which my hon. Friend the Member for Glasgow (Mr. Anderson) has brought forward. I confess, however, that I am not able to agree with my hon. Friend in many of the arguments he has advanced. I do not consider that the question of technical education requires to be bolstered up by any argument directed to show the decadence of British manufactures. For my own part, I do not believe in the inferiority or the decadence of British manufactures. In that respect we stand as well throughout Europe as any other country in the world. The very figures put forward by my hon. Friend are quite sufficient to refute his own pessimist views upon that head, and I will for a moment refer to one or two of them. My hon. Friend took 1872 and 1879 as years of advance and falling off. Our exports amounted to £256,000,000 in 1872, being the largest export trade we had ever experienced; and my hon. Friend contrasted that year with 1879, when the exports fell to £191,530,000. No doubt, a decline from £256,000,000 to less than £192,000,000 shows a great falling off; but, in 1872, prices were at their maximum. Coal, iron, and all the manufactures of the country, reached their maximum price in that year, and the subsequent fall brought about a good deal of depression and a good deal of loss. 1879 may be said to have been the minimum year, seeing that prices were unprecedently low. But, if my hon. Friend would take the quantities, I do not think it will be found that there has been any falling off. The falling off was mainly in the difference in price, and I am prepared to maintain that the prices in 1879 were much more healthy prices than the artificial and inflated prices of 1872. My hon. Friend gave a comparison of imports, in order to establish his case, and talked about our manufacturing supremacy having fallen off. Now, I believe that both myself and my hon. Friend have been engaged in industrious pursuits all our lives; and certainly my practical experience does not enable me to bear out the views of my hon. Friend. Take the case of silk. The imports of silk in 1872 were about £9,500,000, and in 1879—this year of depression—they were £12,500,000. In lace, also, my hon. Friend said the British manufacturers were also losing their supremacy; but it is nothing of the kind. The increase of imports arose from a change of pattern, and change of pattern has had very much to do with the fluctuations in most industrious pursuits. I believe that the Yorskhire trade—the Bradford trade—has suffered for many years almost exclusively from change of pattern. The old lustre goods of Bradford material have gone out in favour of soft wool goods, and the trade has been reduced to a point which it had not reached for a great many years. But, apart from this, I think my hon. Friend has advanced arguments which went far to sustain his case. I quite agree with my hon. Friend as to the great importance of the subject, and I believe that a subject of this importance warrants a great deal more interest, and a discussion in a much fuller House, than it attracts at this moment. If there is any nation in the world which has to depend for its progress, and almost for its existence, upon its manufacturing industry and its commercial spirit, it is this country of ours. Our land is limited in extent, and we have had to employ an increasing population for years. We are increasing our population at an enormous extent. The population of England and Wales has increased two and a-half times within the present century, and for what can we look for the support, maintenance, and employment of this rapidly increasing population but our industrial resources? And, while we have great national resources, while we have coals and iron close together, while we have a quick and vigorous population, more fertility of invention than any other population in the world, great powers of application, and certainly the largest capital in the world to enable us to develop our resources, yet in the race of competition we cannot afford to lose a single point, and it is of the utmost importance that we should have the necessary knowledge of scientific appliance for the development of these resources, in order that we may maintain our manufacturing and commercial superiority. My hon. Friend, in the course of his speech, spoke of the state of the Patent Laws. I quite agree with him that they are odious, and that they urgently need revision. I hope the time is not distant when the Government will deal with them. My hon. Friend also referred to the strides which foreign nations have made in competition with this country, and to the manner in which that foreign competition was made apparent in 1867. We always have been alarmed whenever foreign nations have showed any signs of advance. We have been so accustomed to have all the world at our feet, and so ambitious to do all the work of the world, that we have been unable to understand any other country than England being able to do anything. But we cannot monopolise all the results of scientific research and modern invention, and we now find that most of the countries of Europe, and especially the active and vigorous race of people in America, are able to compete with us in the markets of the world. I take credit to myself for having been one of the earliest to mention the words "technical education" in this country. But for a long time it was like kicking at a dead horse, and even at this moment the value and importance of technical education are hardly understood and realized by our countrymen generally. It is hardly realized in this House what an important influence it has already exercised upon the manufacturing industry of other nations. I believe that there is considerable progress being made in this respect—a silent progress, which, when I came to look into it, certainly astonished me. My hon. Friend says that the basis of all technical education must be a good primary education—a useful and intelligent foundation. But my hon. Friend also said that the great obstacle was the school fees, and he went on to contend that the schools should be absolutely free, and that until they had the schools free they could not hope to make any great progress in technical science. In reply to this, I could point to a country which has made more progress in scientific education and in technical education than any other, but where the schools never have been free, and are not free at the present moment. I refer to Saxony. Saxony has done more, and is doing more, at this moment, in the matter of technical education than any other country of the world, and yet in that country the school fees are paid by the very humblest citizen. It is of no use to generalize. I do not say that this is an argument for free or against free education; but I do say that there is no use in generalizing and saying that the school fees are the hindrance. The apprenticeship system has broken down here and in every other country. The apprenticeship system, where you have a minute sub-division of labour, which is the result of modern science, cannot much longer be maintained. We want something better and higher than the old system of apprenticeship to bring out the intelligence of the very best workmen, and let them be the captains and the lieutenants of the industry in which they are engaged. The idea of giving technical education to the whole of the working classes is an entire mistake. It is an impossibility, and it ought never to be attempted. You can only place technical training within the reach of those who possess the natural talent to use it and apply it. There is a very remarkable pamphlet in the press, which is being published by the City Guilds, and among other useful things I think this will be found one of the most remarkable. I know the author of it. He has had 20 years' experience, gained by residence in a German town, and in simple, plain language, and with great intelligence, he describes the whole system of education adopted in that town, from primary instruction, up to the highest technical education. I will read one or two extracts to show what the views are of those who are advocating this system abroad. The writer says—

> "The old apprenticeship system having become obsolete and gone overboard, and scientific and technical knowledge being now required in all branches of manufactures, institutions like this are becoming an absolute necessity."

He describes the institutions already in existence at Berlin, Munich, Nuremberg, Aix-la-Chapelle, and elsewhere. They are truly marvellous institutions, and fully justify the praise given to them. Last autumn I took the opportunity of visiting some of them. I had seen what Germany was doing 20 years before; but I must confess that I was perfectly astounded at the development which has been made in the last seven or 10 years. My hon. Friend has spoken of what the City Guilds in London propose to do. He spoke of an Institution which is to cost £20,000 or £30,000 to build. There are institutions which have been established within the last four years abroad which have cost as much as £100,000, compared with which there is nothing at all in this country. Even the Polytechnic Institution at Zurich far surpasses anything of the kind in England. I see that at the University of Aix-la-Chapelle they expended last year £60,000 on a laboratory alone. Provision is made in that University for studies in mining, manufacturing industry, mechanics, and all the skilled labour carried on in Westphalia. In that institution there are 23 Professors, with a very large auxiliary staff, and the work they are doing is of far greater usefulness than most hon. Members would imagine. I will not dwell further upon the matter, because I know it is a dry subject; but I will proceed to tell the House something of what we are doing here. We are receiving evidence which shows that the progress we are making in this country is much greater than my hon. Friend gives us credit for. We must take into consideration what is being done by Owen's College in Manchester, Mason's College near Birmingham, and the Yorkshire College of Science at Leeds—a new institution, with a weaving school, where not only theoretical but practical science is taught. So far as it goes, the studies there are as good as in any school to be found anywhere. There is also a school at Bradford; and Huddersfield has turned its Mechanics' Institution into a school for technical science. In Manchester, a gentleman has, I believe, left a magnificent legacy of £150,000, which is to be devoted to the furtherance of technical education; and generally throughout the country there is much more interest in, and appreciation of, the subject than ever existed before. Still, I grant that we should be a great deal better for such information as my hon. Friend asks the House. I think it would do good service if we could have placed before this country, in a reliable form, the great advantages which the industries of France, Belgium, Germany, and Switzerland are deriving from technical schools; and I think that we should not exclude the advantages derived from the application of art to manufacturing industry. That should be quite as much our aim as the application of science to industry. Let any man take back his mind to the state of art as applied to manufacturing industry at the time of the first Exhibition of 1851. A piece of china, or of carpet, or of furniture such as was produced in those days would shock our senses if we saw it before us in the present day. The productions of 1851, instead of being works of art, were only fitted for the chamber of horrors; and we should all be ashamed to see them exhibited now. I can claim for South Kensington that it has done marvellous service for the country. Compare the state of art in the present day with the state of things in 1851, and I do not think we shall find that any nation in Europe has made greater progress than we have in the art attainments of our students as applied to manufacturing industry. In our design and colouring of carpets, in our iron manufacture, in our textile manufactures, in our china, and in other branches of art industry in all our great towns, and especially in the district which my hon. Friend represents, all the decorative arts are now carried on in a strain of beauty such as they never attained before in our history, and we bear a most favourable comparison with any other nation in that respect. The French, of course, hold their own; but they have not made the same strides we have made, and they are jealous indeed of the progress we are making, and which threatens to catch them up in time. In order to show what we have been doing, I may say that in 1860 the number of science schools under teachers was only 8; in 1870 it was 799; and in 1880 it was 1,391. The number of classes in 1860 was 20; in 1870 it was 2,204; and in 1880 it was 4,932. The number of persons receiving science and art education in 1860 was 386; in 1870 it was

34,283; and in 1880 it was 60,878. And the work is of a much more thorough character every year. Every year its character is being raised; every year it is becoming much less desultory *dilletante* work than it was a few years ago; and every year it is assuming a more useful and practical character, and becomes more fitted to be applied to the general industry of the country. We have 37 training colleges, containing 1,663 students, exclusive of the science teaching in the public elementary schools, which I look upon as the first step in art. For art teaching in 1879 there were 733 art night classes, with 29,393 students; 146 schools of art, with 29,191 students, besides the training school at South Kensington; and, in addition, there is art teaching in nearly 5,000 elementary schools to nearly 700,000 pupils. These figures show that we are making real and essential progress. I am glad to say that my noble Friend the Lord President has entered thoroughly into the question with myself, and we have lately been inquiring very carefully into the School of Mines and the School of Science at South Kensington, with the view of making them more useful and practical institutions than they have ever been before, by encouraging the Professors to turn out really trained teachers capable of giving useful technical scientific instruction all over the country.

Mr. O'CONNOR POWER: May I ask what is being done for Ireland on this subject?

Mr. MUNDELLA: I can assure the hon. Member that the Government are doing all they can for Ireland in the matter of technical education; and I can promise him that if we can only get the earnest co-operation of the Irish Members, which I certainly hope to get—[Mr. O'Connor Power: Certainly.]—we shall do everything we can to push forward science and art in Ireland. My hon. Friend the Member for Glasgow said that at present we have no evidence before the House of what is being done in this matter—that we have up to a certain date, 1868—but that since that time there has been a complete revolution; and that 1868 must be regarded as an antediluvian period, as compared with the present day. But to whom were we indebted for the information supplied in 1868, and which, at that time, was very good information in regard to what had been done? We have, in the volumes which have been laid on this Table, as good a statement of the condition of technical education in Europe in 1868 as it is possible to obtain; and we owe it, in a great extent, to the ability, intelligence, and public spirit of my hon. Friend the Member for Banbury (Mr. B. Samuelson), who forced it upon the attention of the House, and conducted an inquiry in a semi-official capacity, at his own expense, for three months—the result being that he was able to produce a Report that did a great amount of good, and that led to very satisfactory results. I am very glad to find that the City Guilds are now following up his example. But, after all, what are they doing? A mere bagatelle. However, there is no doubt that they are now discharging the functions for which they were originally established. They owe their existence to the industries of this country. Their affairs and their functions are connected with the industries of the country; and if they will only devote their energies and their great wealth to the service of those industries, as they have now begun to do, I am sure we should be willing to forget the past, and should be glad to have the advantage of their co-operation. I want now to tell the House how I propose to meet the wishes of my hon. Friend. I am sincerely anxious that the House and the country should be in possession of the information he asked for. I should like them to realize how important this matter is for the future of the country; and what I propose to do is this. I do not think it is needful for the purpose that we should appoint a Royal Commission to visit the various technical schools all over France, Belgium, Germany, and Switzerland—because, to appoint a roving Commission to travel all over Europe, would be a very expensive and, I think, a needlessly tedious process. If I can induce, and I hope I shall succeed in doing so, some gentlemen who have real technical knowledge to do in the coming year what my hon. Friend the Member for Banbury did in 1867—if I could persuade my hon. Friend the Member for Banbury once again to take up this work, and associate with himself two or three other gentlemen representing the various manufacturing industries of the country, I believe that the greatest possible advantage to the country would follow their labours. If two or three gentlemen of industry, and possessing scientific attainments, representing the mining, iron, and textile industries; and, if possible, I should like also to see somebody representing agriculture—if such a body of gentlemen were to go together all over Europe and give us a Report, I can only say that they would render a great service to the country. The Foreign Office would be ready to give them all the assistance possible. I can promise them that the Science and Art Department will render them every assistance. We will give them a Secretary. I am sure they would enjoy the work, and they would render a good and patriotic service; and it would not be necessary for them to make any appeals to the Treasury. There would be great advantages in an arrangement of this kind. After all, what Englishmen do for themselves is better done than what a Government does for them. I feel sure that it is only necessary to make this statement to insure applications from 20 or 30 able volunteers from whom the three or four gentlemen we want could easily be selected. I am satisfied that the House and the country would be grateful to them for undertaking the labour; and I am satisfied that I can find men with the right knowledge and the right earnestness who will be willing to do the work. I will engage that it shall be done, and that by this time next year the House shall be in possession of all the facts that are required, and that we shall have before us as complete a statement of what is being done, how it is done, and the advantages which are derived from doing it by Continental nations as we could possibly obtain from the best Royal Commission we could appoint. I hope that my hon. Friend will accept my assurance of complete sympathy with the object which he has in view, and that he will withdraw the Motion.

MR. BROADHURST said, he would not detain the House at that hour by making the speech which he had intended to make if he could have obtained an opportunity of addressing the House earlier. He should certainly not have ventured now to interpose at all, if it had not been for the statement on the question of apprenticeship which had been made by so high an authority as the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council. The remarks of the right hon. Gentleman in reference to that subject would be read by a very great number of people, and would be quoted hereafter as an authority upon it. If he remembered rightly, the right hon. Gentleman said that the system of apprenticeship had almost gone out of practice, and that it would have a tendency to become more so in the future, as labour became more sub-divided in the manufactories. That was a statement which he (Mr. Broadhurst) very much regretted to hear; and he could not understand how any hon. Member who was an advocate of technical education could have cheered such a sentiment, as he had heard it cheered, when it was uttered by the right hon. Gentleman. He would ask the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council, if he would give his attention for a moment, what sort of a mechanic he could expect to have produced in an engineering shop unless the man had served some regulated number of years of apprenticeship?

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

MR. BROADHURST continued. He exceedingly regretted that the subject of apprenticeship had not received more attention. A question of greater importance to the future position of the country amongst the manufactories of the world could hardly have been introduced. They were, however, so fond of discussing questions of war and peace that it would appear as if no time was left for discussing the greatest interests of England as a manufacturing nation. He could not allow the discouraging observations of so high an authority as the Vice President of the Council with regard to the system of apprenticeship to pass without offering some remarks in reply. If apprenticeship was gradually to be abolished, how could it possibly be expected that England could compete with the clever, able, and highly skilled manufacturing nations of Europe and America? How was it possible for our skilled moulders in iron and brass to obtain a high and skilled technical knowledge of their trade unless it was by an application to that trade continued for a number of years? Again, with reference to the hardware trade. An hon. Member had pointed out that American goods were being bought at the shops in London in preference to English made goods of this class. Whether that statement could be borne out by actual proof he was not in a position to say. No doubt, however, there was something in it, or the hon. Member would not have ventured it in that House. But if it were so, it was because the goods in question were more highly finished and displayed greater artistic taste than the goods produced in this country. If, then, the system of apprenticeship was to be abolished, a decrease, instead of an increase, in taste and finish must be looked for. Then there was the jewellery trade of Birmingham, Sheffield, and other large centres. The very essence of success, as regarded this trade in commanding the markets of the world, was a thorough knowledge and long training to the business. All the great trades he had referred to — the iron trade, building trade, and the furniture trade, the latter having to compete largely with the furniture trade of Belgium and France—required a long apprenticeship to produce efficiency. If, therefore, the system of apprenticeship was to be restricted, our power of competition with other countries would be decreased. He had no hesitation in saying that, if there had been any advance made upon us by other nations in the matter of skilled production, it was due to the rapid and loose system we had, in connection with the skilled trades, of not insisting upon thorough apprenticeship. He held that when apprenticeship was entered upon the employer who undertook the responsibility of teaching should be compelled by law to discharge his duties in that respect. One of the chief sources from which technical education was to be obtained was the early part of the time during which a lad was apprenticed. He had very little confidence in colleges and workshops provided for grown up men. If they wanted to produce a highly skilled class of workmen in any branch of industry, the elementary knowledge which must ultimately develop into the highly skilled and artistic knowledge must be obtained before the age of 20, and ought to be imparted, to a great extent, before the age of 15. He would suggest that this question of technical education formed a part of some other subjects, which he sincerely hoped would command greater attention than they had hitherto. The law of apprenticeship must be amended, and employers must be made responsible for the fulfilment of the contracts entered into by them when they took apprentices into their firms. At present it was no uncommon thing to find a factory or workshop with 10 or 20 apprentices to seven or eight journeymen, the former of whom, instead of being kept at their trade for the first two or three years of their time, were employed in unskilled labour in order to save the grown up labour which was always required to be done in manufactories. He said that the moment a lad was apprenticed and properly indentured to any trade he should be set to work on the rudimentary parts of that trade, and that every opportunity should be afforded him of pursuing his studies in the higher branches while he was working at the practical part of the trade. That, he thought, was the method to be carried on, in order to keep this country abreast of the highly educated people of France, Germany, Switzerland, and America. The deductions to be drawn from the statements of the hon. Member for Glasgow with reference to trade unions were that their practical working was to strike an average wage above which no man could rise, and below which no man was permitted to work. Now, that was altogether a mistake. Trade unionism had struck an average of wage; but it did not insist upon a man not obtaining a higher class of skill in his trade if he pleased. It had certainly never professed itself against a man's being paid a wage above the average in the trade. He ventured to tell the hon. Member for Glasgow that he had never heard of a strike by a trade union demanding a reduction of wage. No such thing had ever happened. Then his hon. Friend went on to say that members of trade unions never received a higher wage than the average fixed by rule. But that was not so. There were highly paid and low paid men in all trades unions, precisely as there were in other professions. He made these remarks for the purpose of correcting a slight misunderstanding on the part of the hon. Member for Glasgow, who, he felt sure, would appreciate the spirit in which they were made. It only remained for him to express regret that the right hon. Gentleman the Vice-President of the Council should have uttered any discouraging words with regard to the apprenticeship system. He trusted that the right hon. Gentleman would find an opportunity for toning down the effect which those words might have in the country if they were allowed to go forth as uttered, without a protest.

Sir JOHN LUBBOCK said, the House was very much indebted to the hon. Member for Glasgow for the introduction of the present question. He was extremely gratified by the business-like discussion which had taken place upon questions of so much interest to the country; but he was compelled to express his surprise that the Conservative Benches were absolutely empty. He had thought that, in the present state of the farming interest, hon. Members opposite would have been particularly anxious to ascertain what was being done by foreign nations with reference to agricultural schools. There were one or two institutions of the kind in this country; but still we were far behind other nations in this respect. It was, therefore, most important that every possible information should be obtained from abroad which could throw light upon the great question of agriculture. There were some points with reference to technical education which he should have been glad to make some remarks had the time permitted; but at that late hour he would only say they had much to learn, both as to the kind of technical education which should be given, and the best system of giving it. Upon that point, also, information from abroad was most desirable. He trusted his hon. Friend the Member for Glasgow would accept the suggestion thrown out by the Vice President of the Council, and that the hon. Member for Banbury would also see his way to assent to the proposal made to him.

An hon. Member added his testimony to the benefit derived from technical education, by instancing the case of two comparatively uneducated young men of the town which he represented, who had both obtained grants of £50 a-year from the Science and Art Department, and afterwards risen to important positions abroad in connection with their respective trades.

Mr. B. SAMUELSON said, he felt gratified at the allusion to the report which he had made; and although he could not agree with all the reasons advanced by the hon. Member for Glasgow in favour of appointing a Royal Commission, he believed that the work of such a Commission would be of considerable service to the country. On the other hand, he differed almost entirely from the hon. Member as to the decadence of English manufactures. He had no belief in that whatever. For instance, in naval architecture they were far ahead of all other nations. The Institute of Naval Architects, and the Iron and Steel Institute, both of which would hold their meetings in London within the next six weeks, held the first rank throughout the world in the arts which they represented.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members not being present,

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (POOR LAW) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Hibbert, Bill to confirm certain Orders of the Local Government Board under the provisions of "The Divided Parishes and Poor Law Amendment Act, 1876," as amended and extended by "The Poor Law Act, 1879," relating to the parishes of Asgarby, Bolingbroke, Boston, Carrington, Chesilborne, Frieston, Hagnaby, Hareby, Hundleby, Keal West, Leverton, Lusby, Mavis Enderby, Milton Abbas, Miningsby, Owermoigne, Reithby, Revesby, Spilsby, Stickford, and Thorpe, and to the townships of Asselby, Balkholme, Barmby-on-the-Marsh, Bellasize, Blacktoft, Cotness, Eastrington, Gilberdike, Kendal, Kilpin, Knedlington, Laxton, Metham, Nether Graveship, Saltmarsh, Skelton, and Yokefleet, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Hibbert and Mr. Dodson.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 130.]

House adjourned at a quarter before One o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 4*th April*, 1881.

MINUTES.]—Public Bill—*Third Reading*—Local Courts of Bankruptcy (Ireland)* (56), and *passed.*

TURKEY—SIR A. H. LAYARD, LATE H.M. AMBASSADOR AT THE PORTE.

POSTPONEMENT OF NOTICE.

Lord STRATHEDEN and CAMPBELL said, he had given Notice that he would that evening call attention to the recent Correspondence on Turkey, and move for the despatches which explained the withdrawal of Sir Henry Layard from the Embassy at Constantinople. He wished to take that opportunity of stating that in the continued absence of the noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Earl Granville) he would postpone bringing the subject under the notice of their Lordships' House until Thursday next. He felt himself that this was advisable; but the feeling of other noble Lords made it incumbent on him, because they thought that at a discussion of the foreign policy of Her Majesty's Government it was indispensable that the organ of that policy should be present. The postponement was, perhaps, also desirable on the ground of the clearer aspect which the negotiations respecting Greece and Turkey now presented.

House adjourned at a quarter past
Five o'clock, till To-morrow,
Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 4th April, 1881.

MINUTES.]—Select Committee—Turnpike Acts Continuance Act, 1880-81, *appointed.*

Ways and Means—*considered in Committee*—Financial Statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer—The Resolutions.

Public Bills—*Ordered*—Whiteboy Acts Repeal*.

Ordered—First Reading—Local Government Provisional Orders (Bath, &c.)* [131]; Local Government (Highways) Provisional Order (York)* [132].

Second Reading—Referred to Select Committee—Conveyancing and Law of Property [101].

Select Committee—Report—Tramways (Ireland) Acts Amendment [No. 156].

Committee—Married Women's Property (Scotland) (*re-comm.*) [128]—R.P.

Considered as amended—Third Reading—Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual) [123], and *passed.*

Third Reading—Inclosure Provisional Order (Beamsley Moor)* [112]; Inclosure Provisional Order (Langbar Moor)* [111], and *passed.*

CONTROVERTED ELECTIONS.

Mr. Speaker informed the House, that he had received from Mr. Justice Grove and Mr. Justice Bowen, two of the Judges selected, in pursuance of The Parliamentary Elections Act, 1868, for the Trial of Election Petitions, a Certificate and Report relating to the Election for the Borough of Wigan.

WIGAN ELECTION.

The Parliamentary Elections Act, 1868.
The Parliamentary Elections and Corrupt Practices Act, 1879.
The Parliamentary Elections and Corrupt Practices Act, 1880.
To the Right Honourable
The Speaker of the House of Commons.

We, the Honourable Sir William Robert Grove, knight, and the Honourable Sir Synge Christopher Charles Bowen, knight, Judges of the High Court of Justice, and two of the Judges for the time being for the trial of Election Petitions in England, do hereby, in pursuance of the said Acts, certify that upon the 23rd, 24th, 25th, 26th, 28th, 29th, 30th, and 31st days of March, and the 1st day of April 1881, We duly held a Court at the New Borough Court, Wigan, in the County Palatine of Lancaster, for the trial of, and did try, the Election Petition for the Borough of Wigan between James Spencer and Edward Prestt, Petitioners; and Francis Sharp Powell, Respondent, which prayed that it might be determined that the said Francis Sharp Powell was not duly elected or duly returned, and that the said Election and Return of the said Francis Sharp Powell were and are wholly null and void.

And, in further pursuance of the said Acts, We report that at the conclusion of the said trial, we determined that the said Francis Sharp Powell, being the Member whose Election and Return were complained of in the said Petition, was not duly elected or returned, and that his Election and Return were and are wholly null and void on the ground of bribery by Agents, and we do hereby certify in writing such our determination to you.

And whereas charges were made of corrupt practices having been committed at the said Election, we, in further pursuance of the said Acts, report as follows:—

(a.) That no corrupt practice was proved to have been committed by or with the knowledge or consent of any Candidate at such Election;

(b.) The following persons have been proved at the trial guilty of the corrupt practice of bribery:—
Thomas Scott,
Edwin McLoughland;

(c.) That there is reason to believe that corrupt practices have extensively prevailed at the Election for the Borough of Wigan, to which the said Petition relates.

Dated this 1st day of April 1881.

W. R. Grove.
Charles Bowen.

And the said Certificate and Report were ordered to be entered in the Journals of this House.

QUESTIONS.

CONSTABULARY BARRACKS (IRELAND).

MR. CALLAN (for Mr. BIGGAR) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is in contemplation to remove the Constabulary barracks of Ballymoney from its present position; whether it is proposed to create new barracks on the outside of the town, and in a street in which there is not one public house, and only one shop of any kind; whether it is true that the Town Commissioners of Ballymoney forwarded a memorial to His Excellency, urging the transfer of the barracks to a more central site; and, if so, if he has any reason to suppose that said memorial does not express the feeling of the inhabitants; and, if His Excellency could direct that Dervock should be the head quarters of the district, and thus save the ratepayers the expense of maintaining barracks in Ballymoney?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: Sir, the site of the new barracks is only 30 yards distant from the present barracks. The reply sent to the memorial was that the Lord Lieutenant was satisfied that the intended change was for the best. The expense of the barracks does not fall upon the ratepayers; it falls upon the taxpayers; and, therefore, the opinion of the Board of Works and of the Treasury must be considered.

AFGHANISTAN — CANDAHAR — WITHDRAWAL OF THE BRITISH TROOPS.

MR. ONSLOW asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether he can now state when our troops will actually leave Candahar for India; what arrangements have been made with Abdul Rahman for the protection of the inhabitants of Candahar and neighbourhood on our retirement; what precautions, additional to those when our troops march in India during the cold season, have been taken to ensure, as far as possible, the health of the troops marching at this unseasonable period of the year; and, whether he can now make any statement regarding the contemplated abandonment of the Pishin Valley, or of our present position in Afghanistan?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Sir, I cannot state the actual date at which the troops will leave Candahar for India. It is stated in *The Times* to-day that it is expected the retirement will commence about the 10th of this month. I have not received full information from the Government of India. As to the arrangements to be made for the protection of the inhabitants of Candahar, it is a subject that has not escaped the attention of the Government of India. A letter has been addressed to the Ameer on the subject, and instructions have been sent to Colonel St. John. It is reported that the greater part of the British adherents at Candahar have tendered their allegiance to Abdurrahman; therefore, there is no probability that they will have anything to fear from him. I stated the other day, in answer to a Question, that a considerable number of Afghan refugees in India were in receipt of allowances, and should it be necessary similar arrangements will probably be made in the case of persons retiring with the troops from Candahar. I have not received any detailed report from the Government of India as to the precautions to be taken to insure the health of the troops on the march; but I believe there is no reason to doubt that the question has been fully considered by the military authorities in India, and the date for the departure has been specially fixed after such consideration. I believe it is in contemplation that either the whole or part of the force will return by the route by which it will avoid the great heats of the desert.

NOTICES AND EJECTMENTS (IRELAND).

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, on the 9th and 10th of March, a large force of police assisted in the serving of writs on the tenants of the Mountbellew Estate, and entered the house of an old man, who was lying ill at the time, and who shortly after died; and if, in view of this, and of fifty other writs of ejectment served in Galway County, and upwards of seventy at Ballyshannon, and of the enormous increase in the emigration from Ireland, he will introduce and demand urgency for a Bill similar to the Disturbance Bill of last year? He also asked for any information about what had happened at Sligo.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: Sir, I am informed that on the 9th of March a force of 51 police, and on the 10th a force of 30 police, were employed in protecting a process-server while serving notices on the Mountbellew estate. The only case in any way answering the description given in the Question was one in which a process-server was accompanied by three policemen only; they remained outside while he entered a shop to serve a summons. The old man who had been taken ill but a short time previously, and whose death was then expected, did not know anything of the transaction, and his death was in no way accelerated by the service of the writ. As to the other 50 and 70 writs mentioned the properties are not indicated, and I have every reason to believe they were not ejectments, but notices preparatory to ejectments being obtained at Quarter Sessions. I have received from one agent a letter which shows that these notices do not necessarily lead to ejectment, as a large number of claims which were for arrears of from one and a-half to three years were settled before the sessions were held. The same remarks, I believe, will apply to the other writs referred to in the Question. With regard to the last Question, I will tell the House what happened. There were processes intended to be served at Clogher, in County Sligo, and the process-server left a neighbouring village under the protection of four constables. As he was going along the road about 20 women warned him to go back, and while the policemen were preventing the women from attacking him about 200 men appeared over the crest of the hill, flourishing their sticks, and when they came close to the party, they commenced throwing stones at the process-server and the police. Sergeant Armstrong was struck with a stone, and discharged his rifle, whereupon he was knocked down. Two of the policemen out of the four fired, and the other constables dashed in to try and save the process-server. One of the constables was knocked down, and very much beaten, and, I believe, has since died. The other constable was very much injured; but it is hoped he will recover. The effect of the firing was that two men were killed and two wounded. Probably the hon. Member will observe that the firing was in self-defence; of that there is the strongest proof. The attack was made on the party, not during the service of the processes, but while they were on the road.

TURKEY AND GREECE—THE FRONTIER QUESTION.

Mr. BOURKE asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he will make a statement to the House before Easter with respect to the Greek Frontier?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Considering, Sir, the uncertain progress of a diplomatic negotiation in which many are engaged, I think considerable progress has been made towards a settlement of the Greek Question. Certainly, very important steps have been taken. At the same time it is not yet settled, and I think it would be sanguine to form any expectation that it will be settled before the Easter Recess. There is so little chance indeed of its being so, that I might almost say no statement can be made on the subject before Easter.

RUSSIA—CENTRAL ASIA—RECALL OF GENERAL SKOBELEFF.

Mr. BOURKE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he can lay before Parliament any Despatch or other official document corroborating the report that the first act of the new Emperor of Russia was to recall General Skobeleff to St. Petersburg, and to put a stop to the operations which that General had been conducting in Asia; whether any of the troops which had been commanded by General Skobeleff had been recalled; and, whether he can state when the orders to recall General Skobeleff had been sent?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: The communication which I made to the House on the 24th ultimo was received, as my noble Friend the Secretary of State for India afterwards stated, from a good, but not a Russian source. All the information which we are in a position to place before Parliament as to the return of General Skobeleff and the suspension of the Russian operations in Central Asia is contained in the Blue Book just presented.

THE SUEZ CANAL COMPANY—THE BRITISH SHARES.

Mr. MONK asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he can inform the House how many of the 176,602 Suez Canal shares purchased by the British Goverment have been drawn for redemption at par; and, whether the actions de jouissance given in exchange for the shares so drawn are deposited in this Country, or are held in trust for the British Government, and by whom the dividends on those actions de jouissance are received?

LORD FREDERICK CAVENDISH: Eight hundred and sixteen of the 176,602 Suez Canal shares purchased by Her Majesty's Government have been drawn and paid off at par. The amount of the redemption money has been applied in the purchase of £16,971 19*s*. 10*d*. Three per Cent Consols. The Stock thus purchased from time to time is held by the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt in trust for the Suez Canal Company until 1904, when it will become the complete property of Her Majesty's Government. Meanwhile, the dividends on the Stock are paid to the Suez Canal Company. Upon the occasion of each drawing Her Majesty's Government receive from the Company a certificate entitling them to receive in 1904 a number of *actions de jouissance* corresponding with the number of drawn shares. Until 1904 the amount representing the dividends on these *actions de jouissance* is received by the Suez Canal Company.

CRIMINAL LAW—ARREST OF THE EDITOR OF "THE FREIHEIT."

MR. BELLINGHAM asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If it is a fact that a meeting promoted by the Social and Democratic Club, Rose Street, was held recently in Grafton Hall, Grafton Street, Fitzroy Square, to commemorate the Revolution of 1848, the Paris Commune of 1871, and to celebrate the execution of the Emperor of Russia; whether the handbill convening the meeting stated that it would be held under the auspices of the revolutionary party in London; whether the meeting was not attended by persons of various nationalities, an Englishman in the chair; whether speeches were made in justification of the assassination of the Tsar, one of which commended the example of Russia to the revolutionary party in other countries, ridiculed the sentiments of those who thought it a shame that an Emperor should be killed, and said that "if ever a man deserved death it was the Tsar;" whether a German named Most, ex-member of the German Reichstag, and now the reputed editor of a revolutionary paper called "Freiheit," used the following language at this or any other recent meeting:

> "Capitalists, aristocrats, and priests must be exterminated. The assassins of the Tsar have earned the gratitude of all Socialists, for the time of theories is gone by, the dagger, poison, and bombs are lawful weapons, and we hope and wish that similar acts may quickly follow, not only in Russia, but in all other lands;"

whether these sentiments were received by a crowded meeting of working men with applause; and, whether, considering the danger there is to society in general by the promulgation of such theories at public meetings, Her Majesty's Government can take any steps to prevent their diffusion, and deal effectually with those who advocate them?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Sir, I have no authentic information in reference to the meeting to which the hon. Member alludes. With respect to that part of the Question which refers to a German named Most and the paper called *The Freiheit*, the action of the Government in that case has been made known to the House. But I take this opportunity of stating that it is an error to suppose that this is a State prosecution of a political character. It is nothing of the sort. It is a police prosecution instituted in the case of a serious crime. I desire further to say, and I am surprised that it is necessary to make the statement, that murder and incitement to murder are, in the eye of the English law, heinous offences, by whomsoever and against whomsoever committed. They are crimes which it is the duty of every Government to punish and to repress; and I wish also to add that the English law does not recognize any exemption in favour of the murder of any particular class of persons, whether they are Sovereigns or private individuals; and, further, that in this matter foreigners in this country are as much amenable to the law as English subjects.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—MILITIA QUARTERMASTERS.

MAJOR-GENERAL FEILDEN asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether Quartermasters of Militia, appointed before the 1st of April 1877 and reap-pointed in 1878, will be allowed to reckon their former service as Quartermasters towards retiring allowance and the higher rates of pay granted to Quartermasters in the Army; and, if not, will they be allowed to retire with special rates of retired pay (according to length of service as Quartermasters of Militia) granted to those who were appointed before 1st of April 1873, with an addition at Army rates, for service rendered after 1st of April 1878 as temporary Quartermasters in the Army; and, whether their widows are eligible for the pensions granted to Quartermasters and Warrant Officers in the Army?

Mr. GOURLEY asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the present Adjutants in the Infantry of the Line will continue to hold their appointments as such after the 1st July 1881, should they be recommended by their commanding officers; if not, whether any concession will be made in favour of those senior Subalterns who may be about to obtain the command of companies?

Mr. CHILDERS: Sir, in reply to the hon. and gallant Member and to my hon. Friend the Member for Sunderland, I have to say that their Questions relate to details of the general organization plan which are now under consideration; but, so far as I am advised at present, I see no reason for disturbing the existing rates of pay and pension for Quartermasters of Militia. I should feel much obliged to hon. Members who take an interest in these very detailed and intricate questions if, instead of putting them on the Paper, they will forward them to me as suggestions, and I will undertake to consider them. I have already received many such suggestions, which are being dealt with by official Committees.

TURKEY AND GREECE—THE FRONTIER QUESTION.

Mr. M'COAN asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the news reported in the London papers of March 31st, that the Ambassadors at Constantinople have formally approved the frontier line last proposed by the Porte as a fair settlement of the Greek claims is authentic; and, if so, whether its acceptance will be diplomatically or otherwise urged on the Greek Government as the final limit of concession which the Powers will demand from Turkey in satisfaction of the Protocol of Berlin?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, the Ambassadors have agreed to a Frontier line, which, however, is not identical with the Turkish offer. The negotiations have not yet reached a stage at which Her Majesty's Government can make any further public statement in regard to them.

THE JUDICATURE ACTS—THE AMENDED RULES AND ORDERS.

Mr. WHITLEY asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether the Committee of Judges and others who have been considering the Amendments to the Rules and Orders under the Judicature Acts have yet agreed upon a report; and, whether such report will be brought before the House?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James): The Committee have agreed to a Report, and I am informed by Lord Coleridge that there is no objection to its being produced.

TRADE AND MANUFACTURE—EXPORTS AND IMPORTS.

Mr. MAC IVER asked the President of the Board of Trade, If it is true that the annual value of our imports of farm produce has increased from £54,805,629 in 1870 to £114,351,057 in 1880, with exports nil; if our annual imports of manufactures have increased fifty per cent. during the same period; and, whether it is also true that our exports of manufactures during the same period not merely show no corresponding increase, but have actually diminished?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: Sir, if the words "farm produce" are intended to exclude wool, then the figures in the first Question are substantially correct. Our annual imports of manufactures have increased, not 50 per cent, but 45 per cent, and these manufactures are largely of articles not manufactured in this country. The exports of manufactures during the same period have not diminished, but have increased 8 per cent in value, and this concurrently with a diminution in the price of them. I may add that any argument based on these facts would be essentially misleading if taken on the basis of one year.

INDIA—RAILWAY TO SIBI.

Mr. MACFARLANE asked the Secretary of State for India, If it is proposed to abandon, as a total loss, the line of Railway lately constructed from our Indian frontier to Sibi; or whether he will take into consideration the desirability of making some arrangement with Abdur Rahman for its continuation to Pisheen or to Candahar?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Sir, I have no reason to suppose that there is any intention to abandon the railway lately constructed from our Indian Frontier as far as Sibi and the entrance to the Bolan Pass; but as to any further prolongation of it, I do not think it possible for the Government of India to come to any final decision until some further determination has been arrived at with regard to the occupation of Pishin and the surrounding district.

STATE OF IRELAND—OUTRAGE ON ANIMALS.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he has ascertained whether the men who committed the outrage on Mr. Penrose Fitzgerald's sheep are known to the authorities, and, if they were soldiers, to what regiment they belong, if they have been arrested under the Protection of Person and Property Act; and, if not, if he could explain why they were not so arrested?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: Sir, I had hoped that a communication in reference to this matter I had made privately to another hon. Member would have prevented the hon. Member for Wexford putting this Question. In consequence of the horrid nature of the crime to which the Question refers the case was heard with closed doors, and I cannot further allude to the offence. The accused person was arrested in the ordinary course of law, tried and convicted at the Assizes; and it, therefore, was not necessary to arrest him under the provisions of the Protection of Person and Property Act.

PRISONS (ENGLAND) ACT—MAIDSTONE PRISON.

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether there is any truth in the statement that Her Majesty's Government, on the recommendation of the Prison Commissioners, intend to discontinue the use of Maidstone Prison; and, further, whether it is their intention to transfer the assizes to Canterbury or elsewhere; and, if so, when such changes are to be made?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, there was no foundation whatever for the statements referred to in the Question of the hon. Member.

ELECTIONS IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether there are any records in the Foreign Office of the practice of Foreign Countries in electoral contests —especially in reference to the question of electoral expenses; and, if not, whether he would have any objection to issue a circular asking information on the subject to Her Majesty's representatives abroad?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, no records exist in the Foreign Office of the practice of foreign countries in electoral contests, or of the cost of Parliamentary elections abroad; but Her Majesty's Representatives in the principal countries of Europe will be instructed to furnish Reports.

CENTRAL ASIA—ENGLISH INTRIGUES AT MERV.

Mr. ONSLOW asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, With reference to a conversation between Lord Dufferin and M. De Giers, as reported in the Despatch of the former, dated March 8th 1881, to Lord Granville, to the effect that "English intrigues at Merv had complicated the situation" between the Russian authorities in Central Asia and the Turkomans at Merv; whether Her Majesty's Government are aware of any such intrigues; and, if so, by whom they have been conducted; whether there is any foundation for the assertion contained in the same Despatch that English officers are haunting the oases "to stir up the Turkoman population" against Russia; and, if there is no truth in either of these statements, whether Her Majesty's Government have authorized Lord Dufferin formally to deny them?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, the observations of M. de Giers probably referred to the movements of two English officers who have been travelling on their own account in Persia. One of them (Captain Gill) recently applied to Her Majesty's Minister at Teheran for facilities to enable him to visit Merv. The application having been referred to Her Majesty's Government, a telegram was sent to the officer desiring him not to go to Turkestan, and he is now on his way home. The other (Colonel Stewart) is believed to have visited Deregez; but there is no reason to suppose that he crossed the Persian border, or held any communication with the Merv Turcomans.

Mr. ONSLOW said, the hon. Baronet had, he feared, misunderstood the purpose of his Question. What he wanted to know was, whether the Government had knowledge of any English intrigues at Merv?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE said, he had been under the impression that the best mode of answering the Question was to state the facts, which he had done.

CENTRAL ASIA—THE PAPERS.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON asked the Secretary of State for India, Why the Papers, distributed to both Houses of Parliament on April 1st, but relating to the advance of the Russians in Central Asia, and giving for the first time the Russian official interpretation of the repeated personal assurances given by the late Czar that Merv should not be occupied by his forces, were kept back until after the conclusion of the Debate upon the evacuation of Candahar, considering that with the exception of one telegram they all bear a date permitting of their publication three weeks back?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, perhaps I may be allowed to answer the Question of the noble Lord. There was no intention of keeping back the Papers; but, according to the practice of the Foreign Office, Lord Dufferin's despatches were referred to him in order to ascertain whether he had any objection to their publication. The last Paper but one in the volume is a despatch received on the 14th of March, and the delay in making the reference and correcting the Papers for the Press does not appear to have been excessive or unusual.

ARMY DISCIPLINE—ABOLITION OF FLOGGING.

General Sir GEORGE BALFOUR asked the Secretary of State for War, If he will adopt all requisite measures within his administrative powers, and further if he will apply to Parliament to grant the funds, and to pass such legislative enactments, as will ensure the provision of the means to enable commanding officers to enforce and carry on Military discipline without the aid of flogging; and if he will add to the establishments of Corps, and to the Army, an efficient provost police body to aid in preventing or checking those few offences which soldiers are too prone to commit; also if he will place all employed men, such as the lance sergeants, lance corporals, pioneers, bandsmen, artizans, standard guard, on such a footing as regards rank and pay as will constitute them non-commissioned officers, bound by duty to aid in enforcing discipline; finally, if he will pass stringent rules, requiring all recruits to be thoroughly trained, and before being passed into the ranks, reported on by a responsible officer of rank, as to their fitness by age, bodily powers, and Military instruction to perform all the duties of a soldier in the field as well as in garrison; and, whether he will make known to Parliament any failure in so preparing recruits for the ranks, or if the recruit depôts be insufficient as regards training establishments or numbers of recruits, whether that inefficiency will be brought under the consideration of Parliament, and the requisite funds asked for, to ensure that high degree of efficiency so essential for our small Army?

Mr. CHILDERS: Sir, any Question by my hon. and gallant Friend is well worthy of consideration; but his present inquiry covers so much ground that I could not possibly answer it in less than half an hour. All the points he raises relate to matters of administration and discipline of the importance of which I am fully conscious, but on which I think the House would hardly wish to form a judgment on an answer to a Question.

AFGHANISTAN (MILITARY OPERATIONS)—VOTE OF THANKS TO SIR FREDERICK ROBERTS & THE ARMY.

Mr. ONSLOW asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether he can now state to the House whether Her Majesty's Government have come to any determination regarding a Vote of Thanks to General Sir F. Roberts and the Army under his command for their gallant exploits in the march from Cabul to Candahar, and subsequent events?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Sir, it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to move in both Houses of Parliament a Vote of Thanks, not only to General Roberts, but to all the officers and men who have been engaged in the campaign in Afghanistan since the renewal of the war. Notice of this intention willbe given before Easter, and the Vote will be moved on the first available day after both Houses have re-assembled, in order that the Motion may be made on the same day in each House.

SOUTH AFRICA — THE TRANSVAAL REPUBLIC — REPAYMENT OF ADVANCES.

MR. LONG asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to demand repayment from the Transvaal Republic of the sum of money advanced to cover their Foreign Loan by the English Government at the time of Annexation?

MR. GRANT DUFF: Sir, perhaps I may be permitted to reply to the Question of the hon. Member. The Royal Commission will have to consider the arrangements to be made for the assumption by the Transvaal State of the liabilities incurred in connection with the administration of the affairs of the country, whether by the South African Republic before the annexation, or by the Provincial Government subsequently.

CRIMINAL LAW (IRELAND)—CASE OF JOSEPH B. WALSH.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether the offence of which Joseph B. Walsh is said to be reasonably suspected, and for which he is detained in Kilmainham, would not, if committed in England, come under sec. 7, 38 and 39 Vic. c. 86, sub-section 1, known as the Picketing Section of the Conspiracy Act, and would, in case of conviction, be punishable by a maximum sentence of three months' imprisonment; and, whether the Whiteboy Acts, under which Joseph B. Walsh would be liable to penal servitude or three years' imprisonment, do not order periodic flogging?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. LAW): The Conspiracy and Protection of Property Act, 1875, referred to by the hon. Member, applies to Great Britain and Ireland alike; but the offence of which Walsh is suspected is not one of the minor character contemplated by that statute; it is a crime of the much more serious character under the Act 1 & 2 *Will.* IV. c. 44. This Act authorizes the Court to order whipping in addition to imprisonment; but, as far as I know, it never forms part of the sentence.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR asked, If the charge contained in the warrant on which Mr. Walsh was arrested was not an offence which, if committed in England, would come under the Conspiracy Act; and whether the Whiteboy Act was not an Act of such barbarity, and if it applied to Ireland alone?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. LAW) said, it would not be an offence under the Conspiracy or Picketing Act, to which the hon. Member referred. The Whiteboy Act was intended to meet cases of a very serious character, such as firing into or attacking peoples' houses, or compelling them to abandon some employment or business in which they were engaged.

MR. PARNELL asked, Under what Act would the offence of which Mr. Walsh was suspected be a crime if committed in England?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. LAW): I should say that that is a Question which would more properly be put to the Attorney General for England.

POST OFFICE—DETENTION AND OPENING OF SUSPICIOUS LETTERS.

MR. HEALY (for Mr. T. D. SULLIVAN) asked the Postmaster General, Whether all the postmasters of Great Britain and Ireland are authorised by the warrant of the Home Secretary to open letters which they suppose to be of a suspicious character; whether they are only directed to forward them to certain designated offices; and, in the latter case, whether he will name the offices so designated, and inform the House what class of officials are authorised to read the letters so forwarded?

Mr. FAWCETT: Sir, in reply to the Question of the hon. Member, I have to state that no such authority as that to which he refers is given by the warrant of the Secretary of State either to postmasters in Great Britain or Ireland, or to any particular class of officials, to open letters which they suppose to be of a suspicious character. This being the case, it will be obvious that the circumstances referred to in the second and third paragraphs of the Question of the hon. Member do not exist. I may add that, in the event of the Postmaster General being directed by a warrant from a Secretary of State to open, detain, or delay letters, he makes such arrangements as he may think best to give effect to the warrant.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—DISTINCTIONS TO MILITIA OFFICERS.

Mr. A. MOORE asked the Secretary of State for War, When the C.B. orders about to be granted to Militia officers will be awarded?

Mr. CHILDERS: Sir, I cannot give any positive pledge; but I hope to take the Queen's pleasure as to these distinctions before Her Majesty's birthday.

SOUTH AFRICA — THE TRANSVAAL (MILITARY OPERATIONS) — BLOCKADE OF PRETORIA.

Mr. CHILDERS: Sir, I promised on Friday to telegraph to Sir Evelyn Wood as to the truth of a rumour in one of the morning papers of that day about fighting at Pretoria. The House may, perhaps, wish to hear the answer, which is in these words—

> "Telegram from General Commanding Natal to Secretary of State for War, dated April 2, 1881.
>
> "Fort Amiel, 12.30 p.m.
>
> "Story of Pretoria sortie concocted, probably south of Vaal. Nothing known of it Heidelberg, noon 29th, though messenger came in 27th."

LANDLORD AND TENANT (IRELAND) ACT, 1870, COMMISSION (THE EARL OF BESSBOROUGH'S) — THE EVIDENCE.

Sir HERVEY BRUCE asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that evidence has been published by the Land Commission, presided over by the Earl of Bessborough, bringing charges against Irish landlords, while the names of the persons giving such evidence have been suppressed; and, whether he would publish the names of the witnesses, or in some way enable the public to form a fair judgment how far the testimony may be biassed or otherwise?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: Sir, the second volume, containing what may be called the rebutting evidence, has only been issued to-day, since the hon. Member put his Notice on the Paper. If, after reading that volume, the hon. Member desires any further information, I shall be glad if he will renew his Question, when I hope to be able to supply him with what he may desire.

Sir HERVEY BRUCE said, that he wished to know the reason why, in the second volume of the Evidence taken before the Land Commission, the names of certain of the gentlemen who gave evidence were not given?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I gave the reply I did because I supposed the hon. Baronet was alluding to some statements made regarding individuals in the first volume, and I meant generally to indicate that the rebutting Evidence would appear in the second volume circulated to-day and to-morrow. After having looked into it I will do my best to answer any Question, though I have no control over the Report. If the hon. Member will see me privately, I think I can furnish him with all the information on the subject he desires.

TRADE AND MANUFACTURE—THE WOOLLEN TRADE.

Mr. MAC IVER wished to put a Question, of which he had not given Notice, to the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, in relation to the woollen trade; but the hon. Member could not be heard in consequence of the cries of "Notice!" from the Ministerial side of the House.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN said, that he had failed to catch the purport of the hon. Member's Question.

Mr. MAC IVER said, that it was not his fault that the right hon. Gentleman could not hear his Question—it was the fault of hon. Members opposite. The hon. Member was about to repeat his Question, when he was met by loud cries of "Order!"

Mr. GORST rose to Order. Was not the hon. Member for Birkenhead perfectly in Order in putting his Question to the right hon. Gentleman, and were not the hon. Members opposite out of Order in raising a clamour that prevented him from being heard?

Mr. MAC IVER then repeated his Question, asking, Whether it was true that during each of the last eight years our importation of woollen and worsted manufactures had steadily and progressively increased; whether it was true that during all those years our exportation of such goods had steadily and with equal regularity diminished; whether there was any reason to doubt the accuracy of the Board of Trade statistics on the subject, or if it was true that in 1870 we only imported woollen and worsted goods to the value of £3,456,675, which increased to £6,484,397 last year, while, on the other hand, our exports of such goods amounted in 1872 to £22,440,031, and by last year had diminished to £13,576,956?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN would willingly answer the hon. Member's Question, if he would give him proper Notice of his intention to put it.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—LEITRIM ASSIZES — THE QUEEN v. CLANCEY.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the fact that at the trial of the Queen v. Clancey and others, at the Leitrim Assizes on the 7th of March last, and the charge being one of unlawful assembly, the Crown Solicitor peremptorily ordered forty-two jurors to stand aside, and that the Catholic jurors in a body thereupon requested the judge to exempt them from further attendance, as they were unwilling to be subjected to the humiliation of being ordered to stand aside without any cause assigned, after they had been summoned under fine to attend; and, whether there is any precedent for the setting aside of so large a number of jurors?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Law): I find that at the trial referred to 42 jurors were directed by the Crown solicitor to stand aside. The case was one of unlawful assembly and riot, in which a great number of persons were involved, of whom 14 were to be tried—and to secure an impartial trial it was necessary to put aside jurors connected with the accused or their comrades. Some persons were directed to "stand by" as being publicans; but no one was put aside on account of his religion. In fact, of the 42 rejected, a considerable number were Protestants. I am informed, indeed, that a publican, named Reynolds, and another juror, complained to the Judge of the course taken by the Crown solicitor; but the Judge refused to entertain their complaint. I see no reason to find fault with the Crown solicitor's exercise of the discretion reposed in him.

MOTION.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Ordered, That the Orders of the Day subsequent to the Order for the Consideration, as amended, of the Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual) Bill, be deferred until after the Notice of Motion for leave to introduce the Bankruptcy Bill.—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

WAYS AND MEANS—FINANCIAL STATEMENT.—COMMITTEE.

Ways and Means—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Mr. GLADSTONE: Mr. Lyon Playfair—Addressing you, Sir, at a period when the Revenue is just beginning to recover from a serious depression, and when important fiscal changes have been recently introduced, I have, I am afraid, a good deal to say. I will, therefore, not waste any time of the House by prefatory remarks, but will at once proceed to the substantial facts of the case. The gross Revenue of the year which has just expired amounted to £84,041,000. Comparing that with the estimated Revenue I find that the latter was £82,696,000. There is, therefore, the appearance of a very considerable increase; but it is necessary to analyse that Statement; and that analysis, I am afraid, will give a somewhat less favourable result than was at first apparent. The Customs were estimated to produce £19,300,000; they have actually produced £19,184,000. The Excise was estimated to produce

£25,151,000; it has actually produced £25,300,000. The Stamps were estimated to produce £11,800,000; and they have actually produced £11,940,000. The Land Tax and House Tax, estimated to produce £2,760,000, have actually produced £2,740,000; and the Property and Income Tax, estimated at £10,425,000, produced £10,650,000. The whole Revenue from taxes, which I have now stated, on the original Estimate of the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, and as estimated in the month of June last by myself, amounts to £69,436,000, while the actual yield is £69,814,000. The Revenue which is not derived from taxes stands as follows:—The Post Office, always faithful to its work of rapid growth, was estimated at £6,400,000; and it produced £6,700,000. The Telegraph Service, which was estimated at £1,420,000, actually produced £1,600,000. The Crown Lands were estimated at £390,000, and have produced that amount; the Interest on Advances and other moneys, estimated at £1,250,000, produced £1,248,000; and the Miscellaneous Receipts, estimated at £3,800,000, produced a sum largely in excess of the Estimate—namely, £4,289,000. The total Revenue, as I have stated, was estimated at £82,696,000; and it has actually produced £84,041,000—showing an increase upon the gross figures of £1,345,000, of which, however, very nearly £1,000,000 is due to those heads which do not represent the taxation of the country. The total increase from taxation is only £378,000. The House will be desirous to know what have been the proceeds of those particular revenues or charges which were made the subject of special reference last year. The Probate Duty was estimated to yield an increase of £700,000; and has actually yielded £510,000, or £640,000, after allowing for the accelerated receipt in March 1880, prior to the new scale taking effect. But, in truth, the Estimate of £700,000 was by no means in excess; but it was rather an under-estimate; and the reason that the comparative yield is not greater is that there was a considerable swelling after the Estimate was formed (which was prior to the expiration of the financial year) of the yield of the Probate Duty of 1879-80 during the remainder of the year. The Beer Duty was estimated to yield £3,690,000, and has only yielded £3,485,000, showing a deficiency of £205,000. On the other hand, the malt drawback, which was, I will not say estimated—for drawbacks cannot be estimated, they can only be conjectured—the malt drawback, which was estimated at £950,000, has cost us no less than £1,319,700. So much, Sir, for a comparison of the Estimates, which, I think, I have shown, upon the whole, to have been just and reasonable Estimates of Revenue. But the House will derive more information from comparing the Revenue, so far as it is derived from taxes, with the Revenue of the preceding year. The state of the case, then, is as follows:—I will not give the House again the details of the several branches; but I will say that the Revenue produced from taxes in 1879-80 was £67,826,000; and in 1880-1 it was £69,814,000. That is a gross increase of £1,988,000, or nearly £2,000,000. But of that sum of nearly £2,000,000, £510,000 is the amount due to the increase on Probate Duty; and £509,000 is due to the fiscal changes which were sanctioned by the House in a later period of the year. The new taxes, therefore, account for £1,019,000 out of the whole increment apparent on the Revenue of the last year, compared with that of the preceding year; and the real increment of the Revenue is £969,000. Now, Sir, that increment cannot well be estimated without reference to the source from which it comes; and upon that I have only to say that, with substantial accuracy, it may be set down to the credit of the Excise. But the year 1879-80, with which we make the comparison, was a year in which the Excise had fallen short of its estimate by no less than £2,000,000. £1,000,000, therefore—and £1,000,000 only—may be said to have been recovered by the Excise upon the loss which was shown by the year 1879-80. The House will perceive, from the statement of figures I have made, that the impressions current in some quarters regarding the degree in which the Revenue has revived are more sanguine than the facts have justified. There is, upon the whole, a beginning of recovery; but I do not think it would be judicious to describe it as more than a beginning. Now, Sir, the most important single financial change which I have ever been concerned in recommending to the House was the change made last year—with hopeful expectation, but still, no doubt, with some uncertainty, and many difficulties of detail hanging around it—from a Malt Tax to a Beer Duty; and the House will expect to know, as far as experience has gone, what has been the result of that very important and large experiment. I have already stated that the revenue from beer has fallen short by £205,000 of the anticipations which were formed of it; but I do not think—and here I shall be borne out by higher authorities than myself, practical authorities who sit in this House and elsewhere—that that deficit in the actual yield for the five months during which the duty has been in course of receipt shows anything unfavourable with regard to the ultimate operation of the tax from a fiscal point of view. I understand that, in the first place, great difficulties, owing to the prolongation of the frost, in obtaining water—and, particularly, greater difficulties still in pursuing the brewing trade, from the length and severity of the winter—have materially acted upon this particular item. There was, Sir, a controversy, carried on, I must say, in a most becoming manner on the part of those connected with this great industry—there was a controversy between the brewers and myself—with regard to the nature of the commutation we had made. It was contended by them that we had fixed the new standard in a manner unfavourable to their interests, and tending largely to impose upon them serious additional taxation; but we stoutly maintained the contrary. As far as figures go, of course, they might be supposed to tell in support of our contention in that controversy; but I do not quote them for that purpose. I think it only right to say that the controversy must stand over to be decided after longer experience. We still contend that, as far as our knowledge goes, the proceedings taken were just and reasonable; they will contend that the result, after a fair year's trial such as it may be hoped we are about to enter upon, will be that the Revenue will be considerably in excess of what we anticipated, and considerably in excess of my computation of the accumulated duty. There is also a great change of the whole conditions of this important tax. The change which has been made bears differently upon different classes; and especially it has told with some strictness, if not severity, upon the smaller and less skilful class of brewers. I do not believe it will be to their injury; but it has had this effect—that they are now obliged, in their own interest, to calculate how much they get from the barley which they consume. Formerly they made no such calculation. They proceeded rather by rule of thumb; and they were not aware of the fact that they got less from their barley than by the use of good processes they ought to get. I do not believe, as far as I can learn, that dissatisfaction generally prevails among them; and I must admit that the method of taxing, which is now more systematic—I might almost say, more scientific, from an economic point of view—will cause them to look more closely to their processes than was the case under the old Malt Tax, which was a tax levied in a manner, I am bound to confess, that was extremely crude. I must refer to another case—to the case of those who are known as the Burton brewers—to whom we are all indebted for providing us with one of the best drinks which has ever been produced since nectar went out of fashion. But the Burton brewers undoubtedly have lost an advantage which they enjoyed under the old Malt Tax. Nor can I restore to them that advantage. It appears to me that traders, to a certain extent, must take the chances of war. As long as the Malt Tax endured, that class of brewers, as compared with other classes of brewers, enjoyed a perfectly fair advantage. At the same time, it was an accidental advantage, on the permanence of which they could not rely. The reason was this—that the Malt Tax was, as the trade always contended, in its essence, a tax upon barley. It was a primary charge raised upon barley; and it could only be checked afterwards, to a certain degree, by certain tests in the course of that manufacture which gave to it the form of a Malt Tax. As it was essentially a tax upon barley, and as the duty was uniform, it is manifest that those who bought and used exclusively the best barleys obtained from them more valuable results, and only paid upon them the same duty as those who used inferior barleys. We have now passed away from that comparatively crude method of taxation to a system which is far more just, under which the tax is laid upon the actual yield of the materials, be they what they may, which are employed in the process of brewing. I regret that those who have such great claims upon us as individuals should in any degree suffer from the operation even of a fiscal improvement; but I do not see how it is possible to restore to them that particular kind of advantage which they formerly enjoyed, but which I am firmly persuaded, from the great vigour and constant expansion of their industry, they will be perfectly well able to dispense with. When I spoke last year of the substitution of a Beer Duty for the Malt Tax, I endeavoured to recommend it to the House as, in the main, a measure for the liberation of trade, and I contended that that measure for the liberation of trade must operate in a manner most advantageous to those who supplied the raw materials of the trade, who must, in the main, be the agriculturists of this country. Of course, any evidence that we may have as yet with regard to the operation of this change in liberating trade must necessarily be partial and initiatory. I have no doubt that it will accumulate by a longer experience; but yet, I think, I can state to the House some facts that are not uninteresting in themselves, and that will convey an idea of the mode in which we are entitled to anticipate great benefits from recent legislation. I will take first the case of barley, and I will mention the proceedings of a house well known in the trade, and engaged in large brewing operations. That house has wisely addressed itself—and, no doubt, many others have done so also—to meeting the change in the law by resorting to purchases of barley lighter in weight and yielding a smaller product for the purposes of their trade. The result of this operation is this—they gained in the price of their barleys 10*s.* per quarter, and they lost in the qualities of their beer—I am not quite sure whether it was 4*s.* or 6*s.*; but, to be on the safe side, I will say 6*s.* a quarter, and the result was a net profit to them from the operation of the change of the law—for before that change they could not afford to use those light barleys—of 4*s.* on the quarter of barley. Oats have begun to be used by the brewers; rice, too, has begun to be used; and maize has begun to be used for brewing. These I look upon as a beginning only, and I speak of them only as such. Besides this, a very important relief has been given to those who use sugar for brewing. Formerly, it was necessary, with a view to the imposition of the tax, that any saccharine material—syrup for instance—must be reduced to a dry state in order that the duty might be taken. Since the Beer Duty was established, the manufacturer of beer takes his choice. The duty can be levied on the material syrup, and the material syrup can be used just as well as sugar; and syrup has accordingly been brought into use. I should like to give a little detail I think the House would like to hear about the case of maize, because it is an interesting illustration of the mode whereby, when freedom is given to an industry, the principle of private enterprize applied to the facts discovers profitable methods of working. Maize was considered somewhat hard for the purposes of brewing. It was also found, when a series of experiments were made, that it contained too much oil, which was a very grave objection. Then a further discovery was made that the excess of oil was not diffused through the general body of the grain, but lay entirely in that which was called the germ of the grain. Consequently, the wit of man, thus provoked and stimulated, extracted the germ from the grain, and turned it to its proper account—that of making oil, which we can burn in our lamps. The maize, relieved of the excess of oil and now made suitable for brewing, was applied to that purpose, and I understand that the result is not only satisfactory as regards the beer which proceeds from it, but likewise that it is satisfactory on this point—that the residue, after the extract has been taken, is found to be decidedly more available and profitable for the feeding of cattle than the residue formerly obtained from barley. These are details, and interesting details, as to the mode in which private enterprize goes to work always with an ultimate benefit which is sure to reach the public when changes that tend in the direction of commercial freedom are made. I must not pass from the subject without saying a few words about the condition of the private brewers, in whom so many persons are interested. First, I will give the statistics of private brewing. There are no less than 60,000 private brewers in this country, as ascertained by the licences taken out. Of these 60,000, 45,000 pay 6*s.* for their licences, and are not taxed upon their materials. The 15,000 remaining are under duty, and in the whole year these 15,000, it is computed, will yield us about £50,000. It is very unlikely that the materials consumed by the other 45,000 represent nearly so much as £50,000 of duty; consequently these 60,000 brewers, carrying on their trade in their private houses, do not consume, as far as we are able to judge, one-hundredth part of the whole of the material applied to the production of beer in this country. The House may, therefore, judge that the time has arrived when it would be no longer right that the difficulty of dealing with the private brewers should stand in the way of an important legislative change and a great public benefit. I shall have next to propose certain changes in the law with regard to the case of these private brewers. First, with regard to the private brewers who are under duty, we think that there is something in their complaint that their case is, in some respects, less favourable than it was under the former system, and we therefore propose to make them an allowance of 6 per cent on their materials—the same allowance as is made to the public brewer. There are other changes in detail, which will be much better understood when the House will have them in the form of a Bill in their hands than they can be now. We find that there are great inequalities in the operation of the law as it now stands. In the first place, it is absolutely necessary that, together with the farm-house, offices, yards, and gardens should be included, and that the power to value them should now be secured. At present there are a great many cases where it is declared that a farm-house apart from the farm buildings has no value at all, and we have no means of putting a value upon it. That is not just. We must look at equality between classes, and it is quite necessary that we should have the power of getting at the value of the farm-house in the only form in which we can get it, by taking together the value of the farm-house and its buildings as one common lot; and we propose, therefore, to make that change in the law. Besides that, we propose a change which I hope will be convenient to farmers and others in various parts of the country—namely, to introduce an intermediate class between £10 and £15 of valuation, and to provide that persons living in houses so valued, and brewing only for domestic use, should be allowed freedom from taxation on their materials, paying a 9*s.* licence, instead of 6*s.*, to keep them in just proportion to houses valued at £10. It will be necessary, Sir, as a complement to, rather than alteration of, the legislation of last year, to deal with the duty on foreign beer, which has not yet been modified. As compared with the 6*s.* 3*d.* which we levy upon British beer, the duty upon foreign beer is now fixed at such a standard as to make it 7*s.* 1*d.* upon the same quantity and strength of beer. That is evidently in the nature of a differential duty, which I am quite sure the brewers of this country have no disposition to maintain. Our proposal is to make a fair allowance for the effect of Excise restrictions, and to fix the tax at 6*s.* 6*d.* There is another small change which we propose in the duty on the article called "mum," or spruce. I trust that no Member of this House will be so injudicious as to ask me what is the article called "mum," or spruce, for I should be bound to confess my ignorance and say—"I do not know." I shall endeavour to defend myself, however, by stating that this ignorance of mine is shared by the whole of the Revenue Department, none of whom can throw the smallest light upon the point. A similar case has occurred in the course of my experience. I remember that when 40 years ago we began to deal with the Customs Duties of this country, we were confronted with the word "inkle," and no human being of that day entertained—or, I believe, at this day does entertain—the slightest notion what "inkle" is; although, perhaps, we may yet have some information about it. There must be an adaptation of the duty with regard to the importation of this kind of beer; and as it is imported in much stronger form than formerly used to be the case, our duty will be in this instance to propose an augmentation of the duty on spruce beer when it comes from abroad. That is all I will trouble the House with in regard to the operation of the Beer Duty. I may say that since the month of June last, when I urged on the House the adoption of this change, I have not seen any reason to recede in any respect from the propositions I then made, or to abate the hopes I then held out. On the contrary, I am bound to say that, owing in a great degree to the courtesy, diligence, and great sagacity of the officers of the Board of Inland Revenue, this very difficult change has been carried into effect all through the country with an amount of friction very much less than on a reasonable estimate we might have been entitled to expect. So much for the Revenue of the past year. Now a few words upon the Expenditure, which will be very short. If we compare the Expenditure with the Estimate, we find that the Estimate was £83,840,000, and that the actual Expenditure was £83,108,000; so that the Expenditure was less than the Estimate by £732,000. If I compare it with the Expenditure of the former year, I find that the Expenditure for the year 1879-80 was £84,105,000, and for the year 1880-81 £83,108,000, showing a diminution of £997,000, or, in round numbers, of £1,000,000. If I compare it with the Revenue of the year, I find that the Receipts of the year are £84,041,000, and the Expenditure £83,108,000, so that the surplus of Revenue over Expenditure is £933,000. I will not pass from this subject without saying a few words upon the condition of the Public Debt. The Funded Debt was, in round numbers, £710,500,000 on the 31st of March, 1880, and it has been diminished by about £1,400,000. The Unfunded Debt has been much more largely diminished—namely, from £27,345,000 to £22,078,000—by the conversion which was made by the right hon. Gentleman the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, and which he fully described at the time he brought it before the House. The Terminable Annuities, instead of showing a large diminution, as they would have shown in case that conversion had not taken place, on the contrary, show an increase of about £1,330,000. The whole of that increase has been taken up, and this additional charge has been incurred, in order to meet the outlay occasioned by the conversion to which I have referred. The total, Sir, stands thus. The Debt on the 31st of March, 1880, was £774,044,000, and on the 31st of March, 1881, it was £768,719,000, which shows a reduction of £5,325,000. But, besides that reduction, the Balances in the Exchequer, which were in 1880 £3,273,000, at the end of the present year were £5,928,400, showing an increase of £2,650,000. Putting these two sums together—for an increase of the Balances is virtually the same as a diminution of the Debt—there has been ostensibly a reduction in the Debt during the year of £7,975,000. But from that there are to be deducted certain excesses in the repayment to the public of loans formerly outstanding—a diminution of these assets which used to be described by my right hon. Friend opposite as part of the property of the public. Happily, more than one great town—exercising the principle and exhibiting the virtue of self-government—has gone into the market for itself, and, instead of coming as a petitioner to Downing Street, has ascertained what its own credit would do. So satisfactory has been the result, that £1,000,000 has been repaid to us in excess of our advances during the year which has just expired, and has caused this diminution to which I have referred in the amount of our outstanding loans. In tracing the reduction of Debt, the Committee will see that I am very near the mark when I put that sum at £7,000,000, of which £2,500,000, in round numbers, constitute the increased Balances, and £4,500,000 reduction of Debt. I do not mention this as a matter of boast—I very much wish it had been more. A small part of it has proceeded from the Sinking Fund established by the right hon. Gentleman the late Chancellor of the Exchequer. I was not among the original approvers of that Sinking Fund, nor do I recede from the objections I took to it as compared with other methods of meeting Debt; but this I must say, we have got it, and having got it—it being embodied in our law and having operated to the extent of £350,000 during the year which has just expired—I am not at all disposed to push my objections to the point of asking the House to repeal it. The reduction of the National Debt is a matter in which I have always felt a great degree of interest, and a great desire to see carried out. I have never thought that our operations in that direction have been as large as they ought to have been. The House, however, having refused to deal with it in what I think the best way, I accept the second best way, and take it as effecting, at all events, a reduction of Debt, and am thankful for it. But I may say here, though it is no part of the proposition I am going to place before the House for its practical judgment to-night, that it appears to me the time has come when we may properly make a further provision for the reduction of Debt by a change which I will describe —by the conversion of a portion of the short Annuities, that will expire in 1885, into longer Annuities that will not expire until 1906. The effect of that conversion, of course, is to liberate a very considerable annual sum. I should regard it as a wholly illegitimate proceeding to apply any portion of the sum, so liberated, in favour of the Ways and Means of the year. I propose to use it to the last farthing in the re-conversion of Stock, into those longer Annuities, expiring in 1906. If I state the figures to the House it will be seen that, at the present time, the total amount of Terminable Annuities which we pay is £7,102,000, of which £6,000,000, in round numbers, expire in 1885. Of these, it is proposed to convert £2,000,000 from four-year Annuities into twenty-five-year Annuities, terminating in 1906. By so converting them, after paying the interest on the Stock into which they are converted, we shall have a sum of £1,550,000 at our disposal. That will enable us to convert £60,000,000 of Stock, and we take that £60,000,000 of Stock as follows:—£20,000,000 of Government Stock held by Savings' Banks, which will leave a sum in the hands of the National Debt Commissioners more than ample for all demands, and £40,000,000 of Government Stock held by the Court of Chancery. With regard to the Chancery Stock, of course, in a matter of that kind, I have not acted without consulting those whose business it is to watch over the interests of Chancery Suitors. I am only illustrating the case when I state to the House how that matter stands. That £40,000,000 will leave a very large amount of Government Stock in the hands of the Court; this is all backed up by a guarantee upon the Consolidated Fund. The increment of Government Stock held by the Court of Chancery from year to year is about £500,000; and it is scarcely possible, unless some fundamental change takes place in the condition and movements of the country, that it should cease to increase. But what is material to be understood, even from the first mention of a subject of this kind, is that in respect of this Chancery Stock the position of the Suitor will remain precisely what it was, both as to his claim and as to the manner of dealing with it. Everything to be paid to him will be paid in Stock or in money, just as heretofore. Of course, these Terminable Annuities are things with which he has nothing to do, and which it would never be dreamed of placing in his hands in lieu of more convertible property. I think it is impossible for me to state too strongly and broadly that there will be no change whatever in the position of the Chancery Suitor. The operation is simply a financial operation, and has been considered in the light of a question of expediency only for the conversion of a certain sum of short Annuities into long Annuities. There is another point on which I think it is necessary to say a few words, because in my estimation we have reached a period at which I think the attention of the Committee ought to be addressed to it. I think this is one of those junctures which undoubtedly renders it, if not obligatory, at least expedient, that this should be done. I wish to present to the House, in a very succinct and general form, a few figures which, I think, illustrate in a striking manner the present movement of public wealth as compared with population and expenditure. This is a subject which does not annually come under the consideration of the Committee; but, undoubtedly, it is a subject that periodically it is desirable should be brought into view, and especially so when a change has been taking place with respect to which the Minister may happen to believe, as I believe, that neither the public nor Parliament are fully aware of it. We make ground at such a rate, and for such a long time, that people begin to believe we shall never cease to make ground; but I wish Parliament to understand that we are not making ground at present. I speak of the last few years, and without reference to Party differences, and I say we are rather losing than making ground. In the calculations of Expenditure I shall present, care has been taken to exclude everything that can be called occasional; all

Votes for special purposes have been shut out, and if they had not been shut out, the result would have been, perhaps, more striking than that which I now present. For example, the £6,000,000 taken by the late Government at one period of their existence does not enter into the figures I shall present; nor does the £3,200,000 paid by a former Liberal Government in respect of the *Alabama* Award. As far as possible, the whole of the results are given in round numbers and approximately, and they do not include anything but the normal Expenditure. I have said there are three elements in the calculation—Population, Revenue, and Expenditure. I begin with the year 1842; there are four different periods, and I compare the first year of each period with the last. The Revenue referred to is derived exclusively from Customs, Excise, Stamps, and Taxes. I shall say a word or two upon the Income Tax afterwards, because I think to include it now would be to introduce an element that would be rather bewildering; but the points I have stated the Committee will see, on the whole, form a fair measure of progress, or the reverse. The Expenditure is, of course, that which we sometimes call optional—that which is in the main Supply Expenditure, excluding Expenditure upon the Debt of the country. The first period is from 1842 to 1858, the latter year being taken because it is the first year of normal Expenditure after the Crimean War. During that period, which included the Famine in Ireland, the Population increased only ⅛ per cent per annum. The Revenue increased at the rate of 1¾ per cent per annum; but the Expenditure increased per annum 2½ per cent — somewhat faster than the Revenue. The next period is from 1859 to 1873. The population increased 1 per cent per annum; the Revenue increased 3 per cent per annum; and the Expenditure 1⅓ per cent per annum. The next period is from 1874 to 1877; and it represents what may be called the setting sun of our prosperity—the last years of rather fading brilliancy, as compared with the economical results of former periods. From 1874 to 1877, the Population still increasing at 1 per cent per annum, the Revenue increased 1½ per cent per annum; but the Expenditure increased at the rate of 3¼ per cent per annum. Taking the two last years, 1878 and 1879—that is, down to March 1880—the Population still increasing at 1 per cent per annum, the Revenue went back at the rate of ½ per cent per annum; but the Expenditure continued to increase at the rate of 2⅙ per annum. So that not only during three of those periods has our optional Expenditure increased a great deal faster than our Revenue, but, in the fourth of those periods—that is, during the last two years—our Revenue has actually gone back, while our Expenditure has increased 2⅙ per cent per annum; and I am sorry to say that when I come to make provision for 1881-2, I shall be obliged to ask for a further augmentation. I will now present the subject in words which show these results in a simpler form. The readiest and simplest of all methods of illustrating the growth of wealth in this country is by a reference to the Income Tax. But, then, we are met by this—that 1*d.* in the Income Tax does not mean the same thing in different years. In the year 1853 the area of the Income Tax was extended. In subsequent years it has been considerably diminished; and it is necessary to make very careful allowance for all these successive changes, and to balance them one against the other, or else the comparison of the 1*d.* of Income Tax in one year with the 1*d.* of Income Tax in another year tends only to mislead. I will not go into the details of these changes. They would be wearisome, and they are, besides, unnecessary; but great care has been taken in preparing the very simple statement I am now about to submit to the Committee, and I can confidently state that it may be, as a whole, safely relied upon. The 1*d.* of Income Tax in 1842-3, when the tax was first laid on, was worth £772,000. No changes took place in the area or circuit within which the tax was applied in the first 10 years of its existence. In the year 1852-3 the £772,000 had only grown to £810,000—a moderate growth; but many great changes have been since brought into operation. Between the years 1852 and 1877-8 the 1*d.* in the Income Tax, after allowing justly for all changes in the way of allowances and remissions, so as to make the comparison approximately precise, had grown from £810,000 to £1,990,000. [Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Is Ireland included?] That includes Ireland, and it includes all additions and remissions. What you must take into account is this—that the figures I am now giving for 1877-8, and those which I will give directly for 1881-2, are upon the supposition that the basis of the tax remains the same as in 1852-3, and, therefore, all changes are taken together. Well, having grown to £1,990,000 in 1877-8, in 1881-2 the 1*d.* of Income Tax, which does not strictly represent the general condition of the people, but the condition of the wealthier classes of the people, has gone back for the first time since it was imposed. No such period can be found, as far as I am aware, since the year 1842. The 1*d.* of Income Tax being, as I have said, £1,990,000 in 1877-8, is now estimated, on the basis of last year, at £1,943,000 for 1881-2. If the Committee will look at the Revenue Returns, they will find that the 1*d.* of Income Tax is not worth so much. I have been obliged to debit and credit the 1*d.* with every change made in the Income Tax since 1852, and, unfortunately, I have had to debit it a larger sum than I can credit it, and, therefore, for the purpose of comparison, the 1*d.* shows a larger yield than the actual 1*d.* of the Income Tax. Having detained the Committee thus long upon a matter which is more or less retrospective, I come now to the year which has been entered upon in the last four days — the year 1881-2. I have now prepared the Committee for a very brilliant and exhilarating state of things. For the year 1881-2 the permanent charge of the Debt will be £28,920,000. It was, I think, £28,800,000 in the last year, and I may as well explain the mode in which the difference arises. There is a Loan of £2,000,000, which has been made to India, and which is now merged in our general Debt, and is no longer standing as to be repaid by India. That being so, I propose to provide for it by an Annuity, expiring in 1906. That will raise the annual charge by about £60,000 for interest on the £2,000,000. There is, therefore, £28,920,000 permanent charge for the Debt; £500,000, Interest on local loans; £200,000, Charge for the Suez Loan; and £1,650,000 for the Consolidated Fund Charges; making, in all, £31,270,000. There is nothing in this to which I need, for our present purpose, ask more particular attention on the part of the Committee. I now come to those charges which fall under the head of Optional Expenditure. The Charge for the Army, according to the Estimate, will be £16,509,000; the Home Charges for Forces in India, are £1,100,000; the Charge for the Navy, £10,846,000; the grant which we propose for India, if the Committee should vote it, will be £500,000; the Civil Service Estimates come to £16,087,000; then come the Charges for the Revenue Departments — Customs and Inland Revenue, £2,851,000; Post Office, £3,540,000; Telegraph Service, £1,294,000; and Packet Service, £708,000; making, in all, a total of £84,705,000. In presenting this Expenditure to the Committee, I must point out that it shows unfavourably, as compared with the Expenditure of the year which has just gone by, to the extent of £1,597,000; but hon. Gentlemen will bear in mind that upon the whole, and under favourable circumstances, a saving is made upon the Estimates as compared with the actual results. Upon the whole, when the Estimate of the coming year is compared with the Expenditure of the past year, the comparison is somewhat unfair to the coming year. The actual Expenditure of 1880-1 was £83,108,000. The estimated Expenditure of 1881-2 is, as I have just stated, £84,705,000, and the increase is £1,597,000. The Committee will naturally, at this point, wish to have a little more particular information as to the forms in which that augmentation arises. First, I look to the Army, and I find that the charge, which was £15,588,000 in 1880-1, is £16,509,000 for 1881-2, showing an apparent increase of nearly £1,000,000. I ought to say that this increase is not really so great, and that, apart from the special charges developed within the last two or three months, the Army Estimates will not show any increase whatever. The Navy expenditure for 1880-1 was £10,703,000. It is now estimated at £10,845,000, showing an increase of £142,000. On the Miscellaneous Estimates there is an increase of £308,000, the charge in 1880-1 being £15,579,000, and that in 1881-2 being £16,087,000. I may as well state how this increase is made up. When I have stated certain items, I think, Sir, the Committee will perceive that the augmentation is not owing to any carelessness on the part of the Government in checking the increase of Expenditure as far as they can, and in effecting any reductions that appear to be necessary. I have said that the total increase on the Miscellaneous Estimates is £308,000, and I will now point to a few items. The Census stands for £144,000—that, of course, is a charge which will not recur until after the expiration of another decade. For the Ordnance Survey there is an increase of £46,000. I might throw the responsibility for that increase upon the House of Commons, inasmuch as everyone urged it to be done; but I am not at all disposed to do so. In this particular instance, my opinion was that the House of Commons was perfectly in the right, and I willingly and cheerfully become responsible for this augmentation. At a time when we have before us the consideration of so many and such important questions relating to land, I think this matter should be carried through with all practicable speed; and if it be found that we are able further to accelerate the work commenced in former years, I should not shrink from asking the House of Commons to enable that to be done. The next augmentation in the Miscellaneous Estimates is that of £160,000, which represents the normal growth of the Education Vote. Another important increase, and one to which I cannot refer with the same satisfaction, is that of £55,000 in the cost of the Irish Constabulary, rendered necessary by the recent disturbances. I have already shown grounds for an increase of £400,000, and the Committee will, therefore, perceive that we have been able to effect some retrenchments in the Miscellaneous Estimates, inasmuch as the items I have named go beyond the increase of £308,000. There is, also, the normal increase in the Estimates of the Revenue Department, especially in the Post Office Department, where it almost always returns to us, in the form of improving Revenue, with vast extension of public accommodation. I told the Committee that there was an increase in the Estimates of the present year compared with the Expenditure last year, of £1,597,000; and the items I have just specified to the Committee account for £1,589,000, substantially the whole sum. I need not say that a very large part of this increase is due to the measures which the Government have thought it their duty to take, or proposals which they have thought it their duty to make, in connection with India and the Transvaal. I will state to the House very briefly, but quite exactly, how these figures stand. In 1880-1 the Vote for India, quite apart from any Army question, came to £561,000, or £61,000 for the interest on the £2,000,000, and £500,000 given in Committee of Ways and Means, a short time ago, in aid of Indian Revenue; and for the Transvaal in the same year the figures are as follows:—Army, £446,000; Navy, £210,000; or, together, £656,000; so that the total cost for the year of these two descriptions of Services was £1,217,000. If that charge had dissappeared this year, I should have been in a condition to come to the House in a very good humour, to submit my Financial Statement, and possibly might have done something towards putting the Committee in a good humour also. But, instead of that, the charges stand as follows:—For India, £620,000, assuming, of course, that the House votes the sum of £500,000 in Ways and Means, for which we ask; and the Charge for the Transvaal will be, Army, £984,000, and Navy, £200,000, together making £1,184,000; or a total for the two Services of India and the Transvaal of £1,804,000. That is the sum which would have been available as net Revenue without these two Services; and if I take the two years together for the purpose of giving a general result, India, for the two years, stands at a cost of £1,171,000, and the Transvaal at £1,840,000, or, together, considerably over £3,000,000. So much for the Expenditure of the year which has just begun. I now come to the Revenue of the year, and that—of course, the Estimate of the Revenue for the year—stands as follows:—The Customs Department does not venture to estimate its revenue at higher than £19,000,000. The Estimate for the Customs last year was £19,300,000; the Excise is estimated at £27,440,000; Stamps, £11,900,000; Taxes, £2,760,000; Income Tax, £11,000,000; total Revenue from Taxes, £72,100,000; Post Office, £6,800,000; Telegraph, £1,600,000; Crown Lands, £390,000; Interest on Advances, £1,200,000; Miscellaneous Revenue, £3,900,000; or a total of £85,990,000. The estimated Expenditure, as I have already stated, is

£84,705,000, making an apparent Surplus of £1,285,000.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: That is taking the Income Tax as it is at present—at 6*d.*?

MR. GLADSTONE: Yes; taking the Income Tax at 6*d.* I can assure the Committee that this is not the first time the subject has presented itself to my mind. The apparent Surplus is £1,285,000; but there is a small addition to the Public Expenditure, which, unless some strong reason the other way should present itself, we propose to make, and that is, a charge for barracks of £100,000. Those who are familiar with the finance of the country are, no doubt, aware that some eight or ten years ago, not during the time of the late Government, but before it came into Office, the charge for barracks was laid upon Annuities. The bulk of the operation, has been effected, and only a sum of about £300,000 remains to be expended. The Fortification Annuities are at an end. No more will be created, and, that being so, I am very desirous to put an end also to the creation of Annuities for these barracks. The charge for the year will only be £100,000, and unless, for some reason which I do not at present foresee, it should appear to be inconvenient to do so, I propose to provide for that in Ways and Means, so that we shall have no more Barrack Annuities. This will reduce our apparent Surplus to £1,185,000. Then comes the question of the sixth 1*d.* upon the Income Tax. That, undoubtedly, was not a grant of a permanent addition to our taxation. It was a loan, or a cadeau, or whatever you like to call it, made to the Chancellor of the Exchequer of the day in order that, by means of it, he might be enabled to carry through, what was deemed by Parliament, a beneficial change. Under these circumstances, I cannot regard it as my property—*vix ea nostra voca*—I think if I were to ask the House to vote this sixth 1*d.* of the Income Tax, it would be said, and said with perfect justice, that it was not a continuance of taxation, but an addition to taxation. Therefore, to establish our starting point, I take away that 1*d.* from the Income Tax. That costs £1,460,000, and leaves me, therefore, with a deficiency in the figures which I have presented of £275,000. Well, that is not a very favourable description of my starting point, and I am afraid it will convey strong emotions of dissatisfaction to the minds of some who have, as instructors of others, already been disposing in advance of an enormous Surplus supposed to be in possession of the Government. Before I proceed to the means by which we intend to ask the House to provide for that deficit, I will mention two subjects tending to its augmentation, if they are entertained. The first is the question connected with the new Tobacco Duty imposed in the time of the late Government. That imposition was in the nature of an experiment. It is no reproach to a Financial Minister if experiments of this kind occasionally fail, because the materials with which they deal do not admit of an exact computation. There is a great deal of doubt and discussion about these experiments, and it has been pressed upon me by many that if the state of the Revenue will admit it, we ought to propose the removal of that small portion of the Tobacco Duty which, for practical purposes, we may call 4*d.* in the pound. I have examined the matter as fairly and impartially as I can, and, in my opinion, the time has not yet come when the House can be in the position to pronounce with adequate certainty on the success or failure of this experiment. The times have been very unfavourable to it, because it came in on a declining state of Revenue, and a declining condition of consumption, and such periods are extremely unfavourable. All who recollect the Budget of the first Lord Northbrook in 1840, will know how extremely unfavourable are such circumstances for the augmentation of indirect taxation. But in endeavouring, as well as I can, to sever the different elements of a somewhat complex case, I find this. In the first place, it must be borne in mind that even a relief of a trade like the tobacco trade is in the nature of a disturbance of the trade, and particularly when what we take off is a fraction, only constituting a small portion of the entire duty. Therefore, it is a thing not to be done without serious consideration. Then the sentiment of the trade is divided on the subject, and I am assured that, although not rapidly, yet the consumption is somewhat advancing. The measure of the right hon. Gentleman the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, which was prejudiced by the general state of the Revenue, has been favoured by the state of the tobacco supply. The tobacco supply has been so abundant that the price of leaf tobacco has very materially fallen, and that great fall has tended in a great degree to cover the augmentation of the duty, and to assist the trade, at least in part, to meet that augmentation. I have referred to the Revenue Department, and I am assured that they, on their responsibility, cannot look for a smaller loss, if that 4*d.* in duty were removed, than £600,000, and, therefore, what I say to the Committee is this—We must postpone the examination of this question. It may be one very fit to examine, should the evidence obtained accumulate upon us a year or a couple of years hence; but at present, the time has not come when, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, the subject ought to be dealt with. The next subject is one of very small consequence and dimensions indeed; but it is one which presents very considerable difficulty as well as inducement. I mean the subject of the duty on silver plate. The Revenue which it produces is no more than £48,000 a-year; but there are two reasons why, if we could, we ought to get rid of it. The first, is the general advantage which has never failed to attend the removal of the Excise Duty upon a product of British industry. That is one; but there is another special reason, which is, that there is every reason to believe that India is well qualified to supply us with silver wares in a manner advantageous to herself and the trade and the people of this country, were it not for the operation of this tax. Now, these are the reasons for the removal of that duty; but, unfortunately, there are two reasons against the removal of the duty in the ordinary manner, which, I believe the Committee may consider as weighty or weightier still. When I say "the ordinary manner," I mean the immediate removal of the duty. In the first place, to get rid of this £48,000 a-year, you must not only give up the £48,000—which you might be willing enough to do—but, if you remove this duty immediately, which undoubtedly would be the best way of doing it, you must be prepared to meet a claim for drawbacks which, in the first place, is enormous in relation to the amount of duty, and totally transcends all the dimensions of our ideas in relation to drawbacks on taxable commodities, but which is open to a still greater objection, in my judgment, at least—namely, that it would be impossible to shut the door against fraud. When I come to make inquiries as to these drawbacks, gentlemen of the greatest intelligence and respectability in the trade say that a drawback would be due to them of—and they are, certainly, not desirous of overstating the drawback and thereby frightening us from giving it the relief, for they would like to see the tax removed, and consequently do not wish to shake our nerves—a drawback, I say, of £170,000, or three and a-half years' revenue. To that I have got to add, that I have not the smallest doubt of the perfect good faith of that estimate, that I have not the smallest doubt of the perfect good faith of the leading members of the trade, in whose hands we are perfectly safe, as to all their own operations; but it is not in their power, nor in the power of anyone, to assure us that we should not be subjected to a demand, perhaps as great, in respect of fraudulent claims. I cannot say what that would be; but, under all the circumstances, we do not see our way to proceed to the removal by the ordinary form—that is, of an immediate removal. I am sorry to say that the problem puzzles me, and I can suggest nothing better than that which is, as a rule, not to be resorted to—namely, in the difficulties of this case, a very gradual removal—to provide for such an annual reduction of the duty as will not sensibly disturb the course of trade; and I will submit to the House a Resolution proposing that, instead of 1*s.* 6*d.* an ounce, which is the amount now chargeable, the duty shall be reduced annually by 3*d.* per ounce until it expires. The gold duty we do not propose to touch. That is a duty so peculiar, that I really do not know how one could deal with it without entertaining large drawbacks and largely interfering with the trade. I do not think there is any reason for touching the duty on gold, as there is for touching the duty on silver. I leave this proposal to the judgment of the Committee—I make it, not as the best thing conceivable, but as being, probably, the best thing that can be done under present circumstances. I do not take this small amount into account in fixing the balance of the account, for it is not worth our notice one way or the other. So I stand thus: I have £275,000 to deal with, and must ask the House to place in our hands one of those small but reasonable Surpluses, without which the vicissitudes of the year cannot be encountered. The first proposal I have to make to the House is an adjustment, not an alteration, of the duty on spirits —an adjustment of what is called the surtax. That surtax is at present 5*d.* per gallon upon what is commonly called foreign spirits, and 2*d.* per gallon on rum. We cannot confute the charge which is sometimes made against us by some foreign Governments that this 5*d.* is, as regards unrectified spirits brought from abroad, really in the nature of a differential duty, and that the 5*d.* ought certainly not to be more than 4*d.* On the other hand, we cannot justify the difference between the duty on rum and the duty upon other descriptions of spirits. Rum is introduced principally from our Colonies, and we should not make a distinction for their accommodation which we do not enforce or observe in relation to other countries. As regards rum and spirits generally, the case stands thus: Heretofore in the Customs Department we have been obliged to be content with very imperfect methods of testing. The only instrument in use has been the hydrometer, and it has been with reference to the use of the hydrometer that our present duties have been fixed; but we are now going to apply the same method that has long been successfully used in the case of wine—namely, the method of distillation. By that method of distillation, we shall be enabled—whether the spirit is rectified or not, whether it is coloured or not—to ascertain the exact amount of alcohol in each gallon, and to make the duty perfectly just. So that this operation, although it will yield us a certain sum of money, is not proposed by me as a new tax. It is an adjustment in the differential duty, which, although it may involve an increase in the figure, invariably operates in the nature of a reduction to the consumer. Our proposal is that henceforward, instead of 5*d.* and 2*d.* surtax, there shall be a uniform surtax of 4*d.* upon a gallon of standard strength. The drawback will also be altered. It will be 4*d.* on rectified spirits, instead of being as it is now, and will be 2*d.* on unrectified spirits, which is the same as under the present law. The effect of this operation—which, in its details, is, probably, not of great interest to many hon. Members—will be, by a more correct method of measurement and the establishment of a more perfect equality between the different kinds of spirit, to yield to the Exchequer—so large are the sums involved in even the smallest modification of the Spirit Duty—no less than £180,000. Now, that does not fill up the deficiency, and, in order to supply what is wanting, our attention has been turned to a much larger subject—namely, the subject of the Death Duty. I do not wonder that the Death Duty excites some interest and feeling in the House, because, undoubtedly, it is the largest and most difficult subject still remaining to be effectually dealt with by Parliament. I will confess, at the outset, that I am not about to propose any complete plan for dealing with that duty. In the first place, I am quite convinced that when such a plan is proposed it ought to be proposed by a Government to a Parliament which has plenty of what I may call elbow room—plenty of free, unoccupied available space for its discussion—because its complication is such, and the nicety and largeness of the interests involved are such, that it never could be got through except with a liberal allowance of the time of Parliament for its consideration. Sir, there are three great, I may say gross, anomalies in our present system of Death Duties—none of which will I attempt to deal with on the present occasion, though I wish always to designate them and keep them in the mind of Parliament. I may say that my hon. Friend behind me, the Member for Stockton (Mr. Dodds), has done right good service to the public in the elucidation of this question; but even he did not feel himself in a position, in the very bold proposal he made—and I think he was right—to deal with the anomalies to which I refer. These anomalies, I say, are three. The first of them is the total exemption of property in mortmain from Death Duty, and Life Duty, and every duty. I do not know how long the Parliament of this country, which is supposed to have some self-governing energy, will be inclined to bear this intolerable anomaly. I, myself, have had the honour of once failing in an attempt to deal with it. No serious—no extended—attempt has been made since that time to deal with it; but the time must come when it must be dealt with. It will be dealt with, and dealt with boldly, at the time when the other anomalies of the Death Duty are taken in hand and reduced to a condition of justice and equality. As to the other anomalies, there is—first of all, the question between settled and unsettled personalty; and it is impossible to conceive anything more irrational—and I speak advisedly when I use this almost hyperbolical term—as regards pure personalty than that utter inequality. It seems as though it were the deliberate policy of the country to drive all property into settlement, instead of leaving it free to be dealt with by the energy and skill of an enterprizing nation—for that is the true policy of the country. But, instead of that, what do we do? We say to those who leave property free—"A heavy Probate Duty shall be levied upon your unsettled property. Put it into settlement, and you will pass by the Probate Duty, paying nothing but a *5s.* stamp, and you enjoy an advantage for which there is not a shred of reason." I have looked very carefully into the question, and I am bound to say that the conclusion of myself and my Colleagues is, that we find that the subject is so much mixed up with the consideration of settlement, either of realty or arising out of realty, that it is impossible to deal with it except as a separate matter. We are obliged, therefore, to leave it for future consideration. Perhaps it may be said—"Why not grapple with the whole of these anomalies at once?" The reason for not doing so will, I think, carry conviction to the mind of the House. It is not the difficulty of doing so; it is not the pressure of Business during this Session, though that might of itself form a conclusive reason; it is, that Parliament will, as I hope, take into consideration and decide, in one way or the other, the main question connected with the devolution of inheritance in real property. That is a very great question on which I, for one, have a very strong opinion; but I hold that it is indisputable that inasmuch as our whole scheme of taxation by Succession Duty upon realty, is based on these life-interests, it is absolutely impossible to deal with the matter at present. I am obliged to pass by these large subjects, and confine myself within comparatively narrow limits; but I cannot approach the matter without saying a word on the plan of my hon. Friend behind me (Mr. Dodds). The ability with which that plan was brought forward, and the strong reasons that may be urged in its favour, would render it intolerable for me to pass it by altogether. I think I may, with substantial correctness, describe that plan as being a plan for abolishing our Legacy Duties, and replacing them by an equivalent addition to the Probate Duties. That is, in very few words, a summary description of the plan. I must say, all the principles of economical science, if they have anything to do with it, and all the principles of fiscal convenience, are so strongly in favour of the plan of my hon. Friend, that they will not bear a moment's counter argument. But the plan of my hon. Friend abolishes what is called the "consanguinity scale." Under the consanguinity scale, as is well known, the law takes very practical cognizance of the relation in which the party inheriting stands to the party bequeathing; and if he be what the law calls a lineal—that is, generally speaking, a child, but it is applied on the one side sometimes to a grandchild or a great grandchild, and on the other side to grandfather or a great grandfather—he pays 1 per cent on the legacy; but if he be more remote through various gradations, he is charged various rates, reaching a maximum of 10 per cent. There is a very strong argument both ways with regard to consanguineous cases. It is not at all unnatural to hold that children, and those who are analagous to children, have a natural expectancy, and that, having that expectancy, they are not fit subjects for taxation to the same extent on inheritance as strangers. And, singularly enough, I find that the able gentleman who has the superintendence of the Legacy and Probate Duties at the Board of Inland Revenue says that almost all his difficulties are with the people who pay 1 per cent; while the people who are subject to the higher rates pay them with comparative cheerfulness. I remember that my late noble Friend Earl Russell—whose name can never be repeated in this House without respect and gratitude for his public services—was once talking of a legacy of £5,000 which had been bequeathed to him, when someone said it was very hard that he should have to pay 10 per cent duty. "On the contrary," he said, "I have much satisfaction in paying £500, as it leaves me £4,500 in pocket." He seemed to think himself well off. There is a strong argument as regards realty; but it may be answered in this way. It is very true that people ought to bequeath their property to their descendants, and not in a fanciful manner to persons a great distance from them, or to institutions for the purpose of being glorified as benefactors after they are dead; and you may say it is the business of the testator and not of the State, to distinguish between what shall go to his children, and what to his more distant relations, or to strangers or institutions. I think that is a matter that might be argued; but I am not prepared to make so great a change, even if I were convinced—and I will not say I am convinced—of its propriety. At any rate, I am not prepared to make so great a change to operate upon wills which for more than one generation have been made in expectation of duties arranged according to the present law. I will illustrate the matter in this way. Of the property subject to Legacy Duty about seven-twelfths pay only 1 per cent, and five-twelfths pay a higher rate. Were you to say that the duty ought to be made uniform in the shape of a really equivalent sum added to the Probate Duty, the effect would be, generally speaking, that the lineals who now pay 1 per cent would then pay 2½ per cent, and would pay that in a great degree to the relief of those distantly related. Under those circumstances, I am not prepared to assent to a system which should compulsorily introduce this system of payment. I am very sensible of the great advantages which would be attained provided testators would take the matter into their own hands, and, instead of leaving the State to draw these distinctions, were to adjust their wills for themselves with a view to an equal tax. If they did that, the lineal, I take it, would get quite as much as now, and perhaps less would go to fanciful and comparatively needless objects. But to my hon. Friend I propose to offer one very small instalment, which will, however, tend to clear the ground, because it will tend after a few years to test public feeling. What I propose is this: To introduce an optional law, and to provide that where all the parties are agreed—the residuary legatees, the executors, and the Board of Inland Revenue—each of them having their own separate interests to defend, the amount of this duty would be a matter for agreement, so as not to lose revenue, at some average rate—say, 5 per cent; and the parties may then go scot free, and make their own arrangements, without ever again darkening the doors of Somerset House. As an optional law, I cannot see that there can be any objection to a scheme of that kind. My intention is to allow, by the consent of all the parties, that the whole sum may be taken at once in the shape of an augmented Probate Duty, and all further payments of duty may be dispensed with. But, Sir, that is not a proposition from which I can expect to derive any sensible amount of Ways and Means. I only mention it as a modification of the law which it appears to me might be tried, and which might, at the worst, work harmlessly, and, at the best, beneficially perhaps. We should still be where we were, and at least we should have an argument in favour of consanguinity. But within the narrow circuit I have traced, without pretending to offer to the House any complete reform of the Death Duties, there still remains, in my opinion, room for a limited, but an extremely useful and in no respect burdensome, and, at the same time, profitable change. The essence of it would be to abolish the 1 per cent Legacy Duty, and, in respect to that 1 per cent, to add ½ per cent to the Probate Duty. As the Legacy Duty touches rather more than half the property that pays duty, that would seem to be in the nature of a slight remission, rather than an augmentation; but, I take it, there is virtually an equivalent. Of course, I base this on the assumption, which I believe to be beyond question, that as this is a commutation of duty, the duty I part with and the duty I impose will fall, usually, on the same parties; and the foundation for that is this—the residuary legatees who pay an additional 1 per cent are usually the children. In an accidental case, a stranger might be the residuary legatee; in a very few cases the widow is the residuary legatee, or, in cases perhaps still fewer, she takes the whole estate; but these cases are so few, that it appears to me they ought not to materially influence the judgment of Parliament. In the main, if you abolish the 1 per cent of Legacy Duty and add ½ per cent to the Probate Duty, you take off 1 per cent from the Legacy Duty and put it on again in the shape of Probate Duty. But by paying Probate Duty, all that description of reversion, which amounts to two-thirds of the whole reversion, and which involves, therefore, two-thirds of the complications my hon. Friend tried to get rid of, would completely disappear. Of course, there would be a certain change in this respect—that the Legacy and Probate Duties would not affect exactly the same subjects. The Legacy Duty is more a personal duty, while the Probate Duty is more a duty on property; but the change, so viewed, is a change completely in conformity with the whole spirit and movement of modern legislation which has been to get rid of taxation on personal property. That is the object we have in view. Now, Sir, in doing this, the first advantage I gain is to get rid of an immense amount of complication, and of the necessity of keeping alive accounts in the Revenue Department of a vast number of wills, by taking the payments all at once. But there is another advantage, which, though it will be rather a heavy cost at first, I estimate even more highly, and that is, that part of the measure will get rid entirely of that singularly cumbrous and inequitable plan under which we first compel the payment of Probate Duty on the debts of a deceased person, and, subsequently, repay the duty through a cumbrous process, at some distant time, instead of allowing the whole of those debts to be deducted at once, as we now propose. That proposal I do commend to the Committee; but it will not add to the Revenue, because this year we shall have to make a double amount of deduction—we shall have the deductions that belong to last year in the repayment of duty, and we shall have the deductions of the present year. I propose to make some other changes, all of which appear to me to be in the right direction. It is quite practicable to have a close adjustment of the scale of duties; but it is not quite practicable to charge the duty at so much per cent up to the very last farthing—at least, so I am informed. It is represented to me by an hon. Friend, who is a better judge on the subject than I am, that if we calculate the duty it must be in round sums, and that if we ceased to do that it would cause great inconvenience to parties all over the country in obtaining the necessary legal instruments. However, we come very near to an equality, because what I propose is that between £100, which is the absolute limit of exemption on the net value of estates, and £1,000, the duty shall be charged at intervals of £50; and above £1,000, at intervals of £100. That will bring us near an exact percentage. I propose, also, to abolish the exemption which exists in regard to legacies of £20. If the richest man in this country dies to-morrow, and bequeaths to the next richest man in this country £20 to purchase a snuff-box in recollection of him, that £20 pays no duty. [Several hon. MEMBERS: £19 19*s.*] Yes; but he never does leave £20. The lawyers take care to steer clear of the fatal £20. But there is another change I propose which will have a very small fiscal effect, but which I regard as of the greatest importance to the mass of the community. What is the great grievance, after all, of these Legacy and Probate Duties? It is the burden they entail—not in the shape of payment to the Exchequer, but in the shape of personal cost and trouble, and the employment of intermediate persons who are necessary, and which falls on the smallest people who inherit anything. There are multitudes of people in this country, I am happy to say, who now hold small sums in the Post Office Savings Banks — amounting to about £70,000,000—held in sums of £25, £50, £100, or £200 at the outside; and all these, if inherited, are subject to Probate and Legacy Duty, and they will entail upon people who are perfectly bewildered as to what they have to do and to pay, vexation, trouble, loss of time—which to them is money—and, finally, charges which constitute a formidable percentage upon the sum they have inherited. The proposal I have to make is this—and it is not a modification of any of the proposals I have yet made. It is completely beside them, and the effect is this. Wherever an affidavit can be made that the gross effects—for with such people to allow a deduction of debts would be wrong—do not exceed £300, the person inheriting shall not be compelled, but shall have the opportunity of applying to the nearest Revenue officer, and under his eye making an affidavit that the gross effects do not exceed £300, specifying what they are—doing before him what would have to be done in the Probate Court; and that, upon doing this, the Revenue officer shall charge two sums of money. The first will be a sum of 15*s*., which will represent the reduced fee which is now payable in the Probate Court. The second sum will be one of 30*s*., in respect of the duty and the measures the officer must take on behalf of the person. Upon the payment of that sum of £2 5*s*., the person can go scot free of all further payments, and trouble, and exertion of every kind. The Revenue officer will then send the affidavit to the Probate Court, and obtain from the Probate Court the necessary authority to place it in the hands of the person inheriting, and he would hear no more about it. That, I think, will be an immense relief to the small persons I am referring to. Together with the deduction of debts it has been customary to make an allowance for funeral expenses; but that can only be made at the time of settling the accounts for Legacy Duty. Both these allowances will now be made at the time of taking out probate, and the confident expectation of the Department is that when they take the first account of the debts and the funeral expenses, and the probate is granted, that will be the final settlement. It will, of course, be necessary to retain power in cases of complication, to require a final account in order to ensure an accurate adjustment. Well, Sir, the essence of this measure, as I hope I may describe it in three short phrases, is this—The duty is not to be taken up; a certain outstanding credit is taken up and out of the funds, and in connection with the funds obtained; and by taking up that outstanding credit practical reforms and improvements in the administration of the law, especially as regards the humbler classes of the community, are to be effected. The financial effect may be very simply stated, and I have now nearly arrived at the conclusion of this lengthy statement. The addition to the Probate Duty for the entire year would be £1,046,000 by the adoption of this plan. Against that, there will be a loss of £151,000 on the Legacy Duty, and £428,000 on account of debts. That sum of £428,000 will be reduced in future years; but the loss on the Legacy Duty will be far heavier. There will never be any loss to the Revenue, but perhaps some small gain ultimately; and with this there will remain the large advantages I have endeavoured to show to the taxpaying community. I propose to fix the 1st of June for the commencement of the operation. That would give us 10 months. The net gain for the first year will be £467,000, and the gain for 10 months, £390,000. Now, Sir, my final figures are of a very simple character. My apparent Surplus was £1,185,000, and my Deficit, after deducting the 1*d*. off the Income Tax, was £275,000. Against this, I place a gain by the adjustment of the surtax on foreign spirits of £180,000, and a gain by the net result of the operations in respect of the Probate Duty of £390,000. That gives a total gain of £570,000, from which I have to deduct the debt of £275,000, leaving as the estimated and very modest Surplus for the year, £295,000, or, in round numbers, £300,000. Now, with regard to the procedure upon these proposals. There is only one Resolution which it will be necessary to take to-night in the usual manner. I hope the Committee will hear what I have to say on the subject of procedure, because our position is rather peculiar. There are not many more—in fact, there are only four working days—before the Easter Recess. One Resolution, that concerning the adjustment of the surtax on spirits, it will be necessary to take to-night; but with regard to the other Resolutions I am in the hands of the Committee. I do not think I am proposing any plan involving principles of great difficulty; but I think it would be very advantageous if the consideration of the Resolutions were postponed until after their publication in the Paper. I am not inclined to ask that at all; I give it simply as my opinion, and I am not aware anyone will be prejudiced by it. If I am not allowed to go on with the Resolutions to-night and bring in the Bill, the consequence will be to entail a greater delay than is desirable in getting the judgment of the House; and with regard to the subsequent stages of the Bill, there will be a much longer postponement than is desirable. I, therefore, respectfully make that proposition to the Committee, believing, as I do, that it will be a very great advantage to take the Resolutions to-night, so that they may be reported to-morrow, and the Bill brought in to admit of its being amply considered both by hon. Members and the country during the Recess. In that case, I should propose that the practical time for the consideration of the Bill should be taken immediately after the second reading of the Irish Land Bill. In conclusion I have yet one duty to perform, which is to thank the Committee for the great attention it has given me. It is not the first time I have made this Statement; it is the 11th time—and probably the last time—on which it has been my duty to place before the House the annual arrangements of our Finance. I do not wish to colour too highly the public prospects. I fully admit I have had no brilliant picture to present to the Committee. I have had no dazzling or bewitching proposals to make. I have spoken on former occasions, sometimes under worse circumstances, and sometimes under better circumstances; but, at any rate, I have done an act of restitution in faithfully and gratefully giving back to the Committee that 1*d.* of Income Tax which they kindly and generously gave me for a temporary purpose, and thereby, at least, I am not open to the charge of breaking faith. As respects the rest of the arrangements by which we propose to meet the small debts and create the necessary Surplus, I do not think I need say anything. It is something to say that we can meet the demand of the enormous Expenditure of this country without adding, as I trust and believe we do not add in any degree, great or small, to the burdens of the country.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"(1.) That, towards raising the Supply granted to Her Majesty, the Duties of Customs now charged on Tea shall continue to be levied and charged on and after the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-one, until the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-two, on importation into Great Britain or Ireland (that is say): on

		£	s.	d.
Tea	the lb.	0	0	6."—

(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Mr. Playfair, I do not rise for the purpose of entering into any disussion upon the Budget which has just been submitted to us. I wish only to say that, so far as I am concerned, and so far as I believe those who sit near me are concerned, we think the proposal which has been made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, as to the mode of procedure, is a reasonable and convenient one. The principles which are involved in the Resolutions that we shall be asked to pass, except so far as they may touch the Death Duty, are principles upon which, I presume, there will be very little or no discussion; and the proposals are obviously of a character that would be better understood, and more conveniently discussed, when we have them before us in the shape of a Bill. I take notice of the promise that is made us that we shall have an early and convenient opportunity, when we meet after Easter, for fully discussing those proposals which are complicated at the first blush and examination. I confess that, clear as the Statement of my right hon. Friend was, there are one or two points in connection with his scheme which I should like to examine further before I express an opinion upon them. I will venture to ask whether we can be favoured with somewhat fuller information, in the form of a Return, of that interesting comparison of Population, Revenue, and Expenditure which was given us in brief? It is rather difficult to understand some of the results unless we have the figures before us. There is another question I should like to ask. It will be remembered that one of the main reasons which were given for the additional 1*d.* on the Income Tax last year was the necessity of making some provision for the probable or expected reduction of the duties on foreign wines. I am not sure that we have had information given us on that subject. I think it is desirable we should know how the matter stands, and whether there is a probability of reduction, and what the negotiations with France generally are? I will not detain the Committee now. I think that the course which has been proposed is a course which it will be desirable to adopt, for we shall be acting wisely by waiting to see the Resolutions before us in a definite shape.

MR. W. H. WILLS said, that he had listened with much interest to that part of the Financial Statement which related to the duties on tobacco, although he regretted that the right hon. Gentleman had not found himself able to grant the small remission which the trade had so long and so anxiously desired. Still, he felt satisfaction that attention had been drawn to the subject, for the tone of the Chancellor of the Exchequer convinced him that he was open to conviction after a little longer experience, and he fully believed that next year, if the state of the finances of the country permitted, their demand would be conceded. The Tobacco Duty was not unimportant; it produced over £8,000,000 sterling every year, and thus formed one-tenth of the entire Revenue of the Kingdom. He desired to point out that during the seven years, 1871-1877, immediately preceding the imposition of the extra 4*d.* by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote), there had been a steady increase in the home consumption of raw tobacco of over 1,000,000 lbs. weight every year. This growth in consumption yielded a money increase of nearly £200,000 every year. Well, the addition which the late Chancellor of the Exchequer made was only 4*d.* per lb., equal to a farthing on each ounce, and that, at first sight, did not seem a very serious amount; but it had disorganized the whole trade, and proved a great hindrance to business. The House must bear in mind that more than three-fourths of the duty—more than £6,000,000 sterling—was every year contributed by working-men, who bought their tobacco not by the pound, but by the ounce or half-ounce; and now for more than 30 years past the uniform price they had always paid was 3*d.* an ounce. The new price was 3¼*d.*, which was obviously an impracticable one. The first result in the retail trade was to add another ¼*d.*, thus making the price 3½*d.* for one ounce; but this course was so opposed by the consumers that it was soon abandoned, and the manufacturers were compelled to supply the trade with an article which could still be sold at 3*d.* When corn was dear the 1*d.* loaf became smaller, and when flour fell the loaf was again larger; but there was no such opportunity for dealing with tobacco. It was sold by the ounce, and must be of full weight. Under the conditions of the new duty it became necessary for manufacturers partially to abandon the superior growths of Kentucky and Virginia, and seek in other countries for less known tobaccos of poorer flavour—more absorbent in their character, but far inferior in quality. The result of the change in the duty had been that, whereas up to the end of 1877 there had been an increase in the consumption of the home trade, as he had already shown, of over 1,000,000 lbs. weight every year, there was, in 1878, a falling off of 1,250,000 lbs. as compared with 1877; in 1879, as compared with 1877, a falling off of 2,000,000 lbs.; and in 1880, as compared with 1877, a continued falling off of another 1,000,000 lbs. So that, in three years, not only had all increase disappeared, but there was an absolute decline in consumption of 4,250,000 lbs. weight. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was perfectly correct in saying that the low prices recently ruling in the leaf tobacco market had tended to compensate for the additional duty. That was certainly true; but if there had been only one bad season, one failure of a crop in the United States, it would have been impossible to have found a supply for the artizan classes of anything at all palatable at 3*d.* the ounce. As it was, the use of inferior growths and poor condition had had a marked effect upon consumption. It was not all due, as the Customs suggested, to the depression of the times, for it was well known that during the worst period of the Cotton Famine there was no perceptible decline in the consumption of manufactured tobacco. He was quite willing, however, to wait the 12 months of which the right hon. Gentleman had spoken. He believed that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had satisfied himself that a return to the old duty would speedily lead to an expansion of the trade, and he was therefore content not to press the matter at the present time. He believed the right hon. Gentleman would assist them as soon as he felt himself at liberty to do so. He was confident that when that time did arrive, and the 4*d.* was taken off, there would be not only a great increase of business, but satisfaction to every consumer of tobacco, with a very appreciable benefit to the Revenue of the country.

Mr. DODDS wished to express his thanks to the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the very kind and complimentary manner in which he had been pleased to refer to his (Mr. Dodds') action in respect to the Probate and Legacy Duties. It was a subject in which he had long taken a deep interest, and one with which, from his professional experience, he was intimately acquainted. He came down to the House to-day in the full expectation of finding the right hon. Gentleman prepared to adopt the scheme he propounded in the House two years ago. He thought his scheme was so plain and comprehensive, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would have seen his way to adopt it upon the present occasion; and, indeed, he had now to thank the right hon. Gentleman for having, in effect, adopted the principle for which he had been contending. He only regretted that the right hon. Gentleman had not viewed, what he had very fittingly called the Death Duties, from the point they ought to be viewed—namely, as duties attaching upon the capital left by the testator. From such a point of view there ought to be a uniform rate charged upon the property left by the deceased person. The Probate Duty might be paid by a stranger; the Income Tax might be paid in exactly the same way; and, in short, everything was against the Death Duty, which ought not to be a charge upon the recipient, but a charge upon the capital fund itself. The right hon. Gentleman had given reasons why he could not, on the present occasion, deal more comprehensively with his (Mr. Dodds') scheme. He admitted that, during the present Session of Parliament, they had had, and would continue to have, very many important subjects engrossing their attention, and that the House was not likely to have at its disposal this year sufficient time to inquire into the anomalies of the duties he was now discussing; but he contended, and he thought if the right hon. Gentleman had had the opportunity of thoroughly investigating the matter, he would have been satisfied that his proposals might have been dealt with without touching in any way the future consideration of those great subjects to which reference had been made. He was quite persuaded that the right hon. Gentleman might have adopted his scheme, and have left the questions referring to land in mortmain and to settled and unsettled property, to be dealt with at a more convenient season. The right hon. Gentleman had said he was unprepared to-night to make so great a change as he (Mr. Dodds) proposed. He hoped, however, that when the Bill came before them, one step would be taken which would pave the way for that great and comprehensive scheme of reform which he was sure would, before many years had passed, be adopted, and adopted not merely with advantage to the Revenue, but to the persons who had to pay the duty throughout the country. The right hon. Gentleman made a suggestion which he (Mr. Dodds) feared he scarcely comprehended. The right hon. Gentleman proposed to adopt an optional clause, and to allow the parties where all were agreed—namely, the officers of Inland Revenue, the residuary legatees, and other interested parties—to combine and to pay one duty of 5 per cent, and so get rid of the matter altogether. When the Bill was brought in, they would see how such a proposal was likely to work. If it be a step in the direction he had indicated, he would be more than satisfied with it. He was glad to see that the complications arising from deaths were to be got rid of; and he did not share the apprehensions of the right hon. Gentleman as to the difficulty of paying duty down to the last farthing. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had referred to the personal cost and trouble in all these matters. He (Mr. Dodds) went fully into the point on a former occasion, and he would not trouble the Committee by going into it now. He would, however, recommend to hon. Members the perusal of a book written by a gentleman who bore a name which was well known and highly respected in the House, and who was amongst the many very excellent and intelligent officials of the Inland Revenue Department at Somerset House—he referred to Mr. Gossett. This gentleman had devoted 80 folio pages to instructions on the art of making a will; and he very completely showed all the complications in the matter. There were other subjects to which the right hon. Gentleman had referred, all going in the direction he desired. He would conclude, as he began, by expressing his extreme regret that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had not seen his way to go further, and by thanking him for the step in the right direction he had taken.

Mr. J. G. HUBBARD said, there was one bright feature in the Statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and that was the promised revision of the Probate, Legacy, and Succession Duties. Nothing more harassing and more distressing to those concerned, and more troublesome to the officials than the levying of these duties could be imagined; and any simplification of the levying of those duties would be regarded as a very great improvement. He would like the Chancellor of the Exchequer to consider whether there was not an effective means of dealing with the very large amount of corporate property which paid nothing at all in the shape of Legacy Duty; in fact, from century to century it escaped Legacy, Succession, or Probate Duty. This property could escape Legacy Duty, but it could not escape the Income Tax. The Income Tax was practically the most useful, most searching, and most indispensable of all taxes. He could not conceal his regret that the Chancellor of the Exchequer did not at once take upon himself the great work of adjusting the Income Tax. This tax then might be so far increased and applied to every species of property that the Probate and Succession and Legacy Duties might be greatly reduced. Many reasons had been given why the Income Tax could not be adjusted, which had been successively answered by the march of events. One great reason, however, remained, and that was that an adjustment could not be made without diminishing the productiveness of the tax. At this moment the Chancellor of the Exchequer had an Income Tax which produced all he wanted, and he might with advantage, and without suffering any loss of Revenue, have retained the 6*d*. rate, and have made the adjustment required to make the tax an equitable one. With regard to the Terminable Annuities, he thought some action necessary; but the plan sketched out by the Chancellor of the Exchequer needed explanation. He was quite at a loss to understand why it was proposed to take off the duty on silver. Plate was only held by wealthy people, and he doubted whether that class of society would altogether thank the right hon. Gentleman for this change, because their property would lose in value, and they would find themselves so much the poorer. He had never heard of any agitation for the abolition of the duty, except on the part of one or two silversmiths. The subject, however, was hardly worth discussion. His object in rising was to express his opinion that the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman were calculated to keep the finances of the country in a sound and healthy condition.

Sir GABRIEL GOLDNEY said, he congratulated the Committee upon the satisfactory Budget which had been laid before them, and which, he believed, would be agreeable to the general community. As to the Legacy Duty, he did not go so far as the hon. Member for Stockton; but as regarded the alterations which would afford facilities for the payment of duty on small legacies, thereby doing away with the expense connected with them, he considered the proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer as very satisfactory. There were originally no duties with regard to the descent of property to children until the year 1815, when they were first imposed; and ever since that time he believed they had been kept at a lower rate than those upon property descending to others. He believed that although the collection of Legacy and Succession Duties had been, to a certain extent, burdensome, there were no duties paid more readily and cheerfully. He pointed out that there was an enormous amount of property in this country which was protected by the State, but which made no return whatever by way of taxation. If property in mortmain were subjected to a fair and equal charge, a very large amount would flow into the Exchequer. Assuming that the persons who held the property in mortmain had the duty which they now paid upon its devolution every fifteen and a-half years commuted to an annual payment, the sum produced would amount to very nearly £5,000,000. The question was, of course, a very large one; but he was exceedingly glad that it was to be a matter of consideration.

Mr. WHITBREAD said, he had no reason to complain of the reference made by the Chanceller of the Exchequer to the effect of the repeal of the Malt Duty. The Committee would remember what was the main subject of controversy between the brewers and the Chancellor of the Exchequer last year. The right hon. Gentleman stated that he desired to find a fair equivalent in the Beer Duty for the tax upon malt. On the other hand, the brewers, while admitting the advantage to be gained by the absolute freedom allowed them in the choice of materials, contended that the substitution of the Beer Duty was something more onerous to them than a fair equivalent of the Malt Duty. The Chancellor of the Exchequer could not be persuaded that the figures put forward in support of this contention were correct; but it had since been found that the brewers did pay, and were now paying, largely in excess of what they used to pay upon the quarter of malt. The figures employed last year were substantially accurate as applied to the present time. It was asked why this increase was not shown in the Returns; but that was accounted for by the cold winter and spring having been adverse to the trade. That was the reason why the Revenue had not shown under the head of Beer Duty what was expected from that source. The brewers had always contended that this change would impose a new burden upon them, and that the fact would be proved by figures at the end of the year; and they were met by the statement that they must not say that because the revenue from the Beer Duty was largely in excess of that derived from the Malt Duty they were more heavily taxed, inasmuch as this might arise from increase of trade. It would, therefore, be unjust now to say that the deficiency in the Revenue anticipated from the Beer Duty was a proof that they were more lightly taxed than formerly. Those with whom he acted last year determined that it was better to submit to the increase of charge, rather than, at the time, to attempt to prove a case which was immature. Sufficient time had not now elapsed to prove their case as distinctly as they desired to do. This would require the getting together of a large amount of evidence; and the short space of time during which the tax had come into operation did not, in their opinion, justify them in making their complaint heard at that moment. Therefore, they asked that their position should not be considered to be weakened because their complaint had not been put forward that year. They desired that the question might be left open, and that they might be considered to be in the same position with regard to it as they stood in last year—namely, that if they could show that the Beer Tax was a new impost upon them it should be held to be entitled to re-consideration. He thought that was the meaning of the words which had been addressed to the Committee that evening by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He did not think the right hon. Gentleman would, for a moment, claim that, because they had not yet made out their case, they should not come to him at a later moment. When the time arrived, he felt sure that the substantial accuracy of their figures would be shown. He concurred with the opinion that the absence of friction, which had marked the introduction of the new scheme of taxation, was largely due to the good sense and temper of the Executive by whom it had been carried out.

MR. WATNEY thanked the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the very great attention he had given to the subject of the Beer Duty. He was still of the same opinion as he held last July, that the Beer Tax would impose a charge upon the brewers of 2*s*. a quarter more than they paid before. His own experience, and that of others engaged in the trade, had proved this to be the case. Last year an attempt had been made to arrive at the average strength contained in a quarter of malt, and the difference between the calculation of the Chancellor of the Exchequer and that of the trade was three degrees. The brewers still believed they would be able to prove their case, and he thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer would have no difficulty in checking their calculations, because at Somerset House a very accurate account had been taken of the strength contained in a quarter of malt, for the purpose of the duty. He ventured to give his explanation with regard to the statement that 4*s*. or 5*s*. per quarter had been saved by one firm in the price of barley per quarter. Last year was an exceptional year so far as barley was concerned, and he suggested that the brewers alluded to had been able, in consequence, to use inferior qualities. It would be found, however, that those brewers who were anxious to keep up the character of their beer would find themselves compelled to go back to barley of the first quality. He felt bound to protest against the exemption extended by the Chancellor of the Exchequer to houses of £15 value brewing for domestic purposes, while the trade were paying additional taxation. When the proper time arrived, he had confidence that the brewers would be able to prove their case to the satisfaction of the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. H. H. FOWLER pointed out that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, although marking the great increase which had taken place in the Expenditure of the country, had not indicated that this expenditure would in any way be reduced. He (Mr. Fowler) thought that even the masterly Statement which had been made that night by the right hon. Gentleman should not be allowed to pass without some protests being entered against the country spending £85,000,000 per annum in time of peace, and in a time, also, of unexampled depression in trade and agriculture. When the right hon. Gentleman left Office in 1874, the gross Expenditure in that year was £76,000,000, and that included £3,000,000 for the "Alabama" Claim, and £800,000 on account of the Ashantee War; the normal Expenditure of that year was, therefore, only £72,000,000. Last year, in Scotland, when the Chancellor of the Exchequer reviewed the Expenditure of the late Government, after giving them credit for expenditure arising from the subsidy to local taxation, and allowing for a proper increase on account of the Education Vote, he showed that the difference of annual expenditure as against the late Government was something like £8,000,000. The amount proposed to be raised by taxation during the year 1881-2 being £73,000,000, if the sum of £30,000,000 levied by local taxation were added to this, it would be seen that the enormous sum of £100,000,000 sterling was being expended in carrying on the Government of the country. Therefore, he thought the time had arrived when independent Members ought to fight the Estimates. The right hon. Gentleman, when in Opposition, had encouraged hon. Members to challenge the Expenditure of the Government, even down to thousands—he believed his remark was that a Chancellor of the Exchequer was not worth his salt who was not prepared to welcome a saving even of £2,000. For his own part, he felt prepared to give the noble Lord the Secretary to the Treasury a good deal of trouble by opposing the Estimates this Session, and he trusted the Government would be always able to show specific reasons for the various items. The only chance independent Members would have of effectually urging reduction of expenditure upon the Government would be by challenging Vote after Vote, and endeavouring to carry a considerable reduction upon each. We had a Military and Naval expenditure which he believed had never been reached before—namely, £31,000,000. The Civil Service Estimates were also steadily increasing all round. On the whole, he was satisfied there was a margin for a great deal of economy. Unless the House made a determined stand at once, they would find a prospect of continual increase of taxation, as well as an increasing Expenditure. He sincerely hoped the right hon. Gentleman would not allow the present conversation to close without holding out some hope that the Government would look into the question of expenditure, as well as that of taxation, and give those who were pledged to reduce expenditure, and who had contrasted the Conservative and Liberal Administration in that respect, an opportunity of showing that a Liberal Government really meant economy, as well as peace and reform.

MR. GLADSTONE was understood to say there was no greater subject for consideration than the relation of the Expenditure and taxation of the country, touched upon by his hon. Friend who had just sat down. It was hardly possible to deal comprehensively with it on that occasion; and he had not been able to refer to it, except in a very succinct manner, in the course of his Statement. The proposition raised was a most pregnant one, and required the most earnest consideration. In answer to the isolated points raised, he wished to recognize the thorough fairness and justice of the speech of the hon. Member for Bedford, and of what was said by the hon. Member for East Surrey on the subject of brewing beer. He considered it a case of "As you were," and that the Government and the brewers stood, as in July last year, in an attitude of friendly conflict. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition had made several observations upon his Statement that were very kindly conceived. Amongst other matters, he had mentioned the subject of the Wine Duties. Upon that subject he (Mr. Gladstone) had omitted to state that, whereas that House last year had given an intimation of its willingness to consider the question, nothing practical had resulted on the other side. Under these circumstances, he could not ask the House to take any further steps until other Governments had shown a disposition to meet us. In response to the wish that he would lay upon the Table the figures from which he had quoted, as to the proportion of wealth and population, he had to state that when the matter had been fully considered the information asked for should be laid in a convenient form before the House. If there were any other points on which hon: Gentlemen required an explanation, he should be most happy to hear them, and to answer any questions put to him; and he very thankfully accepted the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir Stafford Northcote)—namely, that they should take the discussion on the first convenient day after Easter. As far as they were concerned, the course of Business, in his (Mr. Gladstone's) opinion, should be this—that they should proceed with the second reading of the Land Bill immediately after the Easter Recess, and, directly after that, the consideration of the Finance Bill.

MR. STORER hoped he might be allowed to say a word on behalf of those who represented the agricultural population of the country. No doubt, on the whole, the result of the financial operation of substituting a beer for a Malt Duty had been to the advantage of the great brewers from whichever point it was looked at. As the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had himself observed, considerable hardship had been inflicted upon the small brewers—that was perfectly certain. He wished to remind the right hon. Gentleman that when he introduced the measure he did it ostensibly in the interest of those "who" he had said—

> "Are labouring under a most unparalleled depression, the like of which has not existed within the memory of man, and the consequences of which are not yet fully known."

The right hon. Gentleman further added—

> "We are standing still in all departments of trade, and this fact may be traced, in a great measure, to the agricultural depression; and trade will never return to its pristine state as long as that agricultural depression remains, because it must have an effect upon the whole home market."

He wished to point out to the right hon. Gentleman that he was going to impose an additional burden upon the farming class—upon that depressed industry. It was proposed to treat farm-houses—which really had nothing to do with the agricultural industry—as they dealt with shops—namely, as trade buildings, and that was a most unjust thing. He was sorry the right hon. Gentleman was not present to hear the very forcible observation he was about to make—namely, that the agricultural labourers—in whose well-being the Liberal Party had declared themselves especially interested at the last Election—to a man condemned the tax imposed upon them in respect of brewing. They were compelled to pay a 6*s*. licence for liberty to brew, and, by so doing, they were paying more than their home brewing used to cost them under the Malt Tax, for they were only accustomed to brew two or three times in the course of the year. He had been in hopes that the right hon. Gentleman would alter the arrangement this year; but there was no proposal to give relief to the agricultural labourer in the Financial Statement they had listened to.

MR. GREGORY said, that half per cent addition to the Probate Duty was to be made, after deducting from the estate all debts and liabilities. The difficulty in the way of this tax which occurred to him was this—that in order to make the charge as described all the debts would have to be ascertained, or, at any rate, some near estimate, presumably by declaration, would have to be given. The right hon. Gentleman was probably aware of this — that the probate or letters of administration were necessary immediately after a person's decease, for the reason that no one could deal with a balance at the banker's, with a stock or a share, and no one could draw a dividend without the protection of that probate. It generally happened that they could not ascertain what the liabilities were until some months after the decease, so that he saw great difficulties in the way of carrying out the right hon. Gentleman's scheme of paying an immediate duty on the net residue of the testator. At any rate, they could not get rid of the probability of having to submit two sets of accounts. He merely threw out these suggestions for the consideration of the right hon. Gentleman. It might be that the right hon. Gentleman might be able to overcome the difficulty in his Bill; therefore he (Mr. Gregory) mentioned it now in order that the right hon. Gentleman might have it before him.

Mr. J. N. RICHARDSON said, one of the points made by the right hon. Gentleman was where he foreshadowed the simplification of these matters in the case of persons to whom small legacies were left—in regard to their being able to inherit without trouble. He (Mr. Richardson) had had some experiences in his own neighbourhood of legacies of from £20 to £300; and he could assure the Committee that the annoyance and mortification that occurred—especially where ignorant people were concerned—in having to take out probate had not been at all exaggerated by the right hon. Gentleman. The present system was costly, and it was not fair that any money that a person had worked hard to accumulate during his life should be unnecessarily squandered after his death. The measure would be received as a boon, especially by the people of Ireland, who, as a rule, were only able to save small sums of money.

Mr. BUXTON congratulated the Committee and the country that they had the great master hand of all financiers at the head of affairs. The remarkable figures illustrating the contraction of the Revenue as contrasted with the Expenditure of the country during the past few years showed a most serious state of things; and the great reduction in the value of an additional 1*d.* on the Income Tax, as stated by the Prime Minister, proved, beyond doubt, that the financial state of the country was one of great anxiety. He could have wished to have heard from the right hon. Gentleman some scheme for the permanent annual reduction of the National Debt. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to be the only person able to carry out a reduction of the Debt, which had been, and was still, a great burden upon the country. The present Prime Minister had brought about a reduction of the Debt. Whereas, in 1857, it amounted to £835,000,000, it now amounted to £776,000,000, and a considerable part of that reduction was owing to the exertions of the right hon. Gentleman. During his term of Office, previous to 1874, he had reduced it by £26,000,000 or £27,000,000; but since that time not only had there been no reduction of the Debt, but he believed, if anything, it had been slightly added to. When they considered the great charge the National Debt was every year upon the Revenue, they must all admit that some effort should be made to reduce it more extensively and regularly. He would only venture to make one other suggestion to the right hon. Gentleman, and that was as to whether the Stamp Duties had been properly estimated for the coming year. As one connected with the commerce of the country, he had been struck by the remarkable diminution which had occurred in the number of bills of exchange during the past few years. The number of bills of exchange transactions, and the amount of money that passed, had become seriously reduced of late; and he could not help thinking that in this way a great effect must be produced on the Stamp Duty.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, that whilst he, with the rest of the Committee, had listened to the speech of the Prime Minister, so remarkable as an effort of memory and for the elegance of its diction, he could not help thinking that the country might have been spared the deficit in the Budget caused by the deplorable war in the Transvaal had that eloquence been more prudently exercised in the past. He could not forget the disastrous struggle which had been provoked by reckless electioneering addresses, and the dishonourable peace which had just been concluded. But, apart from that question, the Budget could not be described as successful, for it appeared that the great feat of finance, from which they were promised such great results last Session, had not turned out by any means a complete success. The operation of turning the Malt Tax into a Beer Duty had turned out a failure, producing less than the Malt Duty had produced, and less than the Chancellor of the Exchequer had calculated; and he could not think that the advantages described by the right hon. Gentleman with regard to the development of the ingenuity of the brewers in the selection of material for the manufacture of beer were likely to be favourably viewed by the farming interest of the country. The right hon.

Gentleman had grown eloquent upon the fact that rice, maize, sugar and syrup were now used in the manufacture of beer in place of English barley; and he had also become eloquent upon the fact that cheap barley was used—and he (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) was sorry to say that not only the rice, sugar, maize and syrup came from foreign countries, but also this cheap barley—so that the exultation of the right hon. Gentleman was at the expense of that long-suffering and most neglected class, the British farmer. When the Prime Minister boasted of the "ingenuity of men" in this novel manufacture, he (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) could not help thinking of those noxious compounds of foreign importation—suine and soapstone—which the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain) had the other night insisted upon forcing, under a false name, into the stomachs of the labouring classes of this country. With regard to the Sinking Fund, the right hon. Gentleman had said that as we now hold it we had better keep it; but he wished the Government had applied the same principle to our connection with Candahar. As for the decreased production of the Income Tax, that was a very serious question indeed, showing, as it did, that England was, for the first time, living on her capital, and giving rise to some doubts as to the success of our present commercial policy, and it would suggest a question which was more and more coming to the front—namely, that of the re-consideration of our relations with foreign States. He did not wish to directly attack what was called Free Trade; but he could not help feeling that, under present arrangements, it was not Free Trade for England, but for every other country at her expense. He was not going to say that he was not a Freetrader himself; but he thought it altogether ridiculous and preposterous for the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, who had had a long and distinguished connection with that movement, to assume, as the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster did, that there was nothing whatever to be said on the other side. He would say to this latter right hon. Gentleman that there was a great deal to be said for reciprocity of trade. The subject was ripe for discussion, and should be fairly argued out in the House of Commons. In a short time a demand for the re-consideration of foreign tariffs would come from the very classes and constituencies that he had so successfully represented. It was the manufacturing towns that were demanding, he would not say Protection, but Reciprocity. It was absurd to say that we—in the true sense of the phrase—were now in the enjoyment of Free Trade. It was not Free Trade; it was Free Trade for the rest of the world, but not for England. He was in favour of a great commercial Zollverein for Great Britain and the Colonies—that was, absolute Free Trade within the limits of the Empire; and outside of those limits Free Trade with those nations who gave them Free Trade in return. Such a union throughout the British Empire would increase and develop the old Imperial spirit of the English race, the spirit to which he was not ashamed to refer with pride, which had carried the British flag into every quarter of the globe, which had won for England the commerce and markets of the world. That spirit alone could maintain England prosperous, respected, and great.

Mr. FINDLATER said, the Irish brewers were quite as dissatisfied with the present state of the law with regard to beer as their English brethren. He would be able to show that they were subjected to the payment of an additional duty of more than 12 per cent in consequence of the change; but, as it was understood that they would be placed in the same position as the English brewers, and not precluded hereafter by any allegation of acquiescence from showing that by the working of the Act they were paying a considerably larger duty than formerly, he should say nothing further at present, as he did not think that a sufficient time had elapsed for a satisfactory conclusion to be arrived at.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN did not rise for the purpose of entering into a lengthy criticism of the right hon. Gentleman's Statement, but merely for the purpose of saying a few words. He regretted very much to see 1*d.* taken off the Income Tax, instead of a reduction being made in the duty on the articles of consumption. Tea, beer, and tobacco were the articles comsumed by the poorer classes, and a reduction might very well have been made in the duty on one or all of these instead of in the Income Tax, which only affected the well-to-do. It seemed to be forgotten that of the indirect taxation of the country more than half was contributed by the poor classes, and that these people would in no way benefit by the reduction of the Income Tax. The unfortunate man, with £1 a-week to live on, paid 10 per cent of his entire income in taxation; whereas the man with £50 did not pay 5 per cent. He was glad to see the change the right hon. Gentleman proposed in the Probate and Legacy Duty, because the law in this respect would be simplified and rendered much more fair than it had been for a considerable time; and he hoped that, at some future time, the right hon. Gentleman would be able to extend the advantage he proposed. As to the amount it was proposed to take off the foreign spirits—namely, 1*d.* per gallon—he failed to see how the operation could be performed at a gain of £180,000 to the Exchequer. ["No, no!"] He understood that it was proposed to take off 1*d.* from the 5*d.*, leaving the rum at 2*d.* as at present. [An hon. MEMBER: The duty on rum is to be raised.] If the duty on rum was to be raised to 10*s.* 4*d.* it would be hardly fair to the Colonies. An hon. Member on the Ministerial side of the House had complained of the increasing Expenditure of the country; and he (Mr. O'Sullivan) thought the hon. Gentleman was quite justified in making that complaint. The expenses were increasing in the country rather than lessening. Economy might be practised in several ways; for instance, there were two Departments—the Customs and Inland Revenue—with two sets of Commissioners, solicitors, and other head officials; and it was well known that the work of both could be done by one. The Inland Revenue Department was competent to do all the work; and if all the work were handed over to it a large amount would be saved to the country. He trusted the Government would before long bring forward a scheme for amalgamating both these offices. As to the general tendency of the Budget, he thought it was very fair, and such as the House would approve of unanimously; but he must say he regretted that the right hon. Gentleman, before he took off 1*d.* from the Income Tax, did not reduce the taxation on the food of the people.

MR. MAC IVER said, he had no desire to interpose unduly between the Budget and its most appropriate sequel, a Bankruptcy Bill. But there was one remark in the Statement which had been made by the right hon. Gentleman the First Minister of the Crown which struck him more forcibly than any other, and it was the observation that the country had not been making ground. He had beside him certain agricultural and manufacturing Returns, in which, he ventured to think, would be found the true explanation of the reason why the country had not been making ground of late years. The true reason why the condition of the agricultural and mercantile interests of the country was not more favourable was to be found in the competition we had in the imports from abroad. Taking an average of three years, he found that in the three years from 1869 the annual importation of foreign farm produce amounted to £60,678,352; in the next three years to £80,870,757; in the next three years to £94,192,625; and in the last three years to £106,350,902. When we came to contrast this with the diminishing exports of our manufactured articles, we should be able to see at once the reason why we had experienced a lack of prosperity. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade told them in the early part of the evening that our annual imports of manufactures had increased 45 per cent. The right hon. Gentleman excluded the case of wool. In regard to wool, however, it was perfectly true that imports were diminishing and exports increasing; but that referred only to the raw material, and was evidence only of increasing foreign competition as concerned the finished article. Now, he (Mr. Mac Iver) found that in 1869 our exportation of woollen manufactured goods amounted to £20,664,747, and our imports of similar articles to no more than £3,456,675. He agreed with the President of the Board of Trade that it would be misleading to take the basis of any one year; but he had taken the average of three, and found that, as time went on, our exports steadily diminished, while our imports of the same goods steadily increased until last year we found ourselves in this startling position—that our imports of woollen goods amounted to £6,484,397, while our exports had decreased to £13,576,956. These figures certainly confirmed the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister that the country had not been making ground, and formed some justification for the course he (Mr. Mac Iver) intended to pursue at a later stage in asking the House to approve the principle that Customs Duties should be replaced upon foreign importations when they came into unfair competition with our own industries. The question was not a Party one, nor were his proposals such as the Leader of the Opposition would be likely to accept; but the views which he would endeavour to express were those of many business men besides himself. He thought the time had arrived when it was reasonable to raise once more and re-discuss those old questions of controversy which were supposed to have been settled by Sir Robert Peel and Mr. Cobden. It was idle to describe ourselves as a Free Trade nation. How could we be a Free Trade nation when we continued to get as much as £44,484,000 a-year out of Customs and Excise? No one could to-day reasonably maintain that the world at large was showing any signs of conversion to our insular system of political economy; and it was, unfortunately, only too true that any prosperity which Great Britain enjoyed under so-called Free Trade was surpassed by the much greater prosperity of the United States of America, and even of France, notwithstanding the manifest abuses of a system of Protection. There was a midde course. Sometimes Free Trade was right, sometimes Protection was right; it depended upon the circumstances in which a country might be placed; and instead of accepting the proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer we were in a position where it might now be well to get increased revenues through the Custom House in reduction of other taxation. As he had said, it was idle to call ourselves Freetraders. That was part of the general imposture, for it so happened that more than half the Revenue of the country was still derived from Customs and Excise on principles entirely at variance with Free Trade principles, and in the worst possible way. When we, in virtuous indignation, complained that the Colonies taxed our manufactures, it should be remembered that the productions of the Colonies continued to be largely taxed by ourselves. The very first remissions of taxation should be those which, in defiance of Free Trade principles, we levied upon the tea, coffee, cocoa, dry fruits, and tobacco, which were the productions of our own lands. It was wrong, he thought, to be so dependent as we were on foreign nations for our food supply, when our own Colonies could so easily furnish a larger proportion of those articles which we required to get from abroad. It was also an unwise thing and a mistake to rely so largely upon an excessive consumption of intoxicating drinks for our Revenue; and upon that point also, at some future period, he should feel bound to take the opinion of the House. He had always thought that the ease with which this large sum of £44,000,000 was raised from Excise and Customs Duties, and mainly from intoxicating beverages, was a temptation to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whoever he might be, not to legislate in the direction of repressing the too great consumption of alcoholic drinks. The proposals for taxing these drinks were always made in a contrary direction—for purposes of revenue, and not for purposes of restriction—and were, consequently, a double wrong. What was it that the right hon. Gentleman proposed to do now in regard to the Spirit Duties? All that it amounted to was to give the Exchequer a little more money out of our own pockets for the benefit of foreigners; and that object was to be effected by reducing the surtax on foreign spirits, and doubling the tax on spirits from our own Colonies. Under the pretext of Free Trade we had destroyed many of the industries of the country. Where was the woollen trade? Although it was not yet entirely gone, he would ask hon. Members who knew anything of that trade if his assertion that it was in the most depressed condition was not fully borne out? And where was the silk trade? What had our Free Trade policy done for that trade? We could not fight the battle of Free Trade single-handed against the world, and our endeavours to do so had resulted in hopeless failure. It was idle to talk about cheap food when our policy was one which deprived the working man of the means of earning a cheap loaf. What was the general condition of the country? Our trade had entirely changed its character, and our exports to-day were, to a large extent, the exports of raw material and of skilled artizans. We were paying for our food, and importing foreign manufactures out of our own material wealth. He thought the time had arrived for a thorough reconsideration of the whole of our financial system. He was quite aware that these remarks would not be accepted by the right hon. Gentleman opposite; but, representing, as he did, an important trading constituency, and believing that the views he was endeavouring to urge were largely held in the country, he thought he was justified in raising the question. He believed that ere long a loud cry would come from the working classes of the country for the reversal of our present policy. No one could honestly look at the position of the country, as compared with other nations, and say that he really believed the fiscal policy inaugurated by Sir Robert Peel and Mr. Cobden had in any way been successful. Whatever prosperity this country had enjoyed from a Free Trade policy had been entirely overshadowed by the prosperity of the United States and of France. Personally, he did not believe that Free Trade or Protection had much to do with the matter. The abuse of either was an evil; and what he would recommend was that they should take the course they ought to take, as business men, of managing their own affairs, with due regard to the circumstances of the nation. He repeated again that it was not a sound position that we should be dependent upon foreign nations for more than one-half of our food supply; and he thought the day was not far distant when the working men of the country would themselves demand what he had long been asking of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in their name. So far as cheap food was concerned, cheapness was a matter of good wages rather than of nominal price; and our working men, in too many instances, were thrown out of work by unfair foreign competition, and had no money to buy this cheap food of which we heard so much. But even in regard to food production we were not going the right way to get cheap home-grown food. We were protecting the foreigner against ourselves, for British and Irish agriculture paid taxes from which he was exempt. John Stuart Mill never thought taxation was necessarily borne by the consumer, or he would not have said that—

> "The only mode in which any country can save itself from being a loser by the revenue duties imposed by any other countries on its commodities is to place corresponding revenue duties upon theirs."

The course recommended by Mill was that which he (Mr. Mac Iver) respectfully urged upon the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Put no taxes upon the food of the people; but relieve British and Irish agriculture from existing taxation, and tax the foreigner whenever you can. Under the system which we miscalled Free Trade, the luxuries of the rich were admitted free, and our own labour was displaced. The untaxed importation of foreign manufactures was much larger than was commonly supposed. The financial proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, notwithstanding the eloquence with which they had been introduced, were contrary to common sense, and led only towards ruin; but he had still hope in the working men of this land. These, at least, valued our home industries; these valued our Colonies, and they valued our trade with those Colonies, and before long they would send up a mighty cry for justice. It was not justice to receive the production of other lands here duty free unless we obtained similar privileges in return; and when the proper time came to move an Amendment to the Budget Resolutions, he would prove in detail the allegation which to-night he had briefly stated.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH said, the hon. Member who had just sat down had made some allusion to the state of trade in Bradford. It was undoubtedly true that of late years there had been a serious depression hanging over one branch of the woollen trade; but the hon. Member was mistaken in supposing that his observations would apply to the woollen trade generally. They applied principally to one branch of it—the worsted trade—of which the town he had the honour to represent was the centre. He believed the explanation was not that the trade was suffering from the disastrous effects of competition with France, but that within the last half-dozen years there had been a great change in the fashions. One important branch of the worsted industry of Bradford was based on home-grown wool—the long fibre wool, known as "lustre" wool. But there had been for some years a demand for a softer material. As was well known, fashion constantly changed, and the main explanation of the special depression in the Bradford worsted trade was that there had been an entire change in the fashion of ladies' dresses. It was only fair to say that the Bradford trade had, to a large extent, accommodated itself to the change of fashion, and that to a very considerable degree the goods of Bradford were also competing in the foreign market with the goods of France. The hon. Member for Birkenhead (Mr. Mac Iver) had gone a step further, and imagined that our Free Trade policy had been mischievous to the country at large, basing his case on the statistics as they affected Bradford. He was afraid the hon. Member, in that conception of the case, had raised a superstructure which it was by no means capable of bearing. The hon. Member prophesied that before long there would be a great outcry on the part of the working classes against Free Trade. That attempt had already been made in Bradford, as a centre of industrial labour, to raise the cry of Protection to native industry, and the result had been an utter collapse. He could assure the House that, although there had been depression of trade, the working classes in that great centre of labour never went through such a period of depression with so little suffering and so little privation as they had in the present instance. In the first place, whatever it was necessary they should purchase and consume had been at a moderate price. Again, would the hon. Member for Birkenhead pretend to say that if there had been in any form Protection to native industry, and the food consumed by the working classes had been made 50 per cent dearer in consequence of artificial restrictions at our ports, the consumers in Bradford in the crisis they had been passing through would have been in any way helped? How could it have assisted them to call upon them to pay more for their food? Would it not have rendered it more difficult for the productions of Bradford to enter into the various outside markets of the world? He believed, if the whole body of the industrial classes of the country, and those who were at the head of the large industrial establishments, were canvassed, they would state that the depression the country had been passing through during the last few years arose from two causes. So far as the home trade was concerned, it was largely due to a succession of bad harvests. We had suffered from them in this country before, and bad harvests had been attended by even worse consequences than those which had followed from the present depression. There was also another cause. It was likewise due to indulging in a spirited foreign policy, which had materially increased the burdens thrown upon the backs of the people. Further, the wars in which we had indulged, and the rumours of war in the East of Europe, had kept the commercial classes of the country in a state of continual alarm during the last three or four years. He ventured to say that when the country returned to the old lines of peace abroad and economy at home, the hon. Gentleman would see, not very long afterwards, a return of manufacturing and commercial activity in this country. If, in addition, we had a succession of good harvests, we might look forward to a return of prosperity in our home trade. The state of things in the agricultural districts would then be what it had been in former years, and the consequence would be great improvement both in our home trade and in our manufacturing industries for exportation. The hon. Member hinted that possibly there might be a re-arrangement of our fiscal system, whereby some advantages might be given to the Colonies. He would point out to the hon. Member that it was within the power of every one of our Colonies to adopt Free Trade with the Mother Country in harmony with our tariffs, and by that means enter into the best of all relations for the exchange of commodities. Canada and some other Colonies had adopted a protective system almost as bad as that of the United States, and without the same excuse. America had the excuse of an enormous war and a prodigious Debt, and she consequently did what all other countries had to do in the case of war—she was obliged to extract money from the taxpayers in both a direct and indirect form. He ventured to think that we should never make much further advance in this country until a Chancellor of the Exchequer, such as the present Prime Minister, grappled with the whole question of the incidence of taxation.

The CHAIRMAN: Before the debate proceeds further, I must draw the attention of the Committee to the fact that this is not a proper time for raising a discussion on Free Trade and Protection.

Mr. ANDERSON desired to confirm the remarks of his hon. Friend with regard to Canada and Free Trade; but after the caution of the the Chairman he would not pursue that subject. The part of the speech of the Prime Minister which pleased him most was that referring to mortmain. With regard to the fact that all property that passed to a Corporation escaped for ever the incidence of the Succession Duty, he thought that was a great iniquity. It was a subject he had brought before the House on several occasions in past years; and he was of opinion that all property coming to corporations ought to pay Succession Duty at certain intervals. In Scotland there was a system of feu duties, which meant a lease of the ground in perpetuity, with a fixed feu-duty every year as rent. There was a duplicand payment on the entry of every fresh successor to the land, which meant that, when a superior of the land died, his heir was entitled to go to the feuar and make him pay double duty for that particular year. In most cases now-a-days that had been commuted into a payment once in every 19 years, and the practice had become very general in Scotland. That system he would suggest as a fit basis for making mortmain and corporation property pay Succession Duty; and he would suggest that they should pay tax once in every 19 years, as the Scotch system was founded on the experience that, on the average, property changed hands about once in 19 years. The Scotch system would serve, he thought, as a fit basis for the settlement of this question; and he hoped that, if we were not to see any change in that direction now, before many years something would be done to carry out the suggestion. There was another subject which he was sorry to see the right hon. Gentleman had not touched upon, and that was the Inhabited House Duty, which was in an extremely unsatisfactory state. The interpretation of the Inhabited House Duty was arbitrary and absurd. Some years ago, there was a slight modification made by which the whole premises of a large mercantile firm were not charged Inhabited House Duty in respect of a caretaker, and the wording of the statute giving them exemption was so peculiar that it depended on the premises being used for profit or not. It appeared to him that great public buildings which were not used for purposes of profit were, *à fortiori*, entitled to exemption in respect of caretakers living in them. It was altogether unjust that a large municipal institution should be charged Inhabited House Duty for its whole value merely because a caretaker lived in it; and he thought it was high time this injustice was removed. Then there was another injustice, which had come before him a few days ago, in connection with the Spirit Duties which he should like to see removed. Spirits on which duty had been paid occasionally met with accidents, and were lost. The duty was remitted in certain circumstances, and in certain other circumstances where justice would equally require a remission it was not allowed. For instance, if, in conveying a hogshead of spirits from a bonded warehouse into a cart, to be transferred to a ship, the hogshead dropped from the chain and broke, and the spirit was lost, the duty was remitted; if it was being put into a ship at the dock and the chain or rope broke, so that the spirit was lost, again the duty was remitted; but if the hogshead, on the way between the bonded warehouse and the ship, came to grief, the duty was not remitted. He did not think that system could be justified, and it was an injustice which ought to be done away with; and when the Bill came before the House he should propose to introduce an Amendment for that purpose.

Mr. LEA wished to impress on the Chancellor of the Exchequer the importance of the Amendment to the present system of Probate Duties. It was a scandal that corporate bodies should escape the payment of a share of their contributions to the taxes of the country. In the North of Ireland the London Companies had large estates from which they received a considerable revenue, and escaped the payment of what had been termed the Death Duties. He hoped another year the right hon. Gentleman would take care that these Companies, and all other corporate bodies, no longer escaped their share of taxation. He thanked the hon. Member for Wolverhampton for referring to a subject which he had intended to mention—namely, the large amount of National Expenditure. He remembered, during the Elections of 1868, that he quoted in one of his speeches from a speech of the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. John Bright), in which he had said, no Government was worthy of the confidence of the country who could not rule without an Expenditure of more than £70,000,000. We had now got far beyond that—£85,000,000; and unless the House and the country made some protest we should soon get up to £100,000,000.

Mr. BYRNE thought the propositions made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be well received by the country, especially by that section of the country which was not rich. The proposals in reference to the death taxes were a great advance on the existing law; and he highly approved of the scheme by which any person inheriting less than £300 could go to a Revenue officer, and by making an affidavit, and paying him £2 5*s*., avoid all the expense of employing a solicitor or other agent to pass the accounts. It sometimes happened, in the case of a small estate, that after the debts were paid there was not sufficient to pay those heavy charges, and he thought the scheme would prove a great boon to the country. He also approved of the arrangements by which persons administering an estate would be saved the trouble of having to go at one time to pay the Legacy Duty, and at another time to pay the Probate Duty, and so have the process hanging over them for a year. He would like, however, to suggest to the right hon. Gentleman the consideration of what really was an estate. In the eyes of the gentleman fixing the duties, an estate was the gross amount bequeathed; but he would venture to say that the assets were really the amount that was left after all the debts and the expenses of realization had been deducted. With regard to the Income Tax, he approved of the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman; but he did not look upon it in the light of a reduction, but as the remission of a tax imposed last year to tide over the deficiency of the previous Budget. The penny was, he considered, wisely taken off; but he thought the Income Tax was very improperly levied; objecting to the way in which one sum was charged on real property, one on money-making businesses, and one on money left after death. He would tax a person who had inherited money at a higher rate than the person whose income was derived from the work of his brain; and he urged the right hon. Gentleman to consider whether this tax could not be levied in a more equitable manner than at present. Then, with respect to the National Expenditure. True statesmanship was the statesmanship which reduced National Expenditure to the lowest possible limits. He urged the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the House to look to this question of our National Debt, which he considered a standing disgrace to such an intelligent and commercial country as this, and to endeavour to do what younger countries had done—to systematically reduce the National Debt. He hoped that every future Budget would provide a Sinking Fund for the extinction, by degrees, of the National Debt.

Mr. Alderman LAWRENCE said, the hon. Member for Donegal (Mr. Lea) seemed to allude to the property held by the City of London in the North of Ireland, and to speak of the City Companies as though they were great delinquents, because they had not paid Legacy, Succession, or Probate Duty. But that was not their fault; it was not likely they would pay duty which was not levied upon them; and when the hon. Member spoke of the Irish Society, he must know that there was no property in Ireland which was better managed, and on which the tenants were so well satisfied, as that of the Irish Society. The Irish Society spent all the rents they received on the property back again in Ireland, with the exception of a very small sum for the cost of management in England. He thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer was to be congratulated upon having brought forward two Budgets within a year, the first of which had been eminently successful. His scheme for abolishing the Hop and Malt Duties, and putting a tax upon beer, had been carried out with the greatest success. With regard to the present Budget, he had looked forward to some great change in the Probate Duties; but he entirely disagreed with the hon. Member for Stockton-on-Tees (Mr. Dodds) with respect to those duties. But the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had not touched upon the great evil of the Probate Duty, which was that it was levied upon only one class of property—namely, personal property. By increasing the Probate Duty that evil was aggravated; and the Chancellor of the Exchequer had not gone into the whole question of freehold and leasehold property. A man, having both freehold and leasehold property, paid Probate and Succession Duty on the leasehold, but only Succession Duty on the freehold. In the neighbourhood of the Metropolis there were large estates, the leaseholds on which were more valuable than the freehold; but, as time went on, the freehold became more valuable than the leaseholds; and when the leases ran out and the whole property fell into the hands of the freeholder, there would be no Probate Duty to be paid whatever; the whole estate passed as freehold property. That was unjust; and he contended that whenever the Probate Duty was dealt with, it ought to be levied on freehold property as well as on leasehold, or it ought to be taken off leasehold property. There was no reason why only leasehold property should pay Probate Duty; and he was disappointed that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, when he touched the Probate Duties, had not extended them so as to apply to freehold property. A Probate Duty on freehold property would bring in a large amount of money, and it would be a very fair proceeding, because, in many cases, large estates escaped paying their fair share of taxation. Then, with regard to the House Duties, they were most unequally assessed; and, in the country, the larger a man's house was the less he paid in proportion. The argument was that the duty should be estimated upon such a sum as the house would let from year to year. He would take the case of the mansion of a Duke, with an immense estate. Such a house might not let at all, and it might be argued that such a house ought not to be assessed. The system was a great injustice, and he considered that either the House Duty ought to be abolished, or the rateable value must be estimated upon a different basis than that of the letting value of a house from year to year. Then, with regard to the Probate Duty, it seemed to him that the Chancellor of the Exchequer stated in the event of any estate being left to certain parties they might go to Somerset House and pay 5 per cent, and then would not be charged Probate Duty, and would not be troubled for Legacy and Succession Duties. No one would go and pay that 5 per cent unless he would be likely to obtain a profit. In the case of a man leaving a great sum to a charity, as Mr. Peabody had done, for instance, the charity would be very glad to pay 5 per cent; but under the present system they would pay 10 per cent. He regretted, also, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed to increase the Probate Duty by half per cent, and not charge a Legacy Duty of 1 per cent. He was so jealous of the Probate Duty not being increased until it was placed on a just and equal basis that he felt the duty ought not to be touched except in a broad spirit, so that it should embrace the whole property of the country. Whether it was 2 or 1 per cent it ought to include freehold, leasehold, and personal property. In that way a large amount of money would be obtained, and the system would be just. He further wished that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had stated something with respect to the Land Tax. The Land Tax was not, perhaps, generally understood. Very few people knew what they had to pay to redeem the Land Tax. The calculation was as follows:—To the sum necessary to purchase Consols to produce the amount of the Land Tax, 10 per cent was added, and then 17½ per cent was deducted. It would be better to adopt a system of a certain number of years' purchase for the redemption of the Land Tax, as in the redemption of tithes. There were other duties which he should like to see abolished; for instance, the Railway Duties. The sooner they were abolished the better, as he was of opinion that, in order to promote the prosperity of the country, all taxes on locomotion ought to be removed. Then there were the light dues. With the exception of Turkey, England was the only country throughout the world that levied light dues. In other countries those dues were thrown on the Public Revenue and not upon the ships; but here they were levied upon ships, and yet not upon all ships; the whole of the ships of Her Majesty's Navy and private yachts paid no light dues. There was considerable expense in collecting these dues, and he thought these were duties which ought to be abolished. Then, again, he wished it were possible, in the interest of the working classes and of temperance, to abolish the duties on coffee, chicory, and cocoa; but he presumed that, as they produced £300,000, it would not be easy to dispense with them. He trusted that when the Chancellor of the Exchequer came to the Revenue question of the Probate Duty he would be able to see his way to exempt legacies of £20 from duty. It was too much to expect a servant or dependent to pay £2 in case he happened to be left £20. No benefit would be derived, and he did not see the advisability of disturbing the present arrangement. He hoped the whole subject of the Probate Duties would some day be more thoroughly reviewed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Mr. BIDDELL did not think that in the case of a private brewer the farm buildings should be included in the house; and he trusted the right hon. Gentleman would re-consider that part of his Budget. A slight difference had been made in the Import Duty. He would have thought that might have been left alone; but it was evident the right hon. Gentleman did not wish to favour the home produce in any way whatever. He approved of some amendment of the Probate Duty; but was afraid that the reduction in the intervals of the scale, as proposed by the right hon. Gentleman, would lead to a great deal of delay, as valuations would have, in the first instance, to be made more minutely before probate could be obtained.

Mr. GORST said, he would like to call attention to a remark made at a time when very few Members of the Committee were present. An hon. Member (Mr. Lea), who spoke from the opposite Benches, complained of the action of the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster having led him, in the days of his innocence, to make observations upon the extraordinary extravagance of a certain Government to which they were both opposed. He said the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster stated that no Administration ought to command the confidence of the country which could not carry on the Government of the country for a sum not exceeding £70,000,000 a-year; and the hon. Member asked what they were to think of the Government which now came, not for £70,000,000, but for £84,000,000, to carry on the business of the country? Now, that remark showed the extreme inconvenience of hon. Gentlemen, who aimed at being statesmen and great in the councils of the country, making speeches when in Opposition which they could not substantiate when they were in Office. ["Question!"] An hon. Member opposite called "Question." What he was saying might not be palatable to the hon. Gentleman; but he maintained he was speaking of the Expenditure of the country, which was the question now before the Committee. He was remarking upon the inconvenience of hon. Gentlemen in the position of the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster leading on less experienced Members to make statements in the country which were really not borne out by the facts. The same thing went on now, for he was reading only to-day that a candidate for a seat in Cornwall, addressing his intended constituents, enlarged upon the great extravagance of the Conservative Government, and claimed the support of the electors by holding up to them the great economy of the present Government. He wondered whether the gentleman would tell the intelligent electors of St. Ives when he addressed them to-morrow that this economical Government had actually proposed in the present year an increased expenditure of £1,600,000. He (Mr. Gorst) must allude to what happened in 1877, when an increased expenditure was recommended by the then Government of only £600,000. The increase was just £1,000,000 less than that proposed to-night. On that occasion the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose (Mr. Baxter), who spoke with great weight, having been recently the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, after observing that the increased expenditure was, as far as he could make out, £668,000 more than in the past year—

> "From his place in Parliament he wished to protest against this continual increase in the expenditure of the country."

Where was the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose to-night? Why was he not in his place in Parliament now to protest against this continued increase in the Expenditure of the country? The right hon. Gentleman said—

> "Year by year, especially when the Gentlemen on the opposite side were in power, the

expenditure went on increasing, and his belief was that before many years passed it would be found absolutely necessary to reduce the expenditure."—[3 *Hansard*, ccxxxiii. 1020.]

Why was the right hon. Gentleman not present to-night to recommend a reduction of the Expenditure? Then the right hon. Gentleman went on to advocate a great reduction in the expenses of the Army and Navy. He said, "The vast Expenditure was indefensible;" and he went on to make an attack on the Ministry of that day for the increase of Expenditure. Now he (Mr. Gorst) did not want to-night to imitate at all the example of the right hon. Member for Montrose; he did not say one single word against the Government because the normal Expenditure of the country was increasing. He believed the reasons for that increase were perfectly and satisfactorily explained a short time ago by the Chancellor of the Exchequer; but what he did want to say was, that when Gentlemen opposite were themselves in Opposition they should show some forbearance to their political opponents; they should show more candour and truthfulness in their financial criticisms, and they should not take exception to an increase in the Expenditure of the country which they found themselves utterly powerless to prevent when they got into Office. There were, of course, occasions when an increase of expenditure was a proper subject of criticism. Extraordinary expenditure was always a fit subject for criticism on the part of an Opposition, and no one would have found any fault with the criticism upon the £6,000,000 loan during the Russo-Turkish War, and the Government could not raise any objection if hon. Members on this side of the House, at a convenient time, and upon a convenient occasion, asked whether the expenditure of £2,000,000, which the Chancellor of the Exchequer told them was incurred upon the war in the Transvaal, was an economical expenditure of money; whether the suzerainty of the Transvaal, which was all that appeared to be left for us, was really worth an expenditure of £2,000,000, or, in other words, whether if the Government, at the outset, had limited their demands upon the Boers to a mere question of suzerainty, they could not have obtained that without an expenditure of £2,000,000, which they now asked the House to provide? Those were topics which no Government could object to the Opposition being curious about; but he did think that hon. Gentlemen who had been Secretaries to the Treasury themselves, and who had been Chancellors of the Exchequer themselves, should, when they happened to be in Opposition, retain what he might call their financial candour, and when they knew that in a country like this, with the mode of keeping the accounts such as had been adopted, the apparent expenditure must naturally increase year by year, they should not try to make political capital, they should not try to impose upon an innocent candidate for Parliamentary honours like the hon. Member opposite. ["Order, order!"] If he were out of Order he would withdraw; but he only applied to the hon. Member an epithet which he himself almost invited the House to apply to him. He repeated that experienced Gentlemen ought not to impose upon innocent candidates for seats in Parliament by making such monstrous assertions as that of the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster—namely, that no Government deserved to conduct the affairs of the country which could not carry on the business of the country for £70,000,000 a-year, and then to come down to the House of Commons and ask for £84,000,000. There was one further observation he wished to make before they went to a division, and that was he hardly thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer did full justice to the financial arrangements for the reduction of the National Debt, which were made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote). He was sure he did not, because his right hon. Friend (Mr. Hubbard), who was not now in the House, was evidently of opinion that there were no arrangements now made for the gradual and steady reduction of the National Debt; and he was sure if the Chancellor of the Exchequer had explained in the lucid way in which he could explain the arrangements now actually in force for the reduction of the National Debt, no hon. Member would have made a statement that there was no such arrangement in force. As far as he understood the Chancellor of the Exchequer, £6,000,000 of Terminable Annuities would fall in in 1885—that was to say, that by the year 1885 we should have discharged our obligations to the Commissioners of the Savings Banks, who were the holders of the Annuities, and that from 1885, if no further legislation took place to prevent it, we might pride ourselves upon the payment of £6,000,000 a-year towards the extinction of the Debt. But the Chancellor of the Exchequer forgot to tell the Committee that by the operation of the Sinking Fund Scheme of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon that £6,000,000 of Terminable Annuities which would fall in in 1885 would become immediately and directly applicable to the reduction of the National Debt, because the scheme of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon was this—that the charge for the Debt should always be £28,000,000 a-year, and inasmuch as the £6,000,000 would no longer be required to pay Terminable Annuities it would become immediately applicable to the direct reduction of the National Debt. The Chancellor of the Exchequer ought to have told the Committee that without the operation of the new scheme for the conversion of the Terminable Annuities that £6,000,000 would have become applicable to the reduction of the Debt under the existing scheme. He understood the right hon. Gentleman to spend £1,550,000 of the £6,000,000 in the conversion of fresh Annuities, which were not to expire until 1906; and, therefore, there would remain £4,450,000 applicable to the direct extinction of the Debt. He was right in saying there was no virtue in the new scheme, and that, so far as the payment of the National Debt was concerned, the whole of the £6,000,000 would have been just as applicable to the extinction of the National Debt under the scheme of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon as under that of the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, and that the effect of the change now introduced was not to hasten or in any way to facilitate the payment of the Debt, but merely to insure that it should not be paid under the scheme of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon, but under that of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. There was another point in which the right hon. Gentleman was hardly just to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon. A year ago, if his memory was right, a complaint was made against the late Chancellor of the Exchequer that in his last Budget he tampered with the Probate Duties without introducing any comprehensive scheme to deal with them. There, again, was an example how, when people were in Office, they found themselves constrained to do the very thing they found fault with when out of Office. [Mr. Gladstone: That is not so.] He (Mr. Gorst) begged the right hon. Gentleman's pardon if he was wrong. It appeared to him they had witnessed to-night an alteration of the Probate Duties unaccompanied by any comprehensive scheme for their final settlement, which he certainly understood to be the effect of the charge made against his right hon. Friend. He only made these observations because he was very zealous for the candour of statesmen dealing with the finance of the country; and he could not resist the opportunity offered by the hon. Member who spoke opposite (Mr. Lea) of pointing out what a pity it was that people in Opposition were not as candid financiers as they were when in Office.

Mr. J. W. PEASE said, no one could have looked forward to the Financial Statement of the right hon. Gentleman without very considerable anxiety. It was impossible to observe the foreign policy of the last few years without having felt that the day of reckoning must come, and that the Expenditure of the country would be very largely increased in consequence of the pursuance of that policy against which many of them protested from the time it was inaugurated. Allow him to congratulate the right hon. Gentleman upon the most beneficial change he proposed in regard to the Probate Duties, or what he had called the Death Duties. The arrangements the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed in regard to property that could be declared under £300 would be of very great benefit to the working classes and less wealthy of the country. It had been his lot, as he had no doubt it had been the lot of many an hon. Gentleman, to help, from time to time, his poorer neighbours when they had probate to take out, and he had seen how they had been encumbered by their duties and the large lawyers' bills. The admirable plan laid down by the Chancellor of the Exchequer would have the effect of materially facilitating and easing the working classes—especially the poorer classes of society—when passing through this very troublesome ordeal. The right hon. Gentleman had also dealt with the Spirit Duties. The duty imposed on spirits was a most legitimate way of raising money, and many Members of the House thought spirits would bear a still further duty. In the present instance, the surtax would go towards making up the deficiency produced by the taking off of 1*d.* of the Income Tax. His principal object, however, in rising was to speak of the enormous Naval and Military expenditure. It had fallen to his lot, from time to time, to call attention to that expenditure; but upon the last occasion when these Estimates were before the House he had felt that he had no public duty to perform. He felt that the Government which he had the honour to support had been saddled by the expenses incurred by those who preceded them in pursuing a policy which necessitated the keeping up those Services, at any rate, during the present year. If the right hon. Gentleman brought in another Budget, which he sincerely hoped he would have the strength to do, he trusted it would be one which would show a very marked diminution in those two great spending branches of the country. But it could only be done by adhering strictly to that line of foreign policy which had been inaugurated already. [An hon. MEMBER: The Transvaal!] With regard to the Transvaal, he was one of those who thought the late Administration failed in not giving to the Boers that Constitution which, by the agreement made with them at the time of the annexation, they were entitled to have. It was the want of that Constitution which occasioned the war. The course of foreign policy on which they had entered was one which would tend to economy at home in the two large branches of Expenditure, to the honour of England, and to the comfort of the working classes of the country, who were so largely taxed to keep up an Expenditure with which they had no sympathy.

MR. WIGGIN said, he viewed with alarm the enormous Military and Naval expenditure of the country; but he firmly believed that if the present Government had been in Office for the last six or seven years the expenditure would not have been by any means so large as it was at present. He thought he might avail himself of the present opportunity of addressing himself to the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War, and also to the noble Earl the First Lord of the Admiralty, who sat in "another place," and of expressing the alarm which he and others felt at the enormous Military and Naval expenditure of the country. He protested strongly against it; and if he had not the fullest confidence in the Prime Minister and his Colleagues, he should be much more alarmed than he was. He hoped the Government would take the matter to heart, and would seriously consider the propriety of reducing these particular heads of Expenditure before another Budget was brought in next year. He sincerely hoped that the Ministry would turn their best efforts in that direction.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he should not have risen to say a word on the question, because he should have been prepared to confide in the superior experience of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Leader of the House and Prime Minister of the country, with regard to the Budget he had brought forward, if it had not been for the remark of his hon. Friend the Member for South Durham (Mr. Pease), that it was the late Government which had created the Expenditure. ["Hear, hear!"] Of course, hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway began to cheer immediately; but he should like them to answer distinctly one question he wished to put to them. Why was it that the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, when he came into power, did not carry out the Constitution which the Prime Minister as well as the hon. Member for South Durham said ought to have been given to the Boers? In his Mid Lothian campaign, the right hon. Gentleman said the annexation of the Transvaal was a disgrace to this country, and ought never to have been carried out. The right hon. Gentleman had an ample opportunity for reversing the policy of annexation; but, instead of doing that, he entered upon a war with the Boers, and put into the mouth of Her Gracious Majesty a declaration that the dignity of the country was at stake, and ought to be maintained. He wished to know how it was that the Government had not carried out the policy they advocated when out of Office, and why the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister had not given to the Boers the free Constitution which he said they ought to have, and which, whether it was just and right to do so, would have secured peace without firing a shot? The right hon. Gentleman had committed himself in the eyes of the country upon both points, because he had not given the Boers a Constitution, and he had gone to war with them. It was only after having entered upon a war, and having suffered defeat, that he consented to a peace that was based upon terms of humiliation and disgrace.

The CHAIRMAN: I must point out to the Committee that the Transvaal War is not the question before it.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, his remarks had reference to the Army expenditure and the increase of the Army Estimates which the House was asked to Vote this year; and he simply raised the question in answer to the observations of his hon. Friend the Member for South Durham, who placed the responsibility of the Transvaal War upon the shoulders of the late Government. He, for one, so long as he had a seat in that House, and so long as he could make his voice heard, would maintain that it was upon the present Government that the whole responsibility of the Transvaal War rested. They had the power to prevent the war if they had been so disposed, but they deliberately created it, especially by the promises held out and the speeches they had made; and it was not until they had been defeated that they thought of making peace. The peace which had been entered into was, he maintained, a peace without dignity or credit to the country, and without honour—nay, more, with dishonour—to the British flag. [*Cries of* "Oh!" *and* "Question!"] And, although hon. Members below the Ministerial Gangway might holloa "Question!" and evidently did not relish the remarks he was making, he put it to their honesty and candour to say if it was not the present, and not the late, Government who had committed the series of grievous mistakes which had placed the country in its present humiliated position?

Mr. WARTON shared the indignation of his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot), and trusted that hon. Members below the Gangway opposite who approved of the policy of the present Government, and delighted to hear that of their Predecessors abused, would listen with patience to the views of an honest Conservative like his hon. Friend. Like his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for West Sussex, he could scarcely find words to express the feeling of indignation with which he, in common with all Englishmen, had viewed the action of Her Majesty's Government in South Africa. He indignantly protested against the course which had been pursued. The policy of the late Government was to give peace with honour to Europe. The present Government had already given the country peace with dishonour in Africa, and they had retired with dishonour from Afghanistan. In every quarter of the world in which it was possible for the influence of the Government to be used for mischief it had been used. He objected to the principle of measuring the policy of the country upon economical grounds, and gauging the results of that policy upon such a miserably low standard as that of pounds, shillings, and pence. But, even if they took that standard, they would find that at a cost of £6,000,000 the late Government succeeded in staving off a European war, while the policy of the Liberal Party, when there was a similar Eastern complication 25 years ago, brought on the Crimean War, and cost, at least, £100,000,000. It would be thus seen that a spiritless policy was not always the most economical, and that those who paid the least regard to the preservation of the honour of the country did not, even when when judged by a money standard, gain by such a policy. He believed that the path of honour was that of true economy. We should always be ready to fight, and then we should be rarely attacked; but if we were frightened, and were never prepared to fight, we might expect to be constantly attacked. It was the Mid Lothian speeches of the right hon. Gentleman the Premier which made the people of the Transvaal believe that they had been unjustly treated, and that stirred them into rebellion. They could not understand why, after the right hon. Gentleman came into Office, there was any necessity for further delay, and why the right hon. Gentleman should require a few months to enable him to make up his mind. They took the right hon. Gentleman at his word, and they went to war at once.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I must very humbly, mildly, and modestly, beg the House to suspend its judgment upon the frank assertions and interesting sketches of history which the two hon. Members who have last addressed us, under the denomination of honest Conservatives, have offered to the House. If I do not at present reply to the statements which have been made, I hope it will not be understood that the Government, by their silence, subscribe either to the whole or any part or portion, jot or tittle, of the statements which have been made. I trust, therefore, that this matter may be allowed peacefully and quietly to stand over until the time comes for the discussion which the House has already been promised, and that we may be allowed to continue tranquilly the consideration of the more prosaic questions contained in the Budget Resolutions now before the House.

Resolution *agreed to.*

(2.) *Resolved,* That on the first day of June, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-one, the Duties imposed by "The Customs and Inland Revenue Act, 1880," upon Probates of Wills and Letters of Administration in England and Ireland, and upon Inventories in Scotland, shall cease to be payable; and on and after that day there shall be charged and paid on the affidavit to be required and received from the person applying for the Probate or Letters of Administration in England or Ireland, or on the Inventory to be exhibited and recorded in Scotland, the Stamp Duties hereinafter specified (that is to say):

	Duty.
Where the estate and effects for or in respect of which the Probate of Letters of Administration is or are to be granted, or whereof the Inventory is to be exhibited and recorded, exclusive of what the deceased shall have been possessed of or entitled to as trustee, and not beneficially, shall be of the value of £100, and under £300	At the rate of One Pound for every full sum of £50, and for any fractional part of £50 over any multiple of £50;
Where such estate and effects be of the value of £300, and under £1,000 .	At the rate of One Pound Five Shillings for every full sum of £50, and for any fractional part of £50 over any multiple of £50;
Where such estate and effects shall be of the value of £1,000 and upwards	At the rate of Three Pounds for every full sum of £100, and for any fractional part of £100 over any multiple of £100.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"(3.) That, on and after the first day of June, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-one, in the case of a person dying domiciled in any part of the United Kingdom, it shall be lawful for the person applying for the Probate or Letters of Administration in England or Ireland, or exhibiting the Inventory in Scotland, to state in his Affidavit the fact of such domicile, and to deliver therewith or annex thereto a Schedule of the Debts due from the deceased to persons resident in the United Kingdom, and the funeral expenses; and, in that case, for the purpose of the charge of Duty on the Affidavit or Inventory, the aggregate amount of the debts and funeral expenses appearing in the Schedule shall be deducted from the value of the estate and effects, as specified in the account delivered with or annexed to the Affidavit, or whereof the Inventory shall be exhibited."

Mr. R. N. FOWLER asked the noble Lord the Secretary to the Treasary, how soon the duty would have to be paid? Of course, under the present system, probate had to be taken out immediately. Was it intended to allow any length of time for payment in this case?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, the Probate Duty would be paid when probate was taken out. This was not an additional sum to be paid.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER: It is to be deducted from the value of the estate and effects?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH: Yes, when probate is taken out.

Mr. GORST asked if an opportunity would be afforded for discussing the Budget Resolutions? If the Resolutions were all passed to-night, they would be reported to-morrow, and the Budget Bill would be brought in. Was he right in understanding that there was no intention to take the Budget Bill until after Easter?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, the second reading of the Budget Bill would not be taken until after Easter. It would be taken as soon after the second reading of the Land Bill as possible.

Resolution *agreed to.*

(4.) *Resolved,* That Stamp Duties at the like rates as are to be charged and paid on Affidavits and Inventories shall be charged and paid on accounts delivered of the personal or moveable property to be included therein according to the value thereof:

The personal or moveable property to be included in an account shall be property of the following descriptions, viz.:—

(a.) Any donation mortis causâ made by any person dying on or after the first day of June one thousand eight hundred and eighty-one;

(b.) Any property which a person dying on or after such day having been absolutely entited thereto has voluntarily caused, or may voluntarily cause, to be transferred to or vested in himself and any other person jointly, whether by disposition or otherwise, so that the beneficial interest therein or in some part thereof passes or accrues by survivorship on his death to such other person;

(c.) Any property passing under any past or future voluntary settlement made by any person dying on or after such day by deed or any other instrument not taking effect as a will whereby an interest for life or any other period determinable by reference to death is either expressly or implicitiy reserved to the Settlor, or whereby the Settlor may have reserved to himself the right by the exercise of any power to restore to himself or to reclaim the absolute interest in such property.

(5.) *Resolved,* That, in respect of any Legacy, Residue, or Share of Residue payable out of or consisting of any Estate or Effects according to the value whereof Duty shall have been paid on the Affidavit or Inventory or Account, in conformity with the terms of the foregoing Resolutions, the Duty at the rate of One Pound per centum imposed by the Act of the Fifty-fifth year of King George the Third, chapter one hundred and eighty-four, shall not be payable:

And that, in respect of any Succession to Leaseholds or to other Property upon the value whereof Duty shall have been paid on the Affidavit or Inventory or Account, in conformity with the terms of the foregoing Resolutions, the Duty at the rate of One Pound per centum imposed by "The Succession Duty Act, 1853," shall not be payable.

(6.) *Resolved,* That, subject to the relief from Legacy Duty given by section thirteen of "The Customs and Inland Revenue Act, 1880," every Legacy residue or share of residue, although not of an amount or value of Twenty Pounds, shall be chargeable to the Duties imposed by the said Act of the fifty-fifth year of King George the Third, chapter one hundred and eighty-four, as modified in conformity with the terms of the preceding Resolution.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"(7.) That, towards raising the Supply granted to Her Majesty, there shall be charged, collected, and paid for one year, commencing on the sixth day of April, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-one, in respect of all Property, Profits, and Gains mentioned or described as chargeable in the Act of the sixteenth and seventeenth years of Her Majesty's reign, chapter thirty-four, the following Duties of Income Tax (that is to say):

For every Twenty Shillings of the annual value or amount of Property, Profits, and Gains chargeable under Schedules (A), (C), (D), or (E) of the said Act, the Duty of Five Pence;

And For every Twenty Shillings of the annual value of the occupation of Lands, Tenements, Hereditaments, and Heritages chargeable under Schedule (B) of the said Act,—

In England, the Duty of Two Pence Halfpenny;

In Scotland and Ireland respectively, the Duty of One Penny Three Farthings;

Subject to the provisions contained in section one hundred and sixty-three of the Act of the fifth and sixth years of Her Majesty's reign, chapter thirty-five, for the exemption of persons whose income is less than One Hundred and Fifty Pounds, and in section eight of "The Customs and Inland Revenue Act, 1876," for the relief of persons whose income is less than Four Hundred Pounds."

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL wished to say a word, although he had no doubt he should be somewhat singular in doing so, in order to express the regret he felt at the proposal made by the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury to reduce the Income Tax. The 6*d.* at which it stood now was a good round sum, much better calculable than 5*d.* In addition to that, for other reasons he regretted, although he had no greater fondness for paying taxes than other people, that it had been reduced. He thought they ought to be just before they were generous, and that they should pay their debts before they took steps for diminishing taxation. He made these observations more especially in reference to the cost of the Afghan War. A few days ago he had expressed his regret that the £3,000,000 which were to be paid by this country towards the cost of that war were not paid right off. Instead of spreading the payment over six years, it would be more befitting the dignity of the nation to pay off the whole sum at once. He certainly hoped that the other part of the payment—the £2,000,000—would be more seemingly provided for. He was very much astonished to find, and he had heard it with great regret, that the payment of this sum of £2,000,000 was to be extended, by some arrangement which he understood to have been made, over a period of 27 years, of which 25 years had still to come, so that the final instalment would not be paid until the year 1906. He thought that was an arrangement very much to be deprecated. We were owing the money to a comparatively poor country—India—and if it was right that we should pay it at all, we ought to put our hands in our pockets and pay the whole of it at once. The noble Lord the Secretary to the Treasury shook his head. He (Sir George Campbell) should be glad to find that he was mistaken; but he had certainly understood the statement to be that the money was to be paid by an Annuity extending to the year 1906.

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, the sum of £2,000,000 referred to by his hon. Friend was advanced to the Indian Government two years ago upon Consols, and it was proposed to pay off those Consols by Terminable Annuities extending over 25 years.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he quite understood that; but if the money was to be paid off in a shape that would spread it over 27 years, his argument was just the same. Hon. Members seemed to suppose the other day that he was only speaking in a jocular manner when he said he was sorry that the cost of the war in Afghanistan had not been laid on the country in a lump sum. He certainly was joking when he said that he thought the Conservatives, who had brought about the war, should bear the whole of the burden of payment. It was, however, a joke that was suggested by an hon. Member in reference to another part of his argument; but he was never more serions in his life than when he said that it would be better for the country that the expense of any war should be paid on the nail out of Income, and not borrowed or spread over a series of years. According to the explanation of the noble Lord the Secretary to the Treasury, it appeared to be quite true that the payment of the £2,000,000 advanced to India two years ago was to be spread over 27 years, instead of being paid by the present generation. It seemed to him that the people who made wars—not only small wars, but even large wars—should pay for them. Above all, the people who should be called upon to pay for them were those who paid the Income Tax. He would like it to be made part of the Constitution of the country that when a war was entered into the funds raised for the purpose of carrying it on should be paid for, and mostly, out of the Property and Income of the country by the class who made the wars, and who, in most cases, if they were so disposed, could prevent them. An arrangement for raising loans, and spreading them over a long series of years, had a tendency to make wars rather popular than otherwise. The people of the country who embarked in these wars were not made to feel the burden properly, and to wince under it; while there was a considerable class of persons, especially in the City of London—financiers, contractors, shipowners, and others—who profited, and profited largely, by the expense of a war. Therefore, it seemed to him that when the payment of the cost of a war was made easy, and the profit was made large to the financiers, there was a certain inducement and temptation held out to the country to indulge in wars; whereas, if the whole cost was paid on the nail, out of the taxes on the income and property of the country, people would be very chary of entering into them. Under these circumstances, he had certainly thought that the penny which it was proposed to take off the Income Tax might, at least, have been rendered available for the expenses of the war in Afghanistan. A sum of £1,400,000 or £1,500,000, added to the £600,000 already provided, would have made a good round sum of £2,000,000, and by next year, at farthest, we might have paid off the cost of the Afghan War, without adding to the taxation of the country or reducing it. We might then have been able to sit down with comparatively easy consciences—which would certainly not be the case with him—so long as the payment of the money was to be spread over so many years.

Resolution *agreed to.*

(8.) *Resolved*, That, in lieu of the Duties of Customs on Beer and Ale, there shall be charged and paid the Duties following (that is to say):

	£	s.	d.
Upon every thirty-six gallons of beer of the descriptions called Mum, Spruce, or Black Beer—			
Where the Worts thereof were before fermentation of a specific gravity,			
Not exceeding one thousand two hundred and fifteen degrees .	1	6	0
Exceeding one thousand two hundred and fifteen degrees . . .	1	10	6
Upon every thirty-six gallons of Beer of any other description—			
Where the Worts thereof were before fermentation of a specific gravity of one thousand and fifty-seven degrees	0	6	6

And so in proportion for any difference in gravity.

And there shall be allowed and paid in respect of all Beer imported into and subsequently exported from Great Britian or Ireland as merchandise, or shipped for use as ship's stores, or brought into Great Britian or Ireland and subsequently removed to the Isle of Man, the Drawback allowed under Section Thirty-six of "The Inland Revenue Act, 1880," upon the exportation of Beer brewed in the United Kingdom.

(9.) *Resolved*, That, on and after the first day of October, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-one, there shall be granted and paid to the use of Her Majesty, on a Licence to be taken out annually by a Brewer other than a Brewer for sale, who shall be the occupier of a house of an annual value exceeding £10, and not exceeding £15, the Duty of . . . . . . £0 9*s.* 0*d.*

(10.) *Resolved*, That, in lieu of the Duties of Customs on Spirits or Strong Waters, and of the Duties of Excise on Spirits manufactured or distilled, in the Islands of Guernsey, Jersey, Alderney, and Sark respectively, and imported into the United Kingdom, there shall be charged and paid the Duties of Customs follows (that is to say):

	£	s.	d.
Upon every gallon computed at proof of Spirits of any description (except Perfumed Spirits), including Naphtha or Methylated Alcohol, purified so as to be potable, and mixtures and preparations containing Spirits	0	10	4
Upon every gallon of Perfumed Spirits	0	16	6

And so in proportion for any less quantity.

That where a person importing Liqueurs, Cordials, or other preparations containing Spirits in bottle, may have entered the same in such a manner as to indicate that the strength is not to be tested, Duty shall be charged and paid at the rates following (that is to say):

	£	s.	d.
Upon every gallon thereof .	0	14	0

And so in proportion for any less quantity.

And that the allowance of Three Pence per Gallon payable to any Licensed Rectifier or Compounder under section four of the Act of the twenty-third and twenty-fourth years of Her Majesty's reign, chapter one hundred and twenty-nine, or section twelve of the Act of the twenty-eighth and twenty-ninth years of Her Majesty's reign, chapter ninety-eight, shall be increased to Four Pence per Gallon.

(11.) *Resolved*, That, on and after the first day of June, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-one, in lieu of the Duty now payable in Great Britain on Plate of Silver made or wrought in Great Britain which shall or ought to be touched, assayed, or marked in Great Britain, and in Ireland on Plate of Silver made or wrought in Ireland, there shall be charged and paid for every Ounce of such Plate, and so in proportion for any greater or less quantity, the Duty of . . . . 1*s.* 3*d.*

And, on and after the first day of June, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-two, and the first day of June in each of the four succeeding years, the Duty shall be reduced by the amount of Three Pence, until the whole Duty is at an end.

(12.) *Resolved*, That, on and after the first day of June, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-one, in lieu of the Duty of Customs on Plate of Silver, Gilt or Ungilt, there shall be charged the Duty following (that is to say):

Plate, viz.:
Of Silver, Gilt or Ungilt, the ounce troy . . . . 1*s.* 3*d.*

And on and after the first day of June, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-two, and the first day of June in each of the four succeeding years, the Duty shall be reduced by the amount of Three Pence until the whole Duty is at an end.

(13.) *Resolved*, That it is expedient to amend the Law relating to the Inland Revenue and the Customs.

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow;*

Committee to sit again upon *Wednesday.*

ARMY DISCIPLINE AND REGULATION (ANNUAL) BILL.—[BILL 123.]

(*Mr. Secretary Childers, the Judge Advocate General, Mr. Trevelyan.*)

CONSIDERATION.

Order for Consideration, as amended, read.

MR. CHILDERS explained that when this Bill was in Committee on Thursday last, a very long discussion took place upon the 4th clause, which provided that the summary punishment to be substituted for flogging should be regulated by rules made from time to time by one of Her Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State. He then promised to introduce words into the clause which should limit in a general way the character of the summary punishments to be inflicted.

In fulfilment of that promise, he proposed to insert words in the Bill which should limit the summary punishments of personal restraint or hard labour, retaining the other provisos.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now taken into Consideration."—(*Mr. Childers.*)

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill, as amended, *considered.*

Clause 1 (Short title).

Sir ALEXANDER GORDON moved to amend Clause 1, by inserting in line 25, before the word "Act," the word "Amendment," and for the reason that the Act was an Act which amended other Acts relative to the discipline of the Army, and consequently required the word "Amendment" to make the Act intelligible.

Mr. MONK asked if it was right for such an Amendment to be moved, considering that the Act was an annual one?

Mr. SPEAKER said, that was a question for the House to determine rather than the Chair.

Amendment proposed,

In page 2, line 25, after the word "annual," to insert the words "and amendment."—(*Sir Alexander Gordon.*)

Mr. CHILDERS thought it would be unwise to in any way depart in this respect from the lines of the old Mutiny Act, which, like the present Bill, was always an annual measure.

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and *negatived.*

Clause 3 (Prices in respect of billeting. 42 & 43 *Vict.* c. 33).

General BURNABY said, that on the second reading of the Bill he had called attention to the inadequate remuneration allowed to innkeepers and others for the accommodation of soldiers on the march. The Schedule to the 3rd clause was to the effect that there should be paid to the keeper of a victualling-house for the accommodation afforded by him, in pursuance of the Army Discipline Regulation Act of 1879, the prices specified. Now, what were the prices? Lodging and attendance for a soldier 2½*d.*, and with the use of a fire 1½*d.*, making 4*d.* per day—a sum that was perfectly ridiculous. A hot meal was to be supplied for 13½*d.* How would anybody like to supply at that price 1¼ lb. of meat, 1 lb. of bread, 1 lb. of potatoes or other vegetables, and 2 pints of small beer, vinegar, pepper, salt, &c., for that amount? He also thought no publican could afford to supply 10 lbs. of oats, 12 lbs. of hay and 8 lbs. of straw, for 1*s.* 9*d.*; and, therefore, he would suggest that the allowance should be 2*s.* Again, officers' lodging and attendance were put down at 2*s.* a-night. That, again, was too little, and he would suggest it should be 3*s.* 6*d.* He could not move the insertion of higher figures; but, in order to have these charges more equitably settled, he would move the omission of Clause 3 and the Schedule connected with it.

Amendment proposed, to leave out Clause 3.—(*General Burnaby.*)

Question proposed, "That Clause 3 stand part of the Bill."

Major O'BEIRNE said, he should oppose the Amendment.

Mr. CHILDERS could not accept the proposal of the hon. and gallant Member. There was no Notice on the Paper, and the hon. and gallant Member had the whole of Thursday and Friday to give Notice if he had wished. If due Notice had been given, he (Mr. Childers) might have defended each of the items which had been criticized. He would, however, remind the House that the whole subject was fully discussed a few years ago, when the rates of allowance now in existence, and which were far in excess, in some cases, of the former rates, were decided upon. He must, therefore, ask the House to allow Clause 3 to remain part of the Bill.

Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 164; Noes 47: Majority 117.—(Div. List, No. 178.)

Clause 4 (Summary punishment).

Mr. CHILDERS said, that in fulfilment of the undertaking to which he had referred, he proposed the insertion of the following words, to limit the character of the summary punishment:—

"And such summary punishment shall be of the character of personal restraint or of hard labour."

This was, word for word, the engagement he gave to the House, and to it he would adhere.

VISCOUNT EMLYN said, he was rather astonished at the aggressive tone of the right hon. Gentleman, who appeared to think he had carried out his engagement and that others had not. Last Thursday the right hon. Gentleman said he would make inquiries and see what could be done in the way of inserting words of a restrictive character in the clause. But for that promise he would have divided the House. But the words proposed to be introduced meant absolutely nothing. They were that the punishment "shall be of the character of personal restraint or of hard labour." If they were left out, what punishment could be inflicted that would be impossible if they were retained? He had expected words which would make some change in the Bill. What he objected to was that punishment should be so far in the hands of the Secretary of State that the soldier should be made the subject of experiments. In spite of the words, and with the words, this would be possible. The reason was that the question had been made a Party cry at the elections. Candidates had pledged themselves to abolish flogging. He should like to ask those hon. Gentlemen whether they told both sides of the story to the people they were addressing? Did they tell those whom they hoped would be their constituents that if flogging were abolished under certain conditions there would be nothing to replace it but the punishment of death? Did they tell them how many soldiers were shot in the Franco-German War? He protested strongly against questions affecting the discipline of the Army being made use of as Party cries. How would it be possible to carry out the new rules in some of the wars we were compelled to undertake? In the Ashantee War our chief means of conveyance were the heads of coolies, and there were few horses to which offenders could be tied. Nor could an offender have been required to carry a greater burden than was carried by most of the soldiers. In the last Chinese War, also, coolies took the place of carts and horses, and it would have been impossible for these rules to have been carried out. These two cases showed the difficulty there would be in carrying out the rules in the different parts of the world in which the English soldier was called upon to serve. A very grave principle was involved; but the change proposed satisfied a Party cry, which forced the Government to do away with the punishment of flogging without, as they understood, the sanction of the highest military authorities. The Government were bound to tell the House what they intended to put in the place of flogging; and, if the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War did not tell them, he should say it was because he could not. There was one other question to be considered, and that was the position in which a commanding officer would, in time of war, be placed by the action the Government were now taking. In certain positions he would find it impossible to carry out those rules and regulations. What, then, was he to do? They were taking out of his hand the only weapon he could weild, and leaving him in a position in which he could only inflict the alternative punishment of death. In conclusion, as a protest against that course of proceeding, he begged to move the omission of the words, "rules being made from time to time by one of Her Majesty's principal Secretaries of State," and the insertion in their place of the words "the provisions of this Act."

Amendment proposed,

In page 3, line 25, to leave out the words "rules to be made from time to time by one of Her Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State," in order to insert the words "the provisions of this Act."—(*Viscount Emlyn.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill."

MR. CAVENDISH BENTINCK said, that he did not rise to oppose the abolition of corporal puishment, for, as an independent Member of Parliament, he had never voted for flogging, except on one occasion in 1867, and he confessed he then did so, not upon the merits, but as a protest against the unprincipled conduct of the then Leaders of the Opposition, who, to embarrass the Government of the day and in violation of all their antecedents, had supported the Motion of the hon. Member for Rochester. He quite saw the advantage of getting rid of this question from a political point of view, because at every contested election there were always amongt the co-called Liberal Party unscrupulous individuals, who, when other means failed, invariably raised against the Conservative candidate the well-known cry of "Where is the Cat?" But, as they were now about to close this old dread of strife, he desired to examine the reasons urged by the Judge Advocate General, to see whether they afforded any substantial grounds for the change proposed. Now, the first reason assigned by the right hon. Gentleman was that this punishment deterred the best class of men from entering the Army; but then he immediately proceeded to cut the ground from under his own feet and to disprove the proposition upon his own showing, for he cited official figures to the effect that, notwithstanding the existence of the punishment, the ratio of men of this class enlisting had been steadily rising—that was, from 76 per 1,000 in 1860 to 137 per 1,000 in 1878, and to 567 per 1,000 in 1880. These statistics absolutely established that the alleged deterrent effect of corporal punishment rested on no solid foundation. Then it seemed, after all, that the Judge Advocate General was not a total abolitionist, for his second reason was, that while he thought flogging was the most appropriate punishment for drunkenness, yet that plea for its retention was removed by the provisions of the Act of 1879, limiting flogging to an alternative for punishment by death. But the right hon. Gentleman seemed totally to have forgotten that the concession by the late Secretary of State for War, in July, 1879, making flogging an alternative for punishment by death only, followed not only both in detail and principle the suggestion of the present Secretary of State for India; and it seemed inconsistent in the highest degree that the abolition of the punishment in cases of drunkenness, to which all parties agreed last year, should now be set up as a ground for the total abolition at the present time. But he (Mr. C. Bentinck) would like to ask, if this punishment was so barbarous and objectionable, why had the Party opposite not abolished it during their long tenure of power? Why, during a period of 13 years from 1867, had they made no Motion on the subject? Why had the Committee of 1879 on Army Discipline, over which the Home Secretary had presided, with the sole exception of the hon. Member for Hackney, now on the Treasury Bench, sanctioned the retention of flogging in the scale of punishments? Why did the Home Secretary himself, in the subsequent Session, vigorously defend flogging as the only alternative for death? And why did the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India surrender in 1880 all his convictions, both public and private, simply because the President of the Board of Trade rebelled against him, and referred to him as the late Leader of the Liberal Party? The answers to these Questions were clear enough; and he (Mr. C. Bentinck) thought it would have been more to the credit of the Government if the Judge Advocate General and the Secretary of State for War had shown true candour, and confessed that their present policy was founded not upon right and reason, but simply upon political urgency. He (Mr. C. Bentinck) was decidedly opposed to the proposed substituted punishments. He believed them to be more barbarous and cruel than flogging, and so entirely against military opinion that they never could be carried out. For his own part, he could not conceive why the present Administration should require any war punishment at all. They were eminently a peace-at-all-price Government, as shown by their late capitulation to the Boers; and they might as well try the effect for a year or two of Army punishments as they stood, rather than subject our soldiers to infinite degradation. He should support, for these reasons, the Amendment of his noble Friend.

Mr. CHILDERS said, he thought he need not deal at length with the speech of the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down, who said he had long opposed flogging, though he once voted for it when it was opposed by some Members now sitting on that side of the House. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to have forgotten that he himself, as Judge Advocate General, had passed an Act under which the punishment of flogging was to be inflicted in cases where the offender was liable to be shot. The right hon. Gentleman now practically said that a person guilty of drunkenness on the line of march ought not to be punished at all. [Mr. Cavendish Bentinck: I never said anything of the kind.] He was in the recollection of the House, and he certainly understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that he would abolish flogging, and substitue for it nothing at all. If the right hon. Gentleman objected to the punishment of flogging, and also to the summary punishment which the Government proposed to substitute, he must desire that the offender should either be shot or escape without any punishment whatever. The noble Viscount opposite (Viscount Emlyn) appeared to think he had suffered some injustice at his (Mr. Childers's) hands, when he deprecated the renewal of the Motion which the noble Viscount withdrew on the previous occasion. But what were the facts? On Monday last there had been a full discussion, lasting some hours, upon the second reading of the Bill to which the noble Viscount moved the same Amendment. At the end of the discussion a suggestion was made and concurred in by his right hon. and gallant Friend and Predecessor (Colonel Stanley), and on the strength of it the noble Viscount withdrew his Amendment. He (Mr. Childers) agreed that the general nature of the punishments which the Secretary of State for War might be enabled to embody in the rules should be stated in the body of and Bill, and at the same time he indicated and read to the House the very words now proposed as expressing the general nature of these summary punishments. It had been indicated, not as a probability, but as a possibility, that without some words punishments might be designed in the nature of torture, and it was arranged to introduce those words into the clause, and that the rules to be made by the Secretary of State for War should be laid upon the Table of the House. Accordingly, following the words of the Act of 1879, a clause was then and there introduced requiring that all rules framed under the present Bill should be laid before Parliament, and the definition of the general nature of the punishments was to be inserted to-day. The proposal having been made by him in perfect good faith, and, as he thought, accepted by the House, he trusted the House would not adopt the Motion of the noble Viscount.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE said, the question before the House was undoubtedly one of very great difficulty. For a great many years there had existed in the House a widely spread feeling against the infliction of corporal punishment, and as far as the feelings of successive Houses of Commons were concerned, no doubt, at any time that might be named during the last 10 or 20 years there would have been a desire to do away with that punishment, had it not been that successive Governments, who felt themselves responsible for maintaining discipline in the Army, had deemed it necessary that the power of inflicting corporal punishment should be retained. He had in mind various changes and modifications with reference to corporal punishment which had been made from time to time in deference to the wishes expressed by Members of Parliament; but it had been felt all through that there ought to be the *ultima ratio* of corporal punishment in the case of armies employed in the field. Very great difficulties had always been suggested by those responsible for the discipline of the Army under those circumstances, in the event of corporal punishment being done away with. The question was again raised in the year before last, and very strong opinions were expressed by some noble Lords and right hon. Gentlemen now in Office that the time had come when corporal punishment might altogether be abolished; and last year the Secretary of State for War intimated to the House that it would be necessary to provide some method whereby this could be carried out. That was a great step for the House of Commons to take; but the right hon. Gentleman said at the time that the question was one of very considerable difficulty; that although he felt, as others had felt, great objection to continuing this punishment, yet, in the position which he then occupied, it would be extremely difficult to abolish the punishment without substituting something else for it, and he gave the House to understand that the subject was one which would occupy his attention; and he hoped, not last year, but this year, to make a proposal to the House which would afford an effectual substitute for that punishment. Well, hon. Members on that side of the House, of course, thought he had taken a very difficult task in hand. There was no doubt that the power of inflicting corporal punishment, however rarely that punishment might be inflicted, was one of great force and of very great efficiency in the hands of a commanding officer; and he and others on that side of the House had felt that it would be extremely difficult to find as a substitute any punishment which would comprise all the advantages which a commanding officer derived from having the power of inflicting corporal punishment, and which at the same time would be tolerable in the eyes of all persons who desired to maintain discipline in the Army without inflicting any excessive punishment, or anything in the nature of torture on the British soldier. When the question was raised two years ago, it was always said that, if flogging was got rid of, the punishments in use in Continental Armies would have to be adopted. The right hon. Gentleman opposite gave the House to understand last year that he would devote himself, with the assistance of his military advisers, to the solution of this question. Well, what was the solution which he had found? It was that flogging should be done away with, and that the House of Commons should allow the Secretary of State for War to make rules for punishment of any kind whatever. But that was no solution, and no substitute at all, and his noble Friend behind him (Viscount Emlyn) said—"If you are really going to do away with flogging, and substitute some other punishment, and if that is not to be done on the responsibility of officers answerable for military discipline, but on the responsibility of civilians in the House of Commons, at all events, let the House of Commons say what it wishes." Either let Parliament say it trusted the matter entirely to the military authorities, or let it take it into its own hands. They might say that they would trust the matter entirely to the military authorities. It was known that, under the pressure of public opinion, subject, as everything was, to the criticism of the Press, in Parliament, and elsewhere, there was no possibility now of those terrible applications of particular punishments which they had heard of in times past. They might say they would leave all these matters in the hands of the executive officers or commanding officers; or, on the other hand, they might take a different line, and say—"No, we will not trust those officers; we do not think this is a case in which they ought to exercise their discretion, and, under those circumstances, we, the House of Commons representing the people of the country, step in and say you shall not inflict these punishments." In that case, he thought the House of Commons should say what the punishments should be. His noble Friend wished some conditions to be laid down which would bind and regulate the action of the authorities, and that, he thought, was a very reasonable proposal. No one would desire to retain the punishment of flogging for a moment longer than it was absolutely necessary, nor to encourage the military authorities to use their power tyrannically. The matter, however, must be considered with reference to the possibility of wars occurring in the future, as they had in the past; and one line or other ought to be taken—either to trust the military authorities, or to contrive Regulations to be laid upon the Table of the House. But they were doing now neither one thing nor the other, and, therefore, he ventured to say that the course taken by his noble Friend was a very reasonable one.

Mr. NEWDEGATE said, it appeared to him that the House was likely to lapse into a dangerous course with reference to this question. It would be remembered that our Army was an Army of volunteers employed, when the country was not at war, within the United Kingdom in the preservation of peace. Hitherto the punishments to which the soldier was subject had been enacted by Parliament—the same authority under which punishments were inflicted upon civilians and other classes in the country. They were to change the authority under which these punishments were to be inflicted. He admitted that in minor matters a discretion had been intrusted to officers as to the nature and extent of punishments; but they were now dealing with punishments which were to be substituted in some cases for capital punishment, and which were, in all cases, for offences which entailed the next punishment in severity to capital punishment, and he thought it would produce a very uneasy feeling among our soldiers — who were also citizens—when they found that the substitutes for these severe punishments had not been defined by Parliament; but had, if not their origin, their nature and extent, in the discretion of some officers, whether of the Government or the Army it mattered not. The intention of punishment in the Army was to prevent insubordination, and he very much doubted whether, in thus changing the origin and direction of punishment—

taking it from Parliament and placing it in the hands of an officer—he cared not whether the Secretary of State for War, the Commander-in-Chief, or a colonel—they would not arouse a feeling which was common to all Englishmen—whether they were civilians or whether they were soldiers — that they were subject to a severe infliction not directly authorized by Parliament, and, therefore, to which they were not bound to submit with the same willingness or unrepining, or the same absence of revengeful feeling, with which the discipline of the Army had hitherto been accepted by the soldiers. This was a serious matter, and he felt strongly with the noble Viscount who proposed the Amendment on the broad ground he was now stating—that they were dealing with an army of free citizens, who would expect that if they were to be severely punished, the manner, and the nature, and origin of that punishment should be the same for them as it was for every other class of Her Majesty's subjects.

Sir HENRY FLETCHER thought that up to this moment the hon. and right hon. Gentlemen who had spoken had been civilians; and now, perhaps, the House would allow him, an old soldier, to say a few words on the subject. He wished to make a few observations, because the other night, when he had an opportunity of speaking in connection with these new rules, it was after the Secretary of State for War had spoken, and no opportunity had been since afforded to the right hon. Gentleman of answering his remarks. His remarks on that occasion had not been answered up to the present moment; therefore, with the permission of the House, he would repeat what he had said on the former occasion. In the new rules it was said that an offender might be attached to a horse which was to proceed onward at a walking pace. Well, every hon. Gentleman who had been in the Service knew that in an enemy's country, and when the enemy was near, horses had to proceed, very often, at other than a walking pace. Sometimes the enemy appeared when a convoy, or a brigade, or simply a troop of cavalry was passing through the country, and it should be taken into consideration by the authorities what was to be done in such a case. The trot was very often sounded, and the cavalry had to respond. In such a case there might be an unfortunate offender attached to the stirrup, probably, of a trooper—what was to become of that offender? Was he to be unleashed and cut off, and left to the mercy of the enemy; or was the whole troop to be halted in order that some provision might be made for him? He would not go into the flowery eloquence that had come from the other side in allusion to Mazeppa, because he did not believe it was proposed to tie the offender to the back of the horse, as he understood Mazeppa was bound. The offender, he presumed, was to walk by the side of the horse. There was another point to which he had alluded, but which allusion on his part had never yet been answered. In the new rules it was said that the offender might be attached to a cart or waggon; and he had asked what steps were to be taken, after a man had been attached to a cart or waggon, to make him proceed after the waggon. No doubt they could tie a man to a waggon, but they could not force him to walk; just as, according to the old saying, one man could take a horse to the water, but 20 could not make him drink. If they had to deal with a rusty and crusty old soldier who did not care to walk, he might throw himself down and take some steps that might prevent his being dragged after the cart, because the medical authority would be brought in immediately some injury was done to the man. If the offender was dragged over a few stones, and received a few scratches, no doubt he would be detached from the waggon and placed inside it. Unfortunately, there were some lingerers and skulkers in the Army, and these might prefer riding in a waggon to being attached to it, and being obliged to proceed at a walking pace behind it. Then, again, with regard to these rules, he was acquainted with the history of the American War, and he could not help thinking that some of them had been copied from the punishments inflicted in the American Army. There was a great outcry during that war against the barbarous customs instituted by the officers. Men were tied to trees, they were tied to waggons, and left there in the burning sun for many hours, and the flies and some horrible descriptions of insects and animals attacked them. He would put it to the House whether the proposed system was not a most barbarous system of punishment? If they would look back, they would remember that certain changes had been made in the regulations for punishing civilians, offenders having been manacled under unfavourable circumstances, and, to some extent, tortured. He believed, and the House would bear him out, that a great cry had been raised about the marching of seven or eight prisoners, manacled together, from a police station to a railway station. Surely, then, if a cry was raised against marching civilians through a town manacled, there was every prospect of a much louder cry being raised against the dragging through a town of soldiers wearing the Queen's uniform, at a cart tail, in chains and fetters. It was not now the civilians, but the soldiers, who were asked to endure this punishment; and he thought those hon. Members who belonged to the Military Profession should stand up for the Service in which they had spent so many years, and raise a cry against allowing soldiers to be subjected to this punishment, which, in his opinion, was far worse than any corporal punishment to which they had had to submit for many years past. He would go further than this. During the past few days—since this matter had been brought before the House—he had had many opportunities of consulting military friends and old brother officers, and many of them had informed him that during the late war—which, unfortunately, we had had to pay for—these new rules could not possibly have been adopted with any advantage. The general officers who had commanded in the campaigns which we had latety passed through were strongly against the rules. He was not, for one moment, going back to the old question of flogging, because there could be no doubt that that punishment had passed away—the House of Commons had decided it before this year—but he would say this, that if discipline was to be maintained in an army in the field it ought not to be left to rules framed by the Secretary of State for War; but the military authorities in the field, should have, to a certain extent, the regulation of the punishments to be inflicted, because, as he had said before, there were many men—the lingerers and skulkers—who would take advantage of the rules unless the officers had power to prevent them. These men would prefer to ride in waggons to marching with their comrades who were honestly doing their duty. When they arrived in camp there could be no doubt that such men would prefer being manacled, and lying down, probably on a heap of straw, whilst the good soldiers who had performed their march turned out for many hours during the night on guard or picket duty in face of the enemy. In the opinion of many military men these rules would be most detrimental to the discipline of the Army in the field. During the late Zulu campaign the soldiers who were prisoners, and who were actually under sentence of imprisonment, were made to march with their rifles and ammunition during the day in order that they might, if occasion required, take their part in fighting for their country, and in defending themselves and their comrades. But now, according to these rules, the man who had disgraced himself, the man who was looked down upon by his comrades, was to be so treated that he was not to carry his rifle, nor ammunition, nor to fight for himself, nor to defend his regiment—he was to be sent walking behind a waggon, or placed comfortably in it, whilst the good and well-behaved soldiers were fighting for him.

Captain PRICE rose to move the adjournment of the debate. He did so to give the Government an opportunity of considering what answer they were going to give to the arguments which had been advanced to-night, because, up to the present moment, he had not heard one single word in answer to those arguments. They had heard nothing about the punishment the Government proposed to inflict upon offending soldiers in such events as the marches which had been referred to—the marches through Ashantee and Zululand—nor had they had a word from Her Majesty's Ministers as to their reason for not scheduling these punishments in the Act. In common honesty, considering what had occurred in the House within the last two years, considering the way the Conservatives had been vilified for the acts which had led to the proposed change, it was due to the House and to the country that the Government should lay before them in the Act exactly what punishments they were going to substitute for flogging. He would suggest another thing, and put it in the form of a question to the Secretary of State for War. Would the right hon. Gentleman follow the precedent set not long ago in the case of the "cat," and place in the Library of the House of Commons, or some other suitable place, a drawing of a British soldier tied to the tail of a cart? He should like, also, to ask whether a British soldier in that position was to be in his uniform? To his mind, the punishment the right hon. Gentleman now proposed was a far more degrading one than that of flogging. He had always been opposed to the latter punishment. He had lifted up his voice against it, and had voted against his own Party long before the political opponents of himself and his Friends had found out a Party advantage was to be gained by raising the flogging question as a cry against the Conservatives. His reason for voting for a considerable modification of that punishment was chiefly on account of the brutality of the punishment; but, in the second place, he was actuated by a sense of the degradation of the system, and hon. Gentlemen opposite mostly took the same line, opposing flogging not so much on account of the pain inflicted on the culprit as of the degradation he endured. But he contended it would be infinitely more degrading to tie a man in his uniform to the tail of a cart and march him through the country, before the public, disgracing him, perhaps, before the very eyes of his own wife and children. Why, in the case of flogging, it was inflicted where the outside public could not see it! On this point he challenged contradiction. The punishment was infinitely more degrading; therefore, he wished to see a sketch or drawing of it placed in some public place, where it could be seen by everyone. Hon. Gentlemen opposite would remember—it was unnecessary for him to remind them—of the manner in which the punishment of the "cat" was paraded all over the country. In every constituency where there was a Conservative candidate during the late Election there was to be seen an illustration or a lying placard posted on the walls; and he could now promise the Ministerial Party that at the next General Election, in every borough and county, there would be seen carts going about with the Liberal colours, having men in soldiers' uniform tied to their tails. ["Oh!"] Hon. Gentlemen might say "Oh!" but this was the way they treated the Conservatives at the last General Election, and, in return, they must expect to be treated in a similar way themselves. He had only one more word to say—for he knew the subject was very distasteful to hon. Gentlemen opposite. He wished to put one more question. He had intended to move an Amendment to the Bill, but had not had an opportunity of doing so, and he would therefore content himself with putting a question to the Secretary of State for War—the matter being one on which the House and the country ought to have certain information. It was this. When this punishment was carried out of tying a soldier to the tail of a cart, would the right hon. Gentleman assure them that such cart should in no case be a water cart or a manure cart?

Mr. GORST said, he rose to second the Motion for the adjournment. He thought he could tell the House an interesting fact which he thought they would like to know, and which threw a good deal of light upon the reticence of Her Majesty's Government throughout this debate. The question raised this evening for the consideration of the House was, whether the House itself ought to prescribe the corporal punishment to be inflicted on the soldier, or whether the House should delegate the duty of legislating upon this particular matter to the Secretary of State? That was not the first time that this question had been under consideration in the House of Commons. It was under discussion in 1879, not quite two years ago. The question then was whether the House should interfere in the details of corporal punishment, or leave them to the Secretary of State, and a number of right hon. Gentlemen now sitting on the Treasury Bench were extremely eager in their endeavour to impress on the House that nothing ought to be left to the discretion of the Secretary of State, but that the House should be responsible for every detail in regard to corporal punishment, and that every minute detail ought to be settled by the House of Commons. At last, the monstrous proposal was made by the hon. and learned Member for Stockport (Mr. Hopwood) that a pattern of the instrument for corporal punishment should be submitted to Parliament. He could not conceive a stronger instance of carrying out the proposition of the noble Lord. The monstrous proposition that Parliament should settle the pattern of the "cat" was carried to a division, and in the division he found the names of Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, who was now President of the Board of Trade; Mr. Leonard Henry Courtney, now Under Secretary of State for the Colonies; Sir Charles W. Dilke, at present the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs; Mr. Osborne Morgan, the present Judge Advocate General; and Mr. G. O. Trevelyan, the Secretary to the Admiralty. Although he saw that many of the ex-Ministers voted against the proposition, he did not find that the right hon. Gentleman the present Secretary of State for War thought it any part of his duty to attend and vote against any such proposal. After this statement, he thought the House would not be astonished at the reticence of Her Majesty's Government.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned." —(*Captain Price.*)

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I do not know whether my hon. Friend will press for an adjournment; but I hope not, because this is a question of the progress of Public Business, and we are all anxious that the Army Discipline Bill should be proceeded with in the regular course, and that there should be no interruption to its passage into law. I am anxious that the Motion of my noble Friend should be submitted to the House; but I would suggest to him that he will get no better opportunity than by doing so at the present time. I have already expressed my opinion that the Motion is one which is entirely justified by the circumstances of the case, and one which we are imperatively called upon to submit to Parliament; but if the choice is between either trusting the Army authorities or of not trusting them and taking the matter into the hands of this House, I should have preferred trusting the Army authorities entirely, subject to the qualifications which we know exist through publicity against the abuse of their power. If that is not to be done, I think the proposal of my hon. Friend is irresistible; but I should be sorry to see the debate adjourned, because I think in that case a false issue will be raised upon the question. The question is one upon which we may fairly divide now; and although I think we ought to have had stronger reasons given for the line which the Government are taking, and although I think the observations of my hon. and learned Friend are observations which may sink deeply into the minds of a great many people both inside this House and outside, I should be sorry if we were to adjourn upon what, in my opinion, is a false issue.

Mr. CHILDERS: I hope the House will adopt the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman. I must, however, repeat that I distinctly stated that I should consult those officers who are most experienced in the matter; but I never heard yet of a proposal to leave discretion in such matters by statute to irresponsible military authorities, rather than to the responsible Secretary of State for War.

Earl PERCY said, he should like, then, to know what was the meaning of the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War, if we were not to trust to the military authorities? The right hon. Gentleman had always opposed any Amendment to this Bill for the express purpose of limiting the discretion of the Army authorities. The argument of his right hon. Friend (Sir Stafford Northcote) was that the House should either trust the military authorities or not; but what the Government was doing was neither one thing nor the other, and he was astonished that after so long a debate it was impossible to make the Government understand the plain issue of the question. Although he quite understood the motive of the right hon. Gentleman (Sir Stafford Northcote) in suggesting that the Motion for adjournment should not be pressed, he thought there was some excuse for it, for he found the Government not only reticent on the subject, but in absolute ignorance of the ground of the opposition. He thought some further time was desirable to enable the Government to consider the question and to understand the opposition. The issue was this. The old system of punishment was to be abolished, and the Government was prepared to put nothing in its place; but, at the same time, the Government was not willing to act upon its own authority, or on the authority of the House. Further time might be useful to the Government, and it was not necessary that this part of the Bill should be passed this year. At the same time, he should be entirely guided by other Members on the question of adjournment; but he hoped the Government would not, on many occasions, so openly and palpably eat their own words and reverse the whole conduct which they pursued when out of Office upon exactly the same issues.

Mr. CHAPLIN did not wish to interfere in a debate on a question of which he had no practical experience; but he felt bound to say that he did not think the Government should be much surprised that a Motion for adjournment was made, because the right hon. Gentleman opposite had entirely ignored many of the questions and arguments put to him, and many of those used by his noble Friend (Earl Percy). The noble Earl had called attention to the new rules, and had pointed out that one of the proposed punishments was to attach a man to a cart, or waggon, or horse; and he mentioned that in the Ashantee War there were neither carts, waggons, nor horses, and, consequently, the rule would be a dead letter. He also called upon the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Childers) to give an answer to his argument and explain, if he was wrong, how he was wrong, and in what manner, under such circumstances, the rule could be enforced. Not one word had been heard in reply to those questions from any hon. Member or right hon. Gentleman on the Treasury Bench. Under those circumstances, and until answers had been given, he thought the hon. and gallant Member who moved the adjournment was within his right, and he should support him.

Viscount EMLYN felt that it was extremely desirable to go to a vote on the main issue; but he could not conceal from himself that the Government had practically declined to enter into the arguments. If he voted for the adjournment, it was not because he did not wish to go to the direct issue and vote on the real issue, but because he wished to enter his protest against the silence of the Government.

Major-General FEILDEN could not understand why officers should not be consulted upon this question; and he felt quite certain that the Army, if polled, would say distinctly that it would be for the benefit of the Service that the lash, under its present restricted conditions, should be maintained. He believed the lash was not only justice but mercy. It was thought the lash destroyed men; but he could say, from his own knowledge, that many a man had been saved from the gallows by the infliction of the lash. He desired to consider the question entirely apart from any Party aspect, and he was sure that Members on both sides of the House were equally anxious that justice should be done to the Army. He believed the constituencies did not really appreciate the main issue of this question. The constituencies naturally wished to do away with corporal punishment; but they did not appreciate the fact that if corporal punishment was done away with the death punishment must be increased. He was sure that if the Government would take the matter into their own hands and allow the responsible officers in the Army to decide the question of applying the lash, the constituencies would be perfectly satisfied. He should not have spoken, but that the increase of the death penalty he considered a serious matter, and he wished the House to consider it. All felt that our soldiers were becoming better every year—their position was better than it was, and their pay was better; but supposing that a war broke out to-morrow, where should we go for additional soldiers? We should have to enlist men of a low type, and what punishment was so likely to keep them in order as corporal punishment? But it was not only the culprit who should be considered; the position of the officers of the Army must also be considered, who, as members of courts martial, would be called upon to vote away the lives of their soldiers. Do away with punishment by the lash by the will of the nation, but give entire power to the officers commanding any force before an enemy in the field; and he was quite certain that any officer in command, if he erred at all, would err on the side of mercy.

Mr. HENEAGE said, the more he listened to the debate the more in a fog he became. He wanted to know whether the proposed punishments were before the House, or whether they were withdrawn, and the House was discussing imaginary punishments which the Secretary of State for War was in future, after consultation with his Colleagues, to lay before the House? He hoped the debate would not be adjourned, and a vote would be taken on the Motion of the noble Viscount opposite. He could not imagine anything more cruel or degrading than these punishments; and it appeared to him that they would very much encourage malingering—and that meant giving double duty to the honest soldiers. Therefore, he could not vote for the punishments under consideration. But what would be the state of the case after the Army Discipline Bill was passed? What were the punishments the commanding officer would then be allowed to give the soldier in the field before the new punishments were decided on if the proposed rules were now withdrawn?

Mr. CHILDERS: I do not assume that the hon. and gallant Member for Devonport (Captain Price) seriously expects me to respond to his inquiry; but my hon. Friend who has just spoken has asked me a very reasonable question, which I will answer as well and as shortly as I can. What I said before I repeat now—that the criticism which was devoted the other day to the rules as laid before the House satisfied me that, whereas the House was in favour, as I thought, of personal restraint and hard labour being the principle of these summary punishments—and my right hon. Friend, who I am sorry to say is not here now, supported me on this point—there was great doubt expressed as to the feasibility and sufficiency of some of the details, such as that a man should be attached to a cart or a horse. What I undertook to do was this. Assuming that the general principle of restraint and hard labour was adopted, I would consult officers most experienced in the matter, and take care, after due deliberation, and after obtaining every advice, to prescribe certain limits within which commanding officers could inflict punishments. That was the view of the House as I understood it the other day; it was certainly the view of my right hon. Friend; and that was the view I proposed to adopt—leaving the clause as it stood with the proviso embodied in the Amendment—namely, that the punishments shall be of the character of personal restraint and hard labour. I thought the House was satisfied the other evening, and therefore I am surprised at the extent to which the opposition has gone now; but I adhere faithfully and strictly to the promise I gave then; and if the House will pass the Bill in the form we propose, the rules shall be laid on the Table of the House before the end of the Session.

Captain PRICE asked if the right hon. Gentleman would cause a diagram to be placed in the Library?

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS said, that when the Bill was presented he was so struck with some of the provisions that he asked the right hon. Gentleman a Question the next day, and the right hon. Gentleman then stated that he had very carefully considered what the punishments were that should be put in place of corporal punishment, and would lay his proposed rules on the Table of the House. He (Sir R. Assheton Cross) gave Notice of his Question, and before the Question could be asked the rules had been laid on the Table of the House; and when, on Monday, he asked the Question, the right hon. Gentleman stated that these were the final rules. [Mr. Childers: I did not say final.] No, not final; but the result of his deliberate judgment. The right hon Gentleman went on to say that what he wanted to point out was that since the right hon. Gentleman took Office he must have known that his opinion was to abolish corporal punishment. After the action they took last year, everyone knew that the present Government came into Office with a determination that this flogging should be abolished. Therefore, he assumed that they took the advice of all the military counsel they could get as to what punishment should be put in place of flogging. They had had 12 months to consider it; and after consulting with their military advisers, they had at last put the rules on the Table. They had not been there a week before the House would have nothing to do with them. They would not have them; and the Secretary of State for War now said—"Oh, these are not the rules to be put in force; but, on further consideration, we propose further rules." But that was precisely the point they objected to. What they said was, if they were going to abolish flogging they were bound to state to the House, before they substituted another punishment, some limits as to what that punishment was to be. After 12 months these rules had been solemnly and deliberately placed on the Table by the Secretary of State for War, and a week after their production they were withdrawn as unfit to take the place of corporal punishment. [Mr. Childers: Not withdrawn.] Not withdrawn; but when they were brought in the House would not have them, and if they were not withdrawn they were to be withdrawn. The right hon. Gentleman went on to say that they would have to substitute fresh rules; and whatever the Judge Advocate General might suggest to the contrary, he would have to re-consult his Military Advisers. That was tantamount to a withdrawal of these rules. The Government ought to place before the House in the Bill some limits of the punishment. He quite agreed with the Government that it would be a great pity that this debate should be adjourned, and he could not support the Motion for adjournment; but he was bound to say that the Government had brought themselves into this great difficulty, and that they had themselves to thank for it all. He thought his noble Friend was justified in moving the Amendment which he had brought before the House—namely, that they should have this matter placed beyond dispute in terms in the Act of Parliament, or they did not know what their soldiers might be subject to.

Mr. HOPWOOD said, that many speeches had been made on the other side of the House; but not one of them had condemned flogging. A good many said that was not the question now; but not one of the hon. Gentlemen opposite had suggested any minor punishment to take the place of flogging. The real fact was that flogging was still contended for; flogging was still in favour on those Benches. [Earl Percy: Hear!] The noble Earl favoured it; and even the hon. and learned Member for Chatham had shown himself as somewhat favourable to it. [Mr. Gorst: I never said anything of the kind.] He expected the flattest contradiction from his hon. and learned Friend; but all he said was that his hon. and learned Friend had shown himself somewhat favourable to flogging, and he would point out how. He had appeared to ask the House to express its opinion that the famous implement which had been so celebrated was a sort of thing that was to be left to anybody's hands to use; for he had called attention, if not with disapproval, at all events, without approval, to the Motion he (Mr. Hopwood) had made. When they proposed that the "cat" should be exhibited, he certainly implied that that was a matter which should not be indulged in, and that those who voted for it did very wrong. Now, if the Opposition was in favour of the "cat," let it say so. He could see three or four right hon. Gentlemen on the Bench opposite who had been tested over and over again on the subject of abolishing the "cat." What did they intend to propose in substitution for it? Could they deny that they were prepared themselves for its total abolition, but for the rather impetuous intervention of an hon. and gallant Gentleman in that House, who called a meeting of the Tory Party, and gilded its name with eternal fame, for a gallant stand at the last in favour of the "cat?" What were they upon now? ["Hear, hear!"] He was going to answer that question himself, if hon. Gentlemen would allow him. They were upon the substitution of other punishments for the "cat," and some of them did not like the punishments which were to be substituted. But had hon. Gentlemen opposite suggested anything which should meet the difficulty? It was very difficult to suggest anything better. He would ask anybody to consider the matter from that point of view. Hon. Gentlemen, most recklessly, he thought, referred to the doings of the Continental Armies and of the American Armies. But the subject had been well discussed and threshed out in the last Parliament; and he himself produced the testimony from a gallant General in the American Army, who testified that it was possible to carry on the American Army with perfect discipline and yet abolish the "cat"—that it had been abolished for 20 years past, since 1860. If that could be done in America; if it could be done in France, as it had been for the last 80 or 90 years, why, then, the pertinacious struggle to maintain it in the English Army? It was said we fought under different circumstances. That was not the fact in all respects. He supposed it would be admitted that the French troops had fought in Algiers, and that there were recesses, fastnesses, and deserts in Algeria where it would be as necessary to provide punishments as in South Africa. What did hon.

Gentlemen opposite wish the use of the "cat" for? Was it to make soldiers more competent or efficient on the line of march? He supposed some of them must be halted in order to inflict the punishment. Would that conduce to expedition? And when it was done, were the men expected to march all the better for having received the lashes which humanity chose to inflict upon them? He should certainly support the Motion.

Mr. LEWIS said, the hon. and learned Gentleman who had just spoken had carefully avoided the question. He, no doubt, was not in love with the cat; but what did he think of the new rules—

> "Si quid novisti rectius istis
> Caudidus imperiti si non his utere mecum."

Was that the position of the hon. and learned Gentleman? Was it not that he was asking them, after all, to go in for these inflictions which they had heard characterized in various ways from different sides of the House? He took a different position. He thought the Secretary of State for War was a very heroic person. What was the object of the Government in the matter in withdrawing the decision from the House? Was it not to prevent their candidates at a General Election being treated as they—the Conservatives—had been treated? Why did they not introduce the punishments in the Bill? Because they wanted to avoid tacking their supporters to the tail of the punishments. The real issue placed before them was that, for purposes which he would not designate in the last Parliament, the Government identified themselves with the great question of destroying the punishment of the lash in the Army and Navy. Now, they had been driven as practical men to the consideration and elucidation of the question as to what punishments were to be substituted for it. They had found that, to deal with the matter properly, they had had to resort to punishments which were more degrading and more brutal and equally disgraceful to the soldier and the sailor as the cat for which it was proposed to substitute them. The Government would not put the thing honestly in the Bill. They had endeavoured to shelter themselves and to support the alterations in the law by looking only at one aspect of the case instead of the whole. They were now asked to lay aside, for a time, the substitutions for the lash which were placed deliberately on the Table by the Secretary of State for War; and they were asked to draw the curtain before the whole policy of the War Office, and thus enable them to mystify the question of responsibility as well as the amount and nature of the punishment to be inflicted. All they said on that side of the House was—"Be honest!" Why, the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department was himself mixed up in exhibitions, for Party purposes, in the streets of Oxford, which he would not say were discreditable, but which were of the most extreme character. When they found the Members of the Government going down to the country, and making the abolition of the lash an "electioneering dodge," they had a right to be severe when they found the Government treating the matter as they did now. What was the present aspect of the matter? They could not obtain from the Secretary of State for War any definite statement as to what was to be the punishment proposed instead of the lash. Suggestions had been made of various kinds, and hon. Members had said they did not think his hon. Friend behind him could be in earnest when he asked whether it was to be a water-cart or a manure-cart that the soldier was to be tied to. But any form of words was justifiable in pressing such a question. Was that to be proclaimed before the British public as the proposal of the Government at the present time? They were, in his opinion, not pressing the Government too far in asking for this; and, having abstained from anything like obstruction, he thought they had a right to demand that the Government should show themselves to be sincere and earnest upon this point by putting into the Bill some words which would show the conclusion at which they had arrived.

Mr. GLADSTONE said, he would endeavour not to be betrayed by the warmth of the present discussion into an imitation of the tone of the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down. The hon. Member had described the proceedings and declarations of Gentlemen sitting on that side of the House and who constituted the majority for the House, on the subject of the abolition of flogging, as electioneering dodges. Could that tone and strain of language be considered as decent and becoming when applied to hon. Gentlemen? A large portion of the House had expressed their opinion as to the best mode of arriving at a conclusion; and the hon. Gentleman had attempted in the manner he had described to set right all that was going wrong in the proposals of the Government. What said the hon. Member? He said that the issue which had been carefully evaded upon that side of the House was whether the abolition of the lash would not entail the substitution of punishments yet more degrading; and the hon. Member, who always took great credit for his high-mindedness, then took refuge behind a Motion which did not in the slightest degree express that issue. He thought the proper course for the hon. Member, with all his manliness and all his courage, would have been to move a Motion stating that issue in plain terms, and inviting the House to declare that the abolition of the lash could not be effected without the substitution of punishments more degrading, and that, therefore, the lash ought not to be abolished. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for North Lancashire (Colonel Stanley) had very fairly raised that issue, and distinctly stated that the abolition of the lash was bad, and that the lash ought to be retained. He respected the right hon. and gallant Gentleman for the manner in which he had stated his opinion, which, he must say, stood in rather strong contrast to the manner in which the issue had been evaded by hon. Gentlemen opposite. Therefore, he asked hon. Gentlemen opposite, was this the time, or was it not, for reinstating the lash? That was the real issue, because it had been said by the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis) that the abolition of the lash must be followed by much more degrading punishments. If that was the opinion entertained on the opposite side of the House, why was not that opinion manfully declared, and why was not the judgment of the House taken upon that opinion? He thought he had indicated the real object of hon. Gentlemen opposite—namely, to procure the reinstatement of the lash. The immediate issue before the House was this. His right hon. Friend had laid upon the Table of the House a Paper which was a compendium of certain rules with regard to summary punishments. There were three rules, and the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for North Lancashire had accepted two of them, approving, at the same time, the principle of the third. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman suggested that it would be better not to enter into the details set forth in those rules, but to express in general terms guiding lines for the future action of the Secretary of State for War in respect of the punishment which he on his responsibility declared to be necessary. That suggestion was accepted by his right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for War, who was now sharply challenged for having done so. He affirmed that the Motion of his right hon. Friend was founded upon that suggestion, which had met with the general acceptance of the House. There was no doubt that the proposal now made was to reverse the decision at which the House had arrived, that the punishment should be regulated by rules to be made, from time to time, by one of Her Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State; and his right hon. Friend proposed to limit the discretion of the Secretary of State for War in the manner in which the late Secretary of State for War suggested. The difficulties which his right hon. Friend had to contend with had arisen from his desire, which he always evinced, to consult the feeling of the House. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition said—"You must, in this matter, do one of two things—either to trust to the discretion of the military authorities, or else set out in the Act each and all of the punishments you will allow to be inflicted." But why was only one of those alternatives to be adopted? There was a third, and that was not to leave the matter to be dealt with by the military authorities as they might think fit, and not to enter into the difficult course of prescribing in that House in the rigid letter of the law the detail of every punishment, but to proceed on that principle constantly adopted in the arrangements of Government, and to say—"We will indicate in our law guiding principles, and, having indicated them, we will leave the responsible Minister of the day to act upon them, and when he acts upon them wrongly we will call him to account." The House should, of course, be made aware that what his right hon. Friend might do was perfectly right. It was suggested that he should lay on the Table such rules as he proposed, and that was inserted at the suggestion of hon. Gentlemen opposite. He submitted that, instead of the declaration of the hon. Member who had just sat down with respect to evading the issue, instead of the temperate recommendation of the Leader of the Opposition, they should adopt the reasonable and judicious plans embodied in the Bill, which specified the two important conditions—personal restraint and hard labour.

VISCOUNT EMLYN wished to explain that when he withdrew his Motion on a former occasion he distinctly stated that he reserved to himself the right to raise this question on the Report of the Bill, if he was not satisfied with the wording to be introduced.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Original Question put, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill."

The House *divided:*—Ayes 130; Noes 63: Majority 67.—(Div. List, No. 179.)

Amendment made.

Amendment proposed,

In page 3, line 27, after the word "punishment," to insert the words "shall be of the character of personal restraint or of hard labour, but."—(*Mr. Secretary Childers.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

SIR HENRY FLETCHER asked what the "character of personal restraint" meant?

MR. CHILDERS said, he thought he had explained that clearly enough. Personal restraint meant preventing a man from making the ordinary use of his hands or feet.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, that a great deal of political capital had been made by hon. Members opposite out of the punishment of the lash; but was the new punishment proposed by the Government of tying soldiers to the tail of a horse or a cart much more inhuman? Under the powers the Government were now reserving to themselves it would be perfectly possible to inflict torture.

MR. CHILDERS said, the punishment to be provided could not be torture under the words of the clause forbidding injury or danger to life or limb.

MR. CHAPLIN said, no answer had yet been given to the objection of his noble Friend, who had pointed out that it would be impossible for this punishment to apply in the event of a war such as that which had taken place in Abyssinia. They would be obliged to give the Government a further opportunity of considering the matter unless a satisfactory answer were given.

MR. CHILDERS said, he had explained that he did not mean to commit himself to the exact rules which had been suggested. He would consult those who had had experience of active service, especially in the campaigns to which reference had been made; and, whilst abiding by the words of the clause as to "personal restraint," he should decide as to details when he had before him the advice of those to whom he was about to submit the case.

MR. CHAPLIN: Am I to understand that the right hon. Gentleman does not know what punishments will be inflicted?

MR. CHILDERS: I have stated that the punishments will be in the nature of personal restraint or of hard labour. As to the details, I shall consult experienced officers before I finally decide.

CAPTAIN PRICE thought they ought to have some clear definition of what the words "personal restraint" meant. It might mean a great deal. The other day he had put a Question to the Attorney General as to the punishment of the pillory. That punishment had been strictly in the nature of personal restraint, the offender being fastened to a post and having rotten eggs thrown at him, just as candidates at an election had rotten eggs thrown at them. People who were condemned to the pillory used to have their hands and legs tied to a post; and he had asked the hon. and learned Gentleman whether it was not the fact that, by an Act passed during the first year of the reign of Queen Victoria, that punishment was abolished? But, if he read the present Bill aright, there was nothing to prevent a soldier from being "restrained" as people used to be restrained at the pillory. Were they to have the pillory revived? He hoped that the people of

England would understand, when they read their newspapers to-morrow, that the Government wished to revive the punishment of the pillory. He should like to hear some statement from the Government on this matter. Then there was another point. These punishments in the Bill were only to last a year; and if, at the end of that time, it was found that they were not sufficiently severe, discipline might be enforced by even stronger measures. There was a rumour going about—he did not know whether it was true—that when the Secretary of State for War was considering these punishments, the thumb-screw was brought under his consideration. It was to be hoped the right hon. Gentleman would be able to deny that. Was it the fact that the thumb-screw had been suggested?

Mr. CHILDERS said, he had no right to speak again; but he was sure the House would grant him liberty to say that no torture had ever been proposed to him or considered by him for a moment—such as the thumb-screw, or pillory, or anything of that kind. He would pledge himself most solemnly that no such tortures should be practised.

Viscount FOLKESTONE said, the Government had not made up their minds what the character of the punishment was to be; therefore, at that late hour, to give them an opportunity of considering the matter, he would move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned." —(*Viscount Folkestone.*)

Mr. WARTON said, the House had heard from the Judge Advocate General the other evening that he had consulted the highest military authorities on this question; and, when he was reminded that the Commander-in-Chief and the Adjutant General were the highest military authorities, the Secretary of State for War had explained his words away, and stated that they had not been consulted. The Secretary of State for War had said he would consult the military authorities with a view to following their advice; but it would seem that he had a habit of consulting them, and then not following their advice. The House was told by the right hon. Gentleman, when he brought forward these extraordinary punishments, that, if they would trust him for only a year, he would give an assurance that no alterations would be made. But they were gone in a week. Drunkenness was the great crime in the Army, and he suggested the introduction among the punishments for soldiers of what used to be called the "Drunkard's Cloak."

Mr. CHILDERS: I trust the House will not consent to the adjournment of the debate, for it is absolutely necessary that the Bill should pass this House to-night, in order that it may pass both Houses before Easter. Unless it passes to-night, there will be very great inconvenience in connection with the adjournment of both Houses of Parliament for the Easter Recess. After so strong a division and so decisive a majority as there was a short time ago, I trust the House will allow the Bill to pass.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 20; Noes 100: Majority 80.—(Div. List, No. 180.)

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR stated that he had voted by mistake in the wrong Lobby, and added that he had no sympathy with the Conservative Obstructives.

Captain PRICE rose to move to insert words providing that the punishment inflicted on a soldier should not be of a character to degrade the British uniform. The House, he said, were taking care that there should be no injury to life or limb, and that none of the punishments should be in the nature of torture; but he wished to go a little further. Looking back over the last two or three years to the discussions in that House, and the great stress laid upon the degrading nature of flogging, he thought it right that any punishment substituted for flogging should not in itself be degrading to the men or to the British uniform. If a soldier were tied to a cart in his uniform, and so marched through a country, that would be highly degrading. It would impress every civilized person who saw a soldier so tied up with a feeling of horror and detestation, and he thought nothing would act more as a deterrent to enlistment in the Army than such a punishment. He hoped the Secretary of State for War would assent to the Amendment.

Amendment proposed,

In page 3, line 28, after the word "limb," to insert the words "shall not in its character be degrading to the British uniform."—(*Captain Price.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. CHILDERS: I sympathize with the object of the hon. and gallant Member, and it would be our object to see that the punishment should not be in one sense "degrading;" but it would be absurd to use the word when the punishments have, in many cases, to be inflicted for degrading offences. Considering the meanings that might be attached to the Amendment, I certainly hope the House will not agree to it.

Question put, and *negatived*.

Clause 6 (Abolition of Corporal Punishment).

Amendment proposed,

In page 4, line 39, at end, to add "without prejudice to anything done or suffered in pursuance of the said section, and the finding and sentence of any such Court held before the commencement of this Act may be confirmed and carried into effect after such commencement."—(*Mr. Secretary Childers.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT observed, that the House had been discussing these punishments during the whole evening; and yet he believed that scarcely a Member, especially below the Gangway, had realized what sort of punishments might be inflicted. The important consideration was the great responsibility to be placed on the Secretary of State for War; and he wished solemnly to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he thought that what he had put into the Bill would enable a commanding officer, in the face of the enemy, to deal with those disgraceful scenes which, he was sorry to say, sometimes took place, and whether he believed that discipline could be maintained, without which our Army would most certainly be disgraced?

Mr. CHILDERS: I believe that the punishments as proposed will maintain the discipline of the Army.

Captain PRICE asked if that was the opinion of the Military Advisers of the right hon. Gentleman?

Mr. CHILDERS: I will repeat what I said the other day, quoting from the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon on the Army Discipline Bill in 1879. He said distinctly that the Government had consulted their Military Advisers on the question; but that the proposals made to Parliament were made on the responsibility of the Ministers, not of their Advisers, and beyond that no Minister ought to go.

Sir HENRY FLETCHER reminded the House that the proposed rules would not come into force till December, 1881, in India and Africa, and that among the troops in those countries corporal punishment would remain in force until that date.

Mr. CHILDERS: That is so, no doubt.

Sir HENRY FLETCHER further observed, that some of our troops were shut up in the Transvaal, and might not be relieved until the end of the year; and he wished to clearly understand whether corporal punishment would be in force till then?

Mr. CHILDERS: That must be so.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Mr. CHILDERS: I have now to appeal to the House on a matter upon which I hope, after the division we have had, the appeal will not be considered unreasonable. It is absolutely necessary, in order that the Bill may become law in time, that it should be read a third time to-night, so that it may be sent to the House of Lords and passed through the various stages in that House before Easter. I make that appeal, feeling sure that it will be assented to.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read the third time."—(*Mr. Secretary Childers.*)

Earl PERCY said, he was quite aware that the Bill must be passed by a certain date, and that otherwise the Government might be in a dilemma; but it appeared to him to be the deliberate intention of the Government to run everything to the end, and then to resort to this extraordinary means of passing them through the House. After all necessity for urgency was over, they had passed several Bills, when they might perfectly well have taken up the Army Discipline Bill, which was of much greater importance, and got it through its early stages.

Mr. CHILDERS: That is not so. We brought in the Bill on the first day on which it could be introduced. The Report would have been taken on Friday; but, at the request of Gentlemen opposite, I postponed it until to-day, but stated that if I did so it would be necessary to take the third reading to-night.

Mr. GORST thought it was probably true that there had been no delay in regard to this particular Bill; but he considered that the remarks of his noble Friend (Earl Percy) were quite justified by the conduct of the Government generally. He hoped that if the right hon. Gentleman's appeal was agreed to, he would not take advantage of that and always carry on the Business in such a manner, and so drive the House into a corner.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT complained of misrepresentations—which were, no doubt, accidental and not intentional—on the part of hon. Members on the other side of the House, as to the views of hon. Members who opposed the Bill. It had been said that they were opposing the Bill because they were in favour of punishment by the lash; but that was a misdescription. They realized that the alternatives were shooting—which was death; or the still more degrading punishment of being tied to a cart or a horse. They distinctly asked the Government to state in the Schedule to the Bill what punishments they proposed to substitute for the lash. This the Government had not had the courage to do. They had had the matter under consideration for 12 months; they had, after all this deliberation, made the proposition of the cart tail, and then given it up this evening in a perfect panic. Hon. Members were perfectly justified in asking the Government to distinctly state what punishments they proposed; and he thought the Government had shown a singular deficiency in courage.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read the third time, and *passed.*

CONVEYANCING AND LAW OF PROPERTY BILL—[*Lords.*]—[Bill 101.]

(*Mr. H. H. Fowler.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. H. H. FOWLER, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, it was a Bill of a purely technical character. It was prepared by the late Lord Chancellor (Earl Cairns), assisted by eminent conveyancers of Lincoln's Inn, and it had the approval of the Incorporated Law Society. The details of the Bill related to the forms of conveyancing, and would sweep away the redundancy of the present forms and abolish the large expenses connected with them. It appeared to him—and he believed it was also the opinion of the Law Officers of the Crown—that the Bill ought to go to a Select Committee; and, therefore, he should simply content himself with moving that the Bill be read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. H. H. Fowler.*)

Mr. GORST said, he must appeal to the hon. Gentleman not to proceed with his Bill at that hour of the night. He was told by the hon. and learned Member for Preston (Sir John Holker) that it was not the intention to push the Bill through that night. It was a Bill which embodied a great many serious principles, and certainly ought to be discussed before it was passed. It interfered with freedom of contract, and certainly ought not to pass the House of Commons, at half-past 2 in the morning, without discussion. He moved the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Gorst.*)

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, the Bill was one of three Bills which were formulated by Lord Cairns last year before the change of Government; and probably, if that change had not taken place, they would have become law by this time. He believed it was understood, almost as a matter of courtesy to the late Lord Chancellor, that the House should read the Bills a second time; and if it was thought that the House had treated the Bills with discourtesy, he hoped it would be marked that the hon. and learned Member for Chatham, and other Members on his side of the House, would not allow the Bill to be read a second time.

Mr. H. H. FOWLER said, if the hon. and learned Member opposite had looked at the printed Paper he would have seen that he (Mr. H. H. Fowler) was down to move the second reading of the Bill. Earl Cairns did him the honour of placing the Bill in his hands; and, therefore, he thought the hon. and learned Member had made some mistake in speaking as if the Bill was introduced by the hon. and learned Member for Preston. He hoped the House would allow the Bill to be read a second time.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* to a Select Committee.

MARRIED WOMEN'S PROPERTY (SCOTLAND) (*re-committed*) BILL.

(*Mr. Anderson, Mr. Duncan M'Laren, Sir David Wedderburn.*)

[BILL 128.] COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, the Bill was of great importance, and involved a considerable change in the law, and he did not think they ought to take it at that hour of the night. He did not wish to oppose it; but he would appeal to the hon. Member for Glasgow (Mr. Anderson) whether, having taken the one stage in the Bill, Progress should not be reported?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. M'LAREN) said, he could not assent to the proposition of the learned Attorney General. The Committee were only divided upon some minor matters, and ultimately came to an almost unanimous decision. No Amendments had been given Notice of, and he thought they should make some progress with the useful and practical measure before them.

MR. GORST moved to report Progress.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again." — (*Mr. Gorst.*)

MR. ANDERSON said, he was entirely in the hands of the Committee in that matter. He believed there were no further Amendments to the Bill. It was very carefully gone through by the Committee, and, in some respects, altered.

He had been willing to receive Amendments, and had let the Bill go through the Committee without pressing any Amendments of his own. He was, however, in the hands of the Committee; and, unless the Lord Advocate had strong reasons to press it through, he was disposed to assent to Progress being reported.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. M'LAREN) said, if there were to be Amendments, he should at once agree to the proposition. He had understood from the Notice Paper that there were none.

MR. H. DAVEY said, he took the first opportunity that evening of putting an Amendment on the Notice Paper, which had not got on the printed Papers. He thought no one could read the 1st clause without seeing that the Bill involved serious propositions of law, and would involve also a conflict of jurisdiction between English and Scotch laws. They could not discuss it at that hour of the night.

Motion *agreed to.*

Committee report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow.*

MOTIONS.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (BATH, &c.) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. HIBBERT, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to the City and Borough of Bath, the Local Government District of Bowness, the Improvement Act District of Cambridge, the Borough of Derby, the Port of Hartlepool, and the Local Government District of Wigton, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. HIBBERT and Mr. DODSON.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 131.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (HIGHWAYS) PROVISIONAL ORDER (YORK) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. HIBBERT, Bill to confirm a Provisional Order of the Local Government Board under "The Highways and Locomotives (Amendment) Act, 1878," relating to the East Riding of the County of York, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. HIBBERT and Mr. DODSON.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 132.]

WHITEBOY ACTS REPEAL BILL.

On Motion of Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR, Bill to repeal the fifteenth and sixteenth George the Third, chapter twenty-one; twenty-seventh George the Third, chapter fifteen; fortieth

George the Third, chapter ninety-six, section four; fiftieth George the Third, chapter one hundred and two; first and second William the Fourth, chapter forty-four; and, fifth and sixth Victoria, chapter twenty-eight, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Justin M'Carthy, Mr. Gray, and Mr. A. M. Sullivan.

TURNPIKE ACTS CONTINUANCE ACT, 1880-81.

Select Committee *appointed,* "to inquire into the Fifth and Sixth Schedules of 'The Annual Turnpike Acts Continuance Act, 1880."—(*Mr. Hibbert.*)

And, on April 7, Committee *nominated* as follows: — Lord Edward Cavendish, Mr. Wentworth Beaumont, Mr. Beach, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice, Sir William Welby-Gregory, Mr. Wilbraham Egerton, and Mr. Hibbert:—Three to be the quorum.

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power to inquire and report to the House under what conditions, with reference to the rate of interest, expenses of management, maintenance of road, payment of debt, and term of years, or other special arrangements, the Acts of the Trusts mentioned should be continued.

Ordered, That all Petitions relating to the continuance or discontinuance of Turnpike Trusts be referred to the Committee.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.—(*Mr. Hibbert.*)

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members not being present,

House adjourned at a quarter before Three o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 5th April, 1881.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*First Reading*—Charitable Trusts Act Amendment* (59); Stolen Goods* (60); Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual) (61); Regulation Provisional Order (Beamsley Moor)* (62); Regulation Provisional Order (Langbar Moor)* (63).

Second Reading—Sea Fisheries (Clam and Bait Beds) (53).

LORD CHAMBERLAIN'S DEPARTMENT —EGRESS FROM THEATRES (METROPOLIS).—QUESTION.

The Duke of ST. ALBANS said, he wished to ask the Lord Chamberlain a Question, of which he had given him private Notice. Very alarming accounts had of late appeared in the newspapers with regard to the means of egress from the London theatres and other places of amusement. Would the Lord Chamberlain state whether those assertions were correct?

The Earl of KENMARE said, he was much obliged to the noble Duke for having called attention to the subject. The statements he had seen were much exaggerated. There must always be considerable danger when any large numbers of persons were congregated together within a building; but the London theatres were better provided with the means of escape than most other public buildings, and he was glad to say were being constantly improved. Perhaps the best answer which he could give to his noble Friend would be to lay on the Table a Return showing the actual state of things at the present time with regard to the exits from the theatres licensed by him.

ARMY DISCIPLINE AND REGULATION (ANNUAL) BILL.

FIRST READING.

The Earl of MORLEY, in moving that the Bill be now read the first time, said, he proposed that their Lordships should sit to-morrow, at 11 o'clock, for the purpose of reading the Bill a second time. Their Lordships could go into Committee on the Bill on Thursday, and the discussion might be taken on going into Committee on that day. If that course were agreed to, he would move the third reading of the Bill on Friday.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 1^{a}; to be *printed.* (No. 61.)

SEA FISHERIES (CLAM AND BAIT BEDS) BILL.—(No. 53.)

(*The Lord Sudeley.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

Lord SUDELEY, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that it was intended to enable the Board of Trade to give protection to clam and bait beds in the same manner as to oyster and mussel beds under the Sea Fisheries Act of 1868. It had been found, especially in Scotland, that the fishermen on the coast constantly discovered that the banks on which they relied to find their clams and baits had been trawled over and spoilt, so that their means of livelihood were liable to be suddenly put an end to. This had of late years much increased, in consequence of the use of steam trawlers. Of course, there was always considerable contention going on between the rival classes of fishermen; and the Board of Trade, though they had no desire to interfere to protect one industry more than another, thought it important that the hook-and-line fishermen should have their baits protected under certain conditions from beam trawls, as oyster beds now were. The Bill did not apply to Ireland, where there were already more extensive powers, and it was proposed in Committee to omit the Channel Islands.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Sudeley.*)

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2ª accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Thursday* next.

ARMY ORGANIZATION—THE NEW SCHEME.—OBSERVATIONS.

Lord ABINGER, in rising to call the attention of the House to the scheme of Army Organization submitted to Parliament by the Secretary of State for War, together with the various Reports and Papers now on the Table of the House referred to in the said scheme, said, that the Papers which had been laid on the Table and were contained in the Blue Book had evidently been compiled with much care and labour. Many most competent witnesses had been examined before the Commission appointed to inquire into the question; and, though the Commission had not come unanimously to their conclusions, the House had sufficient means of forming a correct opinion. The first, and perhaps the most important, question was the length of service—a matter with respect to which it was to be feared that we might run from one extreme to the other, and that we might sacrifice, to some extent, the strength of our fighting line, in order to form a strong Reserve Force. On this point there was an undeniable difference of opinion. One gallant officer had announced himself in *The Nineteenth Century* an uncompromising advocate of short service; while, on the other hand, another gallant officer, now on his way home from the Cape, had drawn exactly opposite conclusions from his experience in Afghanistan, and had said that without seasoned soldiers his march from Cabul to Candahar would have been impossible. If, as Sir Frederick Roberts said, troops were not fit for active service in India until they had been three years in the country, a large number of our men would at once have to be struck off the rolls of the effective Army. For himself, he concurred with Sir Frederick Roberts and the Report of the Commission of which his noble Friend (Lord Airey) had been the Chairman, and thought that several reasons existed for reverting, to some extent, to the long service system. The Commission proposed that the period should be from six to eight years with the Colours and six years with the Reserve, that recruits should be enlisted as recruits for six months to test their fitness for military service, and that a certain proportion of the men should be allowed to serve for 21 years. It was necessary to pay special attention to two questions—first, whether the scheme would injuriously affect recruiting; and, secondly, how far the new plan would interfere with the Reserves. These were important considerations; but he believed that the plan would work well in both cases. Another very serious matter, in which he could not approve the action of the Government, was the proposal to reduce the number of officers by about 480. It seemed to him that the officers had not hitherto been excessively numerous, and that the intended reduction was for various reasons ill-advised. An officer had more work to do now than was formerly the case, for the men were younger and demanded more supervision, and the old and valuable class of experienced non-commissioned officers was fast disappearing. Then, again, as was shown by the evidence of Sir Thomas Steele, an officer for the first two years of his service spent a great part of his time not in purely regimental duty, but in his own professional education. In short, there were many cogent arguments against reducing the number of officers. The attenuated condition of the Home Establishments was also a blot on the system; and while he considered the system of double regiments better than that of linked battalions, he thought that a still better system might be devised. As to the majors, dealt with in the scheme of the Government, he wished to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether they were to be what was called "walking majors," or whether they were really to be fighting majors? The difference between the two was very great, for the walking major was merely a captain, called a major, but doing the company work of a captain; whereas a fighting major was disconnected from the companies, and did the work of a field officer. He regretted that a system of vaccination was not to be adopted as a check on desertion, and he still held the views which on previous occasions he had expressed in their Lordships' House on the use of the lash. Its retention was necessary, not so much that it would often have to be resorted to, as that the mere possibility that it might be would have a salutary influence on soldiers who would not be deterred from the commission of offence by the fear of any other punishment that would be substituted. No one unacquainted with war could conceive its savagery, or the fierce and turbulent spirit which it bred in the soldier; and he was of opinion that, under some special circumstances, it was hardly possible to do without the terror which the lash excited. In the late American War, General Scott determined to resort to it, instead of inflicting death for certain offences, with the result that the risk of flogging proved a more effectual deterrent than the liability to the punishment of death with the reluctance of the authorities to inflict it.

Lord STRATHEDEN and CAMPBELL desired to refer to a few passages in the Report of Lord Airey's Committee bearing upon a question which he had submitted to the House two years ago—namely, the unfortunate or inconvenient limitation to which the Militia was by law exposed as regarded the Colonial service, for which it might be otherwise available. The passages seemed to give a striking confirmation to the opinion advanced by himself and others that the Militia ought, if possible, to be rendered more elastic and more available for the service of the country than at present. The passages stated nothing new as to fact, but indicated an opinion that such a state of things required consideration. On the whole, he said that the Committee had entered an authoritative protest against a system which locked up in the United Kingdom so large an Auxiliary Force, while the numbers of Regulars available were not larger than they were in the times of the Duke of Wellington or the Duke of Marlborough, in spite of the immense development of the country which had since occurred.

The Earl of POWIS said, that he must apologize for presuming to speak so early on such a subject as that under discussion in the presence of so many illustrious military officers and others; but, as a Welshman, he must protest against depriving the Welsh Fusiliers of that ancient title, and degrading them from a national to a semi-provincial title. The Fusiliers were the senior regiment, they had seen more service, they had 19 names on their Colours, while the 41st had only 11; and surely, in these circumstances, the national and senior regiment should retain its pre-eminence. An English regiment was to be sent into Wales and called the South Wales Regiment, and yet the Welsh Fusiliers were to lose quite unnecessarily a much older territorial distinction. Of the nine Indian regiments whose distinctive titles were to be abolished, three had fought at Plassey; and, while two of them were to be amalgamated, five were to be dispersed through the rest of the Army. One regiment of the Bengal Fusiliers who fought at Plassey were to be joined with the Royal Irish, and another with the Connaught Rangers; and one of the invented titles was the West Munster, which nobody had ever heard of before as a territorial distinction, and which would, he thought, be too easily confused with "Westminster," so that people would be in doubt whether it was to be composed of wild Irishmen or Metropolitan cockneys. Those who formerly administered the Army were not content with placing Plassey on the colours of regiments who fought there; but they gave the 39th the almost unique distinction of bearing the motto "*Primus in Indis.*" There were only two other instances in which corresponding distinctions had been conferred upon our regiments—for the siege of Namur and the gallant defence of Gibraltar. It might have been supposed that the Provinces of Madras, Bengal, and Bombay would have furnished territorial designations of sufficient importance for the Indian regiments, and that episodes in our military history might still have been associated with the regiments who took part in them; but, so far from that being done, the 39th not only lost its name, but it was to be joined with, and confer its motto upon, a regiment that had never fired a shot in Hindostan. He wished to call attention to the position of the officers of the Indian Artillery and Engineers, who, after the Mutiny, were affiliated with the English Army, and had a Parliamentary guarantee that they were not to suffer by the amalgamation. He would also ask whether colonels on the Indian list would participate in the retirement scheme? A point demanding attention was the position of colonels of the Line under the new Warrant. There would be the two classes of purchase and non-purchase colonels; and the former would have paid to the country £4,500 on the faith that they would succeed in turn to the honorary distinction of commander of a regiment, and also to the capacity for employment. There was nothing that was definite as to their position; and it was feared that when the scheme was interpreted at the Treasury, skill would be displayed in minimizing its effect, as, under Commercial Treaties, countries were placed on the footing of the least favoured nations. If that would be the case, these officers were entitled to have the £4,500 returned to them, or have the special retirement of £600 offered to them as well as the Artillery. Referring to the new rules regulating the retirement of general officers, he asked whether it was not a fact that under these rules neither Lord Hill nor Lord Hardinge could have occupied the position of Commander-in-Chief. As this system was one which would have deprived the country of the services of such eminent Generals as those whom he had mentioned, he held that the burden of proving its necessity must be borne by the Secretary of State for War, and that the *onus probandi* ought not to be shifted on to those who objected to the new proposals. After pointing out that in the Navy flag officers were not compelled to retire until after non-employment for 10 years, and that only half that period would be allowed in the case of generals, he illustrated the evils of the new system of compulsory retirement by reference to Sir Henry Havelock-Allan's resignation of his seat in the other House. That officer would have had to retire from the Army if he had not determined to serve immediately. The result was that he had been compelled to leave the House of Commons, where it was of the greatest importance that there should be Members qualified to speak about the feelings and wants of regimental officers. Turning to another subject, he argued that the new system of maintaining one battalion at home and one abroad left no margin for emergencies. He would only add, in conclusion, that, in his opinion, the Government was parsimonious in depriving officers of their good service pensions upon retirement. It was hard that an officer retiring from wounds or ill health should lose the good service pension his gallantry had earned. He suggested that retirement should begin earlier. It cost no more to give A and B in succession £600 for six years' service, than to give £1,200 to C for 12 years' service. Under purchase many ensigns retired at £450 and lieutenants at £700. He suggested that £600, £800, £1,000 should be given for six, eight, or 10 years' service. Subalterns would thus be able to retire before they were too old for other employments, and would make very good Militia or Volunteer officers. On the whole, he did not think the regulations of the Government as to the good service pensions would be satisfactory to the public. He wished them success in their endeavours to improve the position of the non-commissioned officers, and in securing their continuous service.

THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE said, the noble and gallant Lord who introduced this subject (Lord Abinger) dwelt, in the first instance, upon the effects of the introduction of the short service system, and quoted from the remarkable speech delivered by Sir Frederick Roberts before he left England. In the first place, with regard to the sacrifice of the fighting line, before they attributed it to the short service system they should not forget what sort of fighting line they had before the short service system was introduced. So much had been lately written upon the question that he was unwilling to enter upon an historical account of the state of the Army under the system of enlistment which had prevailed prior to the introduction of short service. It was enough to say that from the beginning of the century and the Peninsular War down to the time of the great war between Germany and France there had been a continuous effort on the part of the authorities, not always successful, to keep the Army up to its full establishment. Throughout the whole of that time the condition of the recruits, in respect of quality, had been most unsatisfactory, and the hurried augmentation which in those days used to take place whenever there was a prospect of national emergency arising were, he thought, a most unsatisfactory way of increasing the ranks of the Army. In the case of the augmentation determined upon in 1870, before the augmentation was complete the Franco-Prussian War was over, and the emergency had ceased to exist. The short service was designed to obviate inconvenience of that kind; and, although the system had its faults, they must not be blind to its advantages. The Report of the Inspector General of Recruiting showed that, under short service, they had no difficulty whatever in getting annually about 26,000 recruits; secondly, it showed that the physique of these recruits was improving steadily; and, thirdly, that the proportion of soldiers under 20 years of age was diminishing steadily, and had within the past 10 years fallen something like 100 per cent; and, fourthly, that the recruits were better educated than formerly, and were of a preferable type to those enlisted in former times. He ventured to say that these facts were in themselves satisfactory, and proved, in these important respects, at all events, that the short service system had not been a failure. It was, however, impossible to shut their eyes to the fact that during the last two or three years the condition of the fighting line had very properly occasioned serious misgivings in the public mind. The original scheme contemplated 71 battalions at home and 70 battalions abroad. At the beginning of 1879 he thought he was right in saying there were only 55 battalions at home. These battalions had, owing to the practice of drafting large numbers of men from their ranks into those of the battalions abroad, become attenuated, and the 86 battalions out of the country contained much too large a number of young and partially trained soldiers. How did that come to pass? He denied that it was the inevitable consequence of the short service system. That system, as introduced by Lord Cardwell, depended on two primary principles. The first was that, in time of national emergency, untrained recruits should not be hurriedly gathered in, but that trained Army Reserve men should be available to serve under the Colours; and the second was that a number of battalions should be kept at a high strength, so that a large force of troops should be always in a state of preparedness to leave at short notice on a military expedition. With this object 18 battalions were to be kept at a strength of 820 men. Before, however, one year elapsed, instead of 18 battalions, they had only four battalions at 820; and in 1878 the Estimates provided not for 18 battalions of 820 men, but for 18 battalions at a strength of 740 men. He ventured to say that, in thus departing from the original intentions of the scheme, they were pulling out the keystone of the arch. That was not only his own opinion, but it was that expressed in the Report of a Committee which had sat on the subject in 1878, and had met with the concurrence of his Royal Highness the Commander-in-Chief. There was no part of the scheme of the Secretary of State for War which pleased him more than that which provided that a certain number of battalions should be maintained at a strength even higher than that which was originally fixed, and he hoped that arrangement would be maintained. With regard to the depôts, he found from the Report of the Inspector General that the number of recruits enlisted in the sub-districts was steadily increasing and had now reached 65 per cent of the total. The noble and gallant Lord had said that the depôts did not supply proper training for these recruits; but he thought there had been some misconception as to what was the function of those brigade depôts. They were never intended to supply a complete training, but only a preparatory one for the more thorough discipline of the home battalion to which the recruits were afterwards to be transferred. It had been said, too, that the depôt buildings were insufficient; but that difficulty could be got over by hutting the men in the neighbourhood. A suggestion had been made that larger depôts should be substituted for the present ones; but he did not think such a course would be advisable, as the depôts were in existence, and it would be difficult to re-model the present machinery. A still greater objection was that discipline and order would be more difficult to maintain if a large herd of untrained soldiers were to be gathered together in one place as suggested by the advocates of these large depôts. With respect to the linked battalion system, he had great pleasure in expressing his entire concurrence in what had fallen from the noble and gallant Lord. It was better to have a double battalion regiment than the present system of linked battalions. The Committee presided over by the late Secretary of State for War had thoroughly investigated those questions, and had unanimously recommended the formation of those territorial regiments which it was now proposed to create. The provisions which had reference to the position of non-commissioned officers would, he believed, command the approval of their Lordships. The efficiency of these men was a matter of the highest importance, and it was most desirable to promote their interests and make their position a desirable one. He objected, however, to the compulsory removal of non-commissioned officers after 15 years' service. If a man entered at 20, he did not think his services ought to be dispensed with at 35. He was glad the Secretary of State had not adopted the recommendations of Lord Airey's Committee on the Army Reserves. It would be a dangerous thing to imperil the relations of employers and employed in the case of Army Reserve men. Mr. Brassey had given evidence on the subject, and had said that some employers objected to having those men in their employment, while others were actuated by patriotic motives. He thought it would not be wise to trespass too much on the patriotic instincts of employers. With respect to the changes contemplated by Mr. Childers in regimental organization, they had to consider both the efficiency of the Army and the position and prospects of the officers themselves. As to the number of regimental officers, he was glad that no considerable reduction was proposed. It was important to remember that ours was a volunteer and not a conscript Army, and that the average intelligence of the men could hardly be expected to be so high as when soldiers were taken from all classes of the population. That was one reason why he should be sorry to see the number of our regimental officers largely reduced. Another reason was one by which all thoughtful minds must have been painfully struck in our recent engagements — the large proportion of casualties among the officers due to their intrepidity, and the performance of their duty in the most gallant manner. But though the proposal of the Secretary of State would involve a slight reduction of officers, we should still have a larger number in proportion to the number of men than any other, except one, of the Powers of Europe. In the French Army there was one officer to 57 men, in the Russian one to 56, in the Austrian one to 52, in the German one to 45, and in the English one to 38. He rejoiced extremely that the Secretary of State had been able to avoid having recourse to that system of compulsory retirement of officers introduced in consequence of the recommendations of Lord Penzance's Commission. When those recommendations were made, he ventured, in his place in that House, to protest against the great injustice that would be done to the officers by requiring them, when still in the prime of life, to leave a Service to which they were attached, and in which they might have an opportunity of distinguishing themselves, and doing good work, until the question of organization had first been thoroughly disposed of. If the course then adopted had been carried out in its entirety, half the total number of officers would have been turned out of the Service at the early age of 40, and eventually 4,500 captains and 500 majors would have been retired at a cost of nearly £1,000,000 per annum. That would have been a result unfortunate for the officers themselves, unfortunate for the taxpayers, who would have had to find the retiring allowances, and undesirable in the interests of society, which would have been invaded by some 5,000 extinct officers without profession or prospects. He desired, in conclusion, to express his general approval of the proposals of the Secretary of State, which would, he believed, increase the popularity, as well as the efficiency, of the Army.

Lord CHELMSFORD said, he would not enter into the question of the short service system, which had not been carried out in the manner Lord Cardwell intended. The radical proposals for Army organization which had now been submitted to Parliament showed that the present Secretary of State for War did not consider it altogether a success. It would be far more advantageous to discuss the present organization scheme in itself; and he proposed to go somewhat closely into its practical details. But, first, he wished to say a few words with regard to the German Army, with which our present and proposed system had been so frequently compared. All recruits in the German Army joined in November, and they were at once placed under the company officers, who had the sole responsibility of drilling them. By the end of February the recruits were inspected by the battalion commander, and were passed as fit to take their place in the battalion. They were then passed in April by the regimental commanding officer, and in May or June by the corps commanding officer. So that by the time of the manœuvres the men who had entered in November were fit not only for battalion, but for Army Corps manœuvres. But our recruits came in all the year round, and could not be drilled, therefore, in the same way as in Germany. It was clearly not possible to compare the two systems. Then, with regard to the length of service, the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War said that in 1866 Prussia, with men between 20 and 23, totally defeated the veteran troops of Austria. But he believed no men ever entered the Prussian Army under 20½ years of age, and none went into active service under 21. After three years they went to the Reserve, and there served four years, and in that Reserve they came back to the identical battalion and company which they joined at first. The battalion, therefore, consisted of men from 21 to 27—the finest age that could possibly be had. That not was the case in our Army. There was no use in comparing ours with the German Army because they had a system of short service; they might as well say two statues were alike simply because they were both made of marble. Coming now to the Memorandum, he would consider it step by step. First, no recruit was to be enlisted who had not attained 19 years or a physical equivalent. That was a great change for the better, and the Secretary of State for War was to be congratulated upon it. But how was the physical equivalent to be correctly ascertained? He had read the medical evidence taken before the Committee, and it went to show that medical experience was not a safe guide with regard to age. The physical equivalent in height, weight, or chest measurement that men nominally 19 should come up to did not insure that the recruit was really of that age; and, therefore, unless care was taken we might find that our Army in India was being filled by soldiers too young to stand the trial of such a climate. In the case of soldiers in that country, it was proposed that service should be extended to seven years. That would, no doubt, have the effect of materially increasing the efficiency of the Army in India. He trusted, however, that the men, after serving seven years, would be liberally allowed to extend their service. It was of the highest importance that we should have in India a very efficient Army. There could be no greater danger to India than a weak British Army; and it was to be remembered that men of the Sepoy Army were enlisted for long service, that they were armed with breech-loaders, and that they were peculiarly skilful in musketry. With regard to the rule by which men were not only to be allowed, but to be encouraged to pass into the Reserve for nine years after three years of home service, he feared that with weak battalions the men would not be fit for the Reserve after so short a period of service. The men of the Reserve ought to be thoroughly seasoned and drilled, and should be good shots, which they could not be after only three years with the Colours. Then came the vexed question of territorial regiments. He had always been of opinion that it was desirable that the Line and the Militia regiments should be as closely connected as possible; but he was not prepared, in order to obtain that connection, to destroy the identity of every battalion in the Service. He confessed that he viewed with dislike and dread the system of doing away with the numerical titles of regiments, and giving them fresh territorial distinctions. It would be found in the proceedings of the Committee over which the late Secretary of State for War presided that it had been repeatedly stated that regiments clung rather to their numerical titles than to their actual numbers, and "that the number assigned to the regiment signifies little." However, only five officers gave evidence on that point, and the highest authority who gave evidence on the subject expressed an entirely contrary opinion. Again, how many regiments had nominal titles? He found that only 21 regiments employed them on parade instead of numbers, and of these 21, eight were Fusilier regiments who would have to use numbers if brigaded together. It had been stated that, as a matter of history, the numerical titles of regiments had been often altered. On looking into that matter, he found that six changes had been made in 1748 and 11 in 1757; that 15 second battalions had been converted into new regiments in 1758; that two other changes had been made in 1798; and that, with the exception of the case of the Rifle Brigade, no change of the kind had been made in the present century. It would be absolutely necessary to revert to numbers for regiments, for the sake of convenience on parade and on active service. Supposing that instead of having to telegraph the numbers of the three battalions which had been lately prominently employed in South Africa, territorial designations had been employed, what a difference it would have made in the length of the telegrams. The 58th were the Northampton and Rutland Regiment; the 60th were the King's Royal Rifle Corps; the 92nd were the Gordon and Sutherland Highland Regiment. If he might venture to make a suggestion, the better plan would be, as 67 double battalion regiments were wanted, to keep the first 25 regiments as they were, and to give the other 42 most distinguished regiments a second battalion each, thus only destroying the identity of 42 regiments instead of that of 108. Next he approached the question of the proper strength of the battalions; and he agreed with the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Lansdowne) that it was most necessary to have a strong *Corps d'Armée* ready to take the field at short notice. He hoped no Secretary of State for War would ever reduce the strength of the battalions for foreign service. At the same time, he pointed out that of 51 home battalions the strength of eight was only 500 men, and of the 43 others 480 men. Those were simply depôts to feed the battalions on foreign service, and would be able to do nothing else. With such a system 51 depôts were altogether unnecessary. Another objection to such weak battalions was that they were in various ways so reduced as to be unavailable, or, at any rate, very inefficient, in case of any national emergency. In such an event, each of them would require at least 600 men from the Reserve, and it would be some months before, with so many strangers in their ranks, they could be regarded as in a satisfactory condition. In his opinion, the weakness of the battalions was the worst feature in our military system. The system, in fact, was not that which would give us the most efficient Army, but was the best which we could afford. He was delighted to find that the pay of the non-commissioned officers would be increased, for he thought every inducement ought to be given to them to remain contentedly and happily in the Army. He desired, however, to draw the attention of the noble Earl the Under Secretary of State for War to the circumstance that the lance-corporals were to receive no extra pay, and that, consequently, there was nothing to induce privates to accept that position, which entailed a great deal of hard work and a great deal of responsibility. He must now say a few words with regard to the position of quartermasters. He was sure the Under Secretary of State for War had intended to do everything he thought was necessary for that valuable and much injured class of officers, who were, undoubtedly, placed in a very false position. He considered that, as regards rank and pension, they should be placed, as far as possible, in a position equal to that which they would have gained had they joined the combatant branch of the regiment. As, however, Colonel Alexander had so ably stated their grievances in the House of Commons, he felt he might safely leave their case in the hands of the War Office. The next question he wished to refer to was that of regimental organization. A very great and serious change was proposed to be made in the organization of the Infantry battalions. That change was not to be made, however, simply because the present organization was deemed to be faulty, but for the sake of equalizing the promotion of the different corps in the Army. Would it do so? Was it certain that the Artillery would not still have an undue pull over the Infantry? The present system of promotion, which had been in force for about 20 years, was a sort of military leap-frog, in which officers kept alternately hopping over each other's heads—at one time one branch of the Service was in front; at another time another. This was the result of piecemeal legislation. Whenever the promotion of one part of the Army was proposed to be accelerated, inquiry should first be made as to how it would affect that of the rest. Referring to the scheme of compulsory retirement, he expressed his belief that it would act very harshly indeed upon certain individuals. The intention of the proposed change of organization was to prevent that compulsory retirement; but as captains were to be allowed to become majors in larger proportions than heretofore, the compulsory retirement would be transferred to lieutenant-colonels and colonels. He did not see why the term of five years had been laid down, for there was no reason why an officer should not be, like Sir Henry Havelock-Allan, fit for active service after an interval of even nine years. Moreover, according to the present scheme for retiring allowances, the younger, and consequently, *cæteris paribus*, the most efficient, generals would be those who would suffer most. He pointed out differences in the pay of Field Artillery and Infantry officers, and said he was unable to understand the cause of the difference. Other inequalities also deserved to be rectified, and he commended the matter to the consideration of the noble Earl. He entered his protest against the proposal that rewards for distinguished service should cease to be tenable after retirement from the Active List. The reasons given by the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War were that the officers holding them would, in the natural course of events, forfeit them when they obtained a regiment, and that they had the option of remaining on under present conditions if they pleased. But a large majority of officers now holding good service pensions would have no chance of succeeding to regiments, as, by their position on the list of generals and by their age, they must, according to actuarial calculations, die before such an event could take place. These officers were now in a position superior to those who had not received that reward, and drew £100 a-year more pay. When retired, however, the honourable distinction would be taken away, they would lose the solid advantage of pay now enjoyed by them, and there would be nothing to distinguish them from those who had not been fortunate enough to earn this special mark of Her Majesty's approbation. Whilst admitting that the retiring allowances were on a liberal scale, he trusted that present holders of the reward might be allowed to retain it when retired. He could not sit down without making a few remarks upon an article which had appeared in *The Nineteenth Century*, entitled "Long and Short Service." Questions had been asked in both Houses of Parliament regarding that article, and although it had not received the actual approval of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War, it had certainly not met with his disapproval; for he distinctly stated, when pressed on the subject, that the clause in the Queen's Regulations forbidding officers "to give publicity to their individual opinions," &c., had been "more honoured in the breach than in the observance." Now, if that were really the case, the clause in question should be either cancelled or modified; as, otherwise, the truth of the adage that one person might steal a horse, whilst another might not look over the gate, would be brought painfully home to some officer who might be imprudent enough to follow a bad example. He would venture to suggest, at all events, that Staff officers who might in future write articles in favour of Army Reform should be ordered to confine themselves to argument, and should be strictly forbidden to hold up to ridicule and contempt all those who differed from them. In the present case it was well known that even within the walls of the War Office there were many officers who entirely disagreed with the views of the writer of the article in question. Those who happened to hold different views regarding the present Army system from the writer were spoken of in the following terms:—

"Condemnation of short-service system is owing to wilful ignorance, prejudice, and stupidity. It is a disease characterized by chronic grumblings and whining pessimism. This class of officer believes that the world, as far as armies and military science are concerned, stands still. They are those who would still wish to flog the soldier as the keeper does his wilful spaniel."

He must protest in the strongest terms against that paragraph; it was a gross libel upon those officers who, whilst particularly disliking corporal punishment, maintained that it should be retained until some other punishment which should be equally deterrent could be substituted for it.

"They are naturally Conservative in their tendencies, and consequently view with great suspicion any changes effected in organization by a Liberal Government."

The officers of the Army, as a rule, took but little part in politics; and the writer had no right to charge them with Party feelings, whether Liberal or Conservative. They were all anxious that the Army should be made as efficient as possible, and it was a libel to accuse them of such low motives, in order to account for their general opposition to the present Army system.

"An article of faith with every British soldier is that the authorities of the Horse Guards are his natural protectors, while the War Department officials are his enemies."

It was scarcely necessary to comment upon the bad taste of that paragraph.

"The aspirations of a large proportion of our very oldest officers do not soar beyond the creation of a standing Army of well-set-up, perfectly drilled soldiers."

Had they such an Army, he believed the writer would not have had any cause to complain that the present system did not meet with the favour of the large majority of officers in their Service.

"Regimental officers dislike short service, because it adds considerably to their daily work. Hitherto the Army has been a pleasant home for idle men; now they must make up their minds to a different kind of existence. He must make up his mind to the constant drudgery of teaching his own men, as the officers of the German Army do. Captains prefer old stupid sergeants to young intelligent ones, because the former relieved them of work that ought to have been done by themselves."

He ventured to say that a more unjust or more untrue accusation was never penned. He could speak from the personal experience of many years in command of a regiment as to the regimental officers of some years ago, and he had heard from many sources an account of those who were at present doing duty in that capacity. They were, as a body, as zealous and hard-working, and as proud of their Profession as any in the Armies of the Continent. They would gladly accept the condition of the German company officer; and it was because their system was so different that even the most zealous could not help at times feeling disheartened. The German captain received all his recruits in the month of November, and before the spring drills commenced they were ready to take their place in the ranks. The full strength of a German company in peace time was 131; so that, deducting the inevitable casualties, its captain had always a sufficient number for tactical instruction during six months of the year. He knew also that the men who left for the Reserve at the end of each year would certainly come back to him until they passed to the Landwehr after four years in the Reserve. He had every inducement and every interest in the drill and instruction of the annual recruits. What a different position did a captain in our Army hold! Recruits coming in by driblets all the year round—company so weak as to preclude the possibility of its ever being drilled as a separate unit—men who had completed one year's service sent away to linked battalion, never to be seen again by those who had been instrumental in instructing them! Was it wonderful that now and again a cry of despondency was heard, or that an officer occasionally gave vent to a hearty growl? His task was that of Sisyphus — no sooner had he rolled the stone to the top of the hill as a drilled soldier than it tumbled back to the bottom in the shape of a raw recruit. The writer of the article had no claim to be heard as an authority on regimental matters, for he had done but five years' regimental duty during his whole service, and only two out of them as a captain. To understand and appreciate the work of regimental officers it was necessary that one should have commanded a regiment, or at least a brigade, during peace time. There was but one passage in the article that he could heartily endorse, and that one appeared to point to a conclusion diametrically opposed to all the writer's premisses. It was to be found in the concluding paragraph—

"Without discipline and *esprit de corps*, no army can hold together on active service, or ever be worth much, and everyone who has really served in one of our regiments during war—who has commanded a company on active service—knows as well as I do that our admirable regimental system is above all things calculated to foster the growth and further the maintenance both of discipline and of *esprit de corps.*"

Lord RIBBLESDALE said, he agreed with everything which the noble Marquess near him (the Marquess of Lansdowne) had observed in reference to the merits of short service as regarded recruiting. In England there would always be a difficulty about recruiting; but he thought it possible that the disadvantages incident to voluntary service might be lessened. With regard to the non-commissioned officers, he was of opinion that they were not old enough to keep the men in order, and that an old sergeant would keep up the smartness of a company better than a young man could do it. The way to increase the efficiency of the Army was to improve the position of the non-commissioned officers. It would be well if some employment were to be found for them on their discharge after 20 years' service. The new scheme proceeded on the correct principle that in time of peace the Reserve should be fed by the Army, while in time of war the Army should be fed by the Reserve. He had a command at the time the Reserves were called out, and considered it satisfactory that only 2 per cent of the men were missing at first, and many of them turned up in three or four days. On the whole, he believed the scheme was a step in the right direction.

The Duke of CAMBRIDGE: My Lords, it is difficult, at this time of the evening, for anyone holding an official position to say all that he ought to say on this subject. It is a dry subject for civilians, and, therefore, hardly one admitting of very close discussion in a deliberative Assembly. It is more a subject for discussion by a Committee, when details—many of them wearisome and seemingly, though not really, unnecessary—can be brought forward and considered from day to day. The whole question is made up of minute details, and unless you go deeply into them it is impossible to understand thoroughly this great and important subject. I say great and important deliberately, for is not the Army one of the foundations upon which our Empire rests? The Army is a very important matter in every country, but especially is it so in ours, and it will be very difficult to keep the Empire intact unless the Army is in an efficient condition. The question, I am glad to say, has been discussed to-night without any show of Party feeling. There have been strong opinions expressed, no doubt; but certainly not in a Party spirit. I hope the question will always be discussed, as it has been to-night, as a professional question. Discussing it simply as a professional question, I am in a position to express my opinions with less reserve than I should otherwise have to maintain. In my position it would not be proper even to have the appearance of antagonism to the views of the Government of the day. My Lords, a comparison has been made between our Army and Continental Armies; but, in making that comparison, it must never be forgotten that such Armies are framed upon an entirely different basis. In Russia, Prussia, France, and other Continental nations their Armies are raised by conscription; but ours is raised voluntarily. We are attempting now to have a short service Army without having the foundation afforded by the system of conscription. The absence of that foundation makes the question infinitely more difficult than it otherwise would be. But, comparing the old system of service with the present, I feel bound to say that I very much doubt whether it would have been possible to continue the system of long service, owing to the difficulties of recruiting. I must plead guilty to a connection with the linked battalion system. Being more old-fashioned than some others, and being under the impression that unless some change were made it might be difficult to get the needful number of recruits, I urged, as it was not desirable to dispense with *esprit de corps*, that some such system as the linked battalion system should be introduced experimentally. That system has been much criticized and abused. But there is a great deal to be said for it, and under it recruits joined the ranks in large numbers. The linked battalion system is practically the same as that of double battalions. The two systems are worked on the same principle. The real difference between linked battalions and double battalions is that the feeling of the officers in a linked battalion regiment differs from the feeling which characterizes officers in a double battalion regiment, in which the *esprit de corps* of the regiment pervades both battalions. In regiments which are linked a sentiment of antagonism is, in many cases, entertained. This is especially the case when one of the two linked regiments has a strong desire to be linked with a different regiment—such a desire, for instance, as has been evinced by some of our most distinguished Highland regiments. Therefore, the question arose, could the linked system continue, or ought we to make a great change? I must say that the time had arrived when we had to consider whether we should unlink or amalgamate thoroughly one with the other. I think it is to the advantage of both that the regiments should become territorial. Others think that it would be better to unlink altogether, and to have depôts—either isolated local depôts, or an amalgamated depôt, for those battalions which should happen to be serving abroad. I own I have myself a predilection for unlinking; but a change of that character would necessitate a very large addition to the establishment of the Army, and, consequently, a large additional expenditure. The noble Earl (the Earl of Powis) has referred to the question of numbering. That is, perhaps, a small detail; and I think it very likely that we shall have to come back to some sort of numbering, and this is one of those details which it seems to me will have to be modified. Turning to another point, I believe it is the feeling of all officers who have advocated a short service system that such a system necessitates the maintenance of a larger establishment than that required under the old system. The system renders more drill necessary, and by the time a man has thoroughly mastered his drill, and has become a thorough soldier, he now goes into the Reserve. Unless, therefore, you have a large number of men at your command, it will become difficult to keep up battalions serving abroad. That is a point which is not quite acknowledged by the Government. Under the short service system, then, a larger establishment of men than we have hitherto maintained will always be required. That is one of the questions which the other House of Parliament will have to deal with. My noble Friend, the noble Marquess, has said that this scheme of Lord Cardwell was not thoroughly tried. I perfectly agree with him; but why was it not carried out? Because it would require such large sums of money. No political Party is disposed to incur the risks and difficulties which a demand for large sums of money may entail. It should be borne in mind by those who criticize the working of the Reserve system that our system differs materially from foreign systems. The moment a regiment goes on service in Russia or France the Reserves come out as a matter of course. I do not see how such a system is to be introduced here; but I think the public ought to know the fact. On the whole, I cannot but think that the new scheme of the Government is fair and reasonable. The Secretary of State for War has done all that he could do under the circumstances in which he found himself. I am not going to discuss that question at length. But I am glad that the Secretary of State has agreed to the term of service being seven years instead of six, and eight years in India; and that the Secretaries of State for India and War respectively have power to prolong the term even beyond those eight years, should circumstances in India require it. These are points which show the direction in which the Secretary of State for War has been moving. I think that difficulties will arise in respect of that part of the recommendations of Lord Airey's Committee which refers to great and small wars, and provides that the Reserves shall in future be called out in wars of both descriptions. Those recommendations will be difficult to carry out in detail, as they will not be acceptable to the public, though, in my opinion, absolutely necessary. We have much more frequently to deal with small ones than large ones. Of course, in large wars both the Militia and the Reserves would have to be called out. I venture to think that the recommendations of the Committee have been largely accepted by the present Secretary of State. I do not, however, deny that we are placed in a position of great difficulty; and I think the Secretary of State has done his best in the circumstances. Then it is said that matters are not very satisfactory with respect to the men themselves. No one can deny that the men who were sent to South Africa were not altogether as efficient as we could have wished. Well, my noble Friend must remember the position in which we were placed. We were in this difficulty. It took a great many more men than had been originally estimated for; and I cannot help thinking that it was difficult to send them in a shorter period than we did. As to the condition of the men, it is in your Lordships' recollection that a Committee of distinguished military officers, under the presidency of Lord Airey, was assembled to consider the short-service system, and where it was found to be deficient. The question was argued with much ability; and if it had not been for the recommendations of that Committee we might have been in still greater difficulty as to the course to be adopted, as it enabled the Secretary of State to modify the arrangements which had, up to that time, been in force. If you follow the course of events they entirely contradict and refute the statement that there has been any falling off in the description of the recruits enlisted. My noble and gallant Friend, who has made remarks which I have heard with great satisfaction and pleasure, quite acknowledged the difficulty about the men; but, then, that leads us back to the fact that we have no conscription, and that we cannot raise more than a certain number of men at any particular period. The recruit takes from one to three years to be trained; and we are obliged to enlist our men from day to day. When we send away 100 men, instead of having 100 to take their places, we are obliged to meet our wants by enlistment, and wait for them to be trained. That is the cause of a great deal of the difficulty; and then, in addition to that, there is the question of pounds, shillings, and pence; and it is very difficult to make the public understand that it is not just always to be finding fault with the military authorities for being unable to do impossibilities. It is no easy task to keep up a larger body of men for short service in an army of volunteers. Now, I would not have your Lordships think that I am an advocate of conscription in this country. I am not going in for anything of the sort. I always said it was impossible. But I have always been strongly of opinion that you ought to have conscription for the Militia. The Militia ought always to be kept up to its full strength. I do not care whether you call it conscription or ballot, it comes to much the same thing. I do not mean that the Militia ought to be called out to go to a foreign war; but it ought always to be in a condition to fill up the gaps in the Regular Army. On the whole, my Lords, I think it may be as well to accept the scheme of the right hon. Gentleman. Then comes the question of battalion organization. There is, no doubt, a great deal to be said as to organization; but I hope that there will be no change in this respect in battalions. I am a strong advocate for eight companies, and I believe all the best officers in the Army take that view. I will now say a few words on the question of majors. The question of the majors of the Army was a question of simple justice. Out of 1,000 candidates entering the Line as officers 600 would have to be compulsorily retired as captains. Under the present regulation it is impossible to avoid this, because, otherwise, you would be doing a great injustice by stopping promotion altogether. Under the present system you have no means of keeping up a proper retirement for the Army except by compulsory retirement, and the consequence is that without it there would be complete stagnation in promotion. Now that purchase has been abolished you must necessarily retire compulsorily a much larger number of officers. I do not at all advocate the system of having a too early retirement of officers; and unless the Secretary of State for War had taken the steps he now proposes to adopt a great injustice would have been done to the great body of officers entering the Army, and we should have lost compulsorily a large number of those who are now serving; and we were, therefore, bound to find some other mode of obtaining the required promotion. We were obliged to take the course we did; and in the accomplishment of that object, in my opinion, the more decided the measures that were taken the better. Certainly it is better to do that than to lose so many good officers as we certainly should have lost. As to the general character of the officers themselves, the history of the country speaks for those of former times. We know what they have done; we know the Empire we happily possess; and we are proud of it.

I believe the officers of the present day will follow their example. I believe they are anxious to do their duty, and to acquire knowledge. Their gallantry is as conspicuous as ever it was in the time of war, as my noble and gallant Friend knows. I need not assure your Lordships that I have all my life taken a zealous interest in the Service; and I must say I am astonished to see how much the young officers know compared with what they knew when I came into the Service. Look at the classes which they go through—signalling, musketry, and the various kinds of instruction which they receive from day to day and hour to hour, thus giving officers a knowledge in professional subjects which in former days was never contemplated. And then, as for conduct, see what they have done. It is said—"You mark the officers by their dress, and they are shot down." It is not the dress; but it is the leading. That is why they are shot down. I do not mean that the men would hang back; but it is the spirit of English gentlemen that urges them to lead on in the time of danger. Talk of the young officers being idle! It is a calumny I am prepared to deny. I am not now entering into details. I am making some general observations in my military capacity as head of the Army. The noble Earl (the Earl of Morley), who is well acquainted with this whole subject, will, in his official capacity, and with the ability for which he is conspicuous, answer on the various points brought forward. I have not attempted to go into those details—it is not my province to do so; but I wished to make some general observations on what I think the most important points for the efficiency of the Public Service. Reference has been made to the age at which officers are called upon to retire. Age is one of those things as to which men deceive themselves. They do not like to believe that they get older. It is quite true that one man at 60 or 65 is, perhaps, a less active or efficient man than another at 70. But, on the other hand, you must make some rule. In doing so you may hit some men very hard; but if you wish to have a flow of promotion, you must make rules with a view to insuring it. At a certain age a man is not so active as when he was younger; but you want to bring young blood into the Army; and unless you lay down a hard-and-fast line you cannot do what you want. Whether the Secretary of State has exactly hit the right age or not I will not pretend to say; but I think it will be admitted that his proposal is a fair one; and I hope it may effect the object in view. With regard to the system of five years' command, a great deal may be said upon it. I should like to see some arrangement by which the two lieutenant-colonels could have their fair share of command. I quite agree with the Secretary of State that what is to be done should be decided upon at as early a period as possible; but I believe the small details will be subjected to a general review before they are carried out, and that modifications will be made. I have to thank your Lordships for having heard me with so much attention. I thought it my duty to make these remarks, occupying, as I do, the highest position which a soldier can hold in this country, and having at heart the honour of the British Army; and I only hope that my observations may be of some service in elucidating a subject so difficult, so dry, in many of its details, and yet so interesting and important for the general benefit of the country.

VISCOUNT HARDINGE said, he was very glad that the present discussion had taken place, although he quite admitted that, inasmuch as the number of men had already been voted, it could have very little practical effect. When the Enlistment Bill of 1870 was before the House, he had ventured to remark that that Bill gave the Minister for War *carte blanche* to manipulate the conditions of service as he pleased. The consequence had been that we had had constant changes in those conditions, so that the soldier was always kept in a state of uncertainty as to his position, which acted prejudicially to the Service generally. What, however, surprised him most was that the War Office should have believed that with short service, *pur et simple*, a proper supply of non-commissioned officers could be procured. In this respect Lord Cardwell's scheme had signally failed, as, in the present year, the first step taken was to improve largely the position of the non-commissioned officers, and to enlist them for long service with pension, of which he entirely approved. He was sorry the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Lansdowne) was not now in his place, because he stated that the short service system had been a success, but qualified the statement by admitting that it had failed, to a certain extent, after the disaster of Isandlana, because it had not been properly worked. He wished to ask the noble Marquess what he would have done if the emergency had been greater than it was. He could not have called out the Reserves, or embodied the Militia, because he had not the power to do so, and therefore would have been compelled, *nolens volens*, as the Conservative Government had been, to have recourse to the pernicious system of volunteers. For himself, he was strongly in favour of calling out the Reserves in small wars. But the noble Marquess said that would interfere too much with the employment by the public of the Reserve men. He found, however, that the Reserve men, when demobilized, had no difficulty in getting back to their places on railways and elsewhere; and, therefore, he did not understand why the Government should be so squeamish with regard to calling out the Reserves when we had little wars. The noble Marquess stated that six years with the Colours and six in the Reserve had worked very successfully, whereas only seven out of 122 officers of distinction had approved of it in their evidence. He (Viscount Hardinge) attributed many of the present shortcomings in the Army to the pernicious system of volunteering, which he hoped they might never see again. It should be remembered that it was Lord Cardwell's original intention that a certain proportion of recruits should be enlisted for long service. The first General Order issued from the Horse Guards after the re-organization of the Army provided for 25 per cent of long service men. Some time afterwards a new General Order was issued providing for the enlistment of all men on short service. Now, why, he wished to know, were the plans of the War Office changed? He did not believe that any difficulty would be experienced in getting 25 per cent of the recruits to enlist for long service. The evidence, indeed, given before Lord Airey's Committee was all in favour of that supposition; and he regretted that the Secretary of State for War should not have seen his way to adopting that principle, and so securing in the Army a certain proportion of those seasoned soldiers whose absence the witnesses examined before Lord Airey's Committee so greatly lamented. The want of seasoned soldiers in the ranks had been clearly demonstrated before that Committee. The evidence of Lord Chelmsford, General Newdigate, and Sir Evelyn Wood had exposed the deficiency; and it was well-known how, during the South African campaign, the young soldiers had failed to bear the hardships of long marches, even when relieved of their knapsacks. They were told that they must bear the Reserve in mind; but it seemed to him there was too great a tendency to foster the Reserve at the expense of the Line. In connection with the question of short service, it was important to consider what Lord Airey's Committee described as the "great waste" going on in the Army. We never enlisted in one year more than 28,000 men. The illustrious Duke said recruiting was going on admirably; but the fact was that this year we had only enlisted 25,000 men. Now, according to one calculation, it was necessary, in order to secure an effective addition of 28,000 men to the Army, to raise 36,000, the margin being consumed by desertions, invaliding, &c. Another calculation, based on the enormous losses between enlistment and final approval, fixed the number of men which ought to be raised at 54,000. The fact of these large margins being required would be understood when he stated that within the past six years 17,000 men had been lost through desertion, and 15,000 through invaliding, discharge, &c. Not one of those men had gone into the Reserve, and yet surprise was expressed that the Reserve should not be in a better condition. Then, again, we had 13,000 men in the Army under 20 years of age. Now, what was the remedy proposed? It was to enlist recruits between 19 and 20, of which he entirely approved; but it should be borne in mind that it was difficult, if not impossible, to ascertain the age of the recruit. You could not look into his mouth as you could into the mouth of a horse. All that could be done would be to have more stringent regulations as to chest measurement, height, and other qualifications. As a means of checking desertion and fraudulent re-enlistment, he saw no objection to the marking of recruits by vaccination. The plan, indeed, seemed to him perfectly reasonable, and he had no sympathy with the squeamish ideas which one sometimes heard expressed on the subject. Brigade depôts were a costly and unsatisfactory contrivance, though they had the redeeming point of affording each other great mutual support. Of the 70 colonels examined before Lord Airey's Committee, only 20 were in favour of brigade depôts as they were. It was possible, he believed, to attach too much importance to the territorial connection, for the evidence of competent observers was that under the new system, as under the old, recruits would always in the main come from one class —the waifs and strays of society. The great objection to them was that they denuded the home battalions of their best men, and annihilated *esprit de corps*, which had been so clearly shown in the letters of "One Who Has Served." Then it was said that by their agency new districts were "tapped;" but that did not appear to be the case from the evidence of Lord Airey's Committee. Again, when the battalions became dislocated, there was no means of expanding the depôt, which was mainly insisted upon by Colonel Stanley's Committee. If we could re-organize *de novo*, there could be no doubt that regiments with three battalions would be the best; but after upwards of £3,000,000 had been spent on these brigade depôts, it could hardly be expected that the Government would at once sweep them away and adopt Lord Airey's alternative, which would entail an expense of £700,000 a-year. With regard to the conditions of service in India, Sir Henry Norman and other authorities had, he believed very rightly, insisted on a period of nine years, so that the soldier might remain in the country for a sufficiently long time after becoming acclimatized. For home service he would infinitely prefer eight years, as recommended by Lord Airey's Committee. He imagined that seven years could only have been adopted as a compromise between Lord Cardwell's scheme and that of Lord Airey. The additional year would be of great value. In India the expense, under the present system, of sending home the six years' men had been enormous. The expense had increased from £2,000 to 5,000 a-year. The proposal to keep the first 12 regiments at 950 was excellent in principle; but such had been the variations of our establishments from successive fits of economy that there was no security that these establishments could be maintained. And then the reduced home battalions would again become mere nurseries for the foreign battalions. Our real Reserve was the Militia, which had given, at least, 35,000 men to the Line in the Crimean War; and the Militia Reserve should at once be recruited by every possible means up to its establishment. The number of absentees from training was unsatisfactory—13,000 men were the numbers given; and the only way to check this was to insist on every recruit on enrolment being sent to the depôt to be trained. Where circumstances would admit of it, they should be trained with the Line, especially the Reserve men. As the Militia was short of its establishment by 20,000 men, it would be desirable to offer additional inducements to recruiting; because it must be borne in mind that on the declaration of war the Militia Reserve would have to be deducted from the strength of the Militia Force. His fear was that the Government thought more about the Reserves than the fighting Army, and he might remind them that the Army was not made for the Reserves, but the Reserves for the Army.

THE EARL OF GALLOWAY said, that in the comments on the letters that had appeared in *The Times* signed "One Who Has Served"—who had been alluded to in the House of Commons by the Secretary of State for War as being avowedly Sir Lintorn Simmons—the Report of Lord Airey's Committee had apparently been anticipated, and, as he held, unfairly handicapped. Information had, in this instance, been withheld from the public after a newspaper had been enabled to print inspired articles on the subject. It was a dangerous precedent to decline, over and over again, after pressing solicitation, to give information on a most important subject to Members of Parliament in either House, while such information was communicated privately to writers in the public journals. The public mind had thus been poisoned against the recommendations of Lord Airey's Committee before its Report was permitted to see the light of day. He might say briefly that that Report might be regarded, first, as a condemnation of the present system as to the term of engagement for service in the Army; secondly, as a condemnation of the mode of manipulation of recruits; thirdly, as showing the unfortunate want of inducement to soldiers to attain to the rank of non-commissioned officers; and, fourthly, as an utter condemnation of the linked battalion or brigade depôt system. No one, he thought, would deny that that was the substance of the Report. As regarded the term of service and the inducements to non-commissioned officers, he entirely concurred in the remarks made by his Royal Highness the illustrious Duke. The noble Marquess (the Marquess of Lansdowne) had remarked, with great seeming satisfaction, that 25,000 men were enlisted last year; but he could not help feeling that that was a doubtful source of gratification, considering the terrible waste in the Army attendant upon those enlistments. The evidence adduced before the Committee showed that 12 per cent of all the recruits enlisted of late years deserted within three months of their enlistment; and that within 12 months of enlistment the ratio of desertions increased to something like 25 per cent. The country at large ought seriously to consider why it was that this very rapid desertion occurred. He believed there was nothing so galling to a young soldier as to be shunted and hustled from one place to another during the first few months after his enlistment. It was the amount of drill at the beginning, as well as this change from place to place—all caused by this unfortunate brigade depôt, including the linked battalion, system—that was the cause of the early desertions which were a disgrace to this country. On one point he ventured to differ from the illustrious Duke—namely, with regard to conscription, or ballot for the Militia—for he conceived it was the great glory of this country that we possessed an Army composed entirely of volunteers. Indeed, he had always regretted that the term "Volunteer" should have been given to that gallant body which was raised in the year 1859, because it conveyed the idea that the Regular Army itself and the Militia were not based on the volunteer system. He did not see why it should be necessary to have recourse to balloting in the Militia. We ought to consider all these matters thoroughly, to use every means to make the two Services popular, and to avoid the introduction of continual changes. He was convinced that the system of "territorial regiments" was the most unfortunate ever conceived, and that it would never add one effective soldier to the Army. Its only effect would be to efface all the old distinctions which soldiers held most dear, and set regiments at sixes and sevens. He trusted it was not yet too late to reconsider and abandon it, and revert to the older system which it was now threatened to replace.

VISCOUNT BURY said, he should not take part in the discussion were it not that he thought it right that someone connected with the late Government should say a few words on the subject before their Lordships' House. In the new scheme of Army Organization the Secretary of State for War had followed, to some extent, the steps of the late Government, and there were novel points in the scheme upon which the right hon. Gentleman was to be heartily congratulated; but there were others upon which he, for one, could not altogether agree with him. The discussion that evening had been of a somewhat desultory character, as from the nature of the subject it was bound to be; but it had served in no inconsiderable degree to elucidate the subject. The question was, did the new scheme supply the defects of the old, which were patent and acknowledged? Many questioned whether these defects were removed by the new scheme; would it supply seasoned soldiers for the battalions abroad at all times? Did it afford a reasonable guarantee that in sudden emergencies the reinforcements we should send out should consist of men of mature military age, of physical fitness, and of thorough training? The present scheme was a continuation of that brought forward by Lord Cardwell. No one could read the Localization Report on which the original scheme was founded without seeing that something was originally in the scheme of Lord Cardwell which must have dropped out shortly before the production of that scheme. The changes made by Lord Cardwell were in the direction of the imitation and the followings of foreign Armies; but the scheme was like the play of *Hamlet* with the Prince of Denmark omitted. Some form of compulsory service was the backbone of the foreign Army system; but it was left out of ours. There seemed to be complete evidence that originally some form of compulsory service was contemplated by Lord Cardwell. All the calculations as to the numbers of the Militia were based upon the assumption of so many men per head of the population. There were various other points that irresistibly led to the same conclusion. He heard with pleasure the illustrious Duke say that compulsory service—service in the sense of conscription—was utterly foreign to English modes of thought, and impossible for our Indian Army; but that some form of compulsory service for home battalions and the Militia might, without any undue strain upon the feelings of a free people, be admitted among us. The new scheme dealt efficiently, and in the main very fairly, with the question of Army promotion. The difficulties of former Governments had been, on the whole, very fairly and successfully met by the new scheme in this respect, and also as regarded the improvement of the condition of non-commissioned officers. As a matter of detail, he would suggest that corporals should be allowed to go until they had earned a pension. It would be a great improvement if it were possible to enlist men at 19 instead of 18, so that they might be 20 before being sent to India; but if simultaneously there were to be a diminution of chest measurement that would neutralize the other change, and we should still find men of 17 and 18 in the ranks. The main point was whether the new scheme would do better than the old in point of bringing fully developed, matured soldiers into the ranks, and he did not think it would. Under the old system the home battalions were denuded by constant drafts until they became mere skeletons of young and untrained men, and they were sent on foreign service at the very moment when they were in the most unfit, denuded, and forlorn condition. The idea of linked battalions, one at home, and one abroad, was not carried out; the stress of exigencies did not allow even Mr. Cardwell's Government to realize it. The numbers in the linked battalions at home and abroad should have been even; but that was never the case. A recent Return showed that in 1871 there was a dislocation of one battalion; in 1873, one; in 1874, three; in 1875, one; in 1876, five; in 1877, five; in 1878, 13; in 1879, 31; in 1880, 19; and this year, 19. We had now a total of 80 battalions abroad and 61 at home, showing a dislocation of 19. The dislocation of 31 battalions implied that the battalions at home became less and less able to furnish even their own links, and when their turn came for foreign service they were utterly unable to obey the call. The results of this dislocation might be illustrated by an official Report, which showed that when the 21st Regiment was ordered to Zululand it was supposed to consist of 800 rank and file. Of this number 343 had to be left behind. By drafts from various regiments the number was made up to 798; but of these 119 were under 20 years of age, and 303 of less than 12 months' service. In the case of the 91st Regiment, also, 374 men were required to bring it up to the Cape establishment, and the men were drafted from 11 different regiments. At the hour of embarkation these men were total strangers to one another. It would be well, he thought, for the public to understand that we could not have an efficient Army—numerous enough for our wants and suitable in every way—under present conditions. The conditions of an efficient Army had not been satisfied by Lord Cardwell's system, because for the money the people were willing to give suitable men could not be obtained in sufficient numbers. Unless the country was willing to pay the necessary price we could not have the best Army possible. There were three courses open to us. We must be content with a system inferior to the best, or we must go into the labour market and give a higher price for the article we required, or we must submit to some form of compulsory service, not for the foreign Army—for that, he believed, would be impossible—but for the Home Army, that was, the Militia and Volunteers. Referring to the Reserves, he asked whether any legislation was contemplated with regard to them? At present the Reserves were only to be called out in great national emergencies. The right hon. Gentleman intended to go on with the system which had been begun by Lord Cardwell. The main reason urged, he said, was that the country, in consequence of Lord Cardwell's measures, was committed to an expenditure of £3,500,000. But that could hardly be expected to have much weight with those who, like himself, had opposed Lord Cardwell's scheme. The scheme now before their Lordships was not the re-organization scheme which some of its enthusiastic admirers had promised. It was not a scheme which settled the condition of the Army for ever and a day. It was merely a scheme, good in some points, and good as far as it went, but which merely touched the fringe of this great question. It was a mere re-shuffling of the same cards, so much money and so many men, and as former schemes had broken down, so he took the responsibility of saying the scheme would break down again. Would these territorial brigades, he asked, when completed, answer their purpose? Would they draw to regiments on foreign, and especially on active service a full proportion of seasoned men, and steady-going Reserves? That was the main question, for these small wars to which he had referred might be called our normal condition. During the last 40 years we had been at war for 35 years. For 16 of these years we had two wars at a time; during eight years, three wars; and during two years we had no fewer than four wars on hand at the same time in various parts of the world. The reason why he thought the new scheme would not be better than the old one was that it depended, as Lord Cardwell's also depended, upon an exact balance between the battalions at home and the battalions abroad; and if in any one year one of those wars came upon us and took one single battalion away from home to the seat of war, from that moment the whole scheme of the right hon. Gentleman would be dislocated, as Lord Cardwell's was dislocated, as at the time of the Zulu War, and the whole thing would get into inextricable confusion. It was also absolutely necessary for the success of the scheme that the establishment should remain during a term of years exactly at the same point. But neither of these two conditions had hitherto been fulfilled; and he did not see why the right hon. Gentleman should anticipate that he should be more fortunate than former War Secretaries, and that he should find successive Parliaments more compliant than former Parliaments had been. Nor did he believe that the hopes expressed by the right hon. Gentleman of the efficiency of *Corps d' Armée* would be realized. He felt sure, also, that there would be great difficulty in maintaining the establishments in a state of efficiency. A fit of economy would come, and then the establishments would come down, and with them the whole fabric of the right hon. Gentleman's scheme. If they must have a territorial Army, let them keep the depôts at home. With reference to the proposal of the Government as to having a local Indian Army, he did not see the advantage of trying to have a scheme which on the very face of it appeared not to be an extremely useful one. As to the waste of the Army, he thought the right hon. Gentleman had not framed his Estimate with regard to the requirements of the number of recruits for the Army. Short service would only be felt in 1882; and when that time arrived it would take 38,000, instead of 25,000 men, to keep up the Army to its present strength, and the waste of the Army went on to such an extent and with such rapidity that in order to obtain those 38,000 or 35,000 soldiers they would be obliged to enlist 54,000 men. There were several respects in which the scheme of the Government was a good one; but in other directions he certainly thought there was reason to complain. He should be glad to know whether it was intended that in case of war—a minor war, not sufficient to call out the Reserve—the brigade depôts should be expanded into a provisional battalion, and whether the Secretary of State would be able to call out the Reserve Militia of a district. He did not see anything in the new scheme which would attract the private soldier to the Service. The condition of the non-commissioned officer and the officer had been improved; but that of the private soldier had been altered rather for the worse, because he was asked to extend his term of service. He approved of that extension; but we should not attract private soldiers without giving them greater inducements.

THE EARL OF MORLEY begged to thank the noble Lord who had brought forward the subject and thus initiated a most valuable debate. Many of the suggestions made by noble Lords of great military experience would be most useful in determining many details of the scheme now under consideration. He acknowledged that the criticisms from both sides of the House had been useful, and, on the whole, friendly to the scheme. He would, in the first place, refer to that part of the scheme which dealt with the officers. There was no intention of interfering with any officer under the Indian guarantee, as the noble Lord opposite seemed to suppose. Colonels of Artillery and Engineers in India had a better scale of retirement than English officers in the same arm of the Service; and, therefore, any improvement in the retiring pay of English officers would be inapplicable to officers in the Indian Service. One of the main objections urged against the new regulations was that general officers would be retired at an earlier age than at present. But it was absolutely necessary to have some limit at which officers in the various ranks should retire from the Service or from the several ranks. It should be remembered that by keeping one man in they kept another out. Every scheme of promotion and retirement aimed at two things—to secure that officers should be of such an age as to be able to give efficient service in their rank; and, secondly, to create such a flow of promotion as would encourage officers in the hopes that they would reach, within a reasonable time, the higher grades in their Profession. For that purpose, he did not think the rule unfair which would compel a general officer to retire from the Service after five years' non-employment, particularly when it was proposed to increase the pensions of retiring generals. The whole difficulty in framing any scheme for the promotion and retirement of officers consisted in equitably balancing the interest of officers in various positions in the Service. The illustrious Duke the Commander-in-Chief had paid a high compliment to the officers of the British Army, which he wished in the fullest manner to endorse. During all the changes which had resulted from the recent Army reforms—and changes must be harassing—the officers had loyally and energetically performed their duty. In doubling the number of majors in the Cavalry and Infantry, the Government had no desire to press on a determination of the question of large or small companies. That was a question of organization on which military authorities had not expressed a unanimous opinion; but if the large company organization were ever adopted, the new establishment of officers would be suitable for it—if not, they would, at least, save a number of captains from being compelled to leave the Service, because they had failed to obtain promotion within the period prescribed by the existing warrant. Passing to the important questions relating to non-commissioned officers and men, he should repeat what the illustrious Duke (the Duke of Cambridge) had stated, that there was no analogy between the English and the German Army. Not only was the one recruited by conscription, and the other by enlistment; but the one had a large part of its Army abroad, while the other had no foreign army at all. The object of the recent changes was not to assimilate our Army to the German Army, but to provide a Reserve, and without a short service system a Reserve was impossible. The defects which were alleged against the short service system were that in the battalions there was too large a proportion of young soldiers; that there was a deterioration in the non-commissioned officers; that the Reserve had not grown as fast as had been anticipated, and that, in consequence of desertions, dismissals, and other causes, a very large number of men were lost to the Service between their enlistment and the termination of their service with the Colours. Some of those defects might be due to the state of transition in which the Army had been during the past nine years. It should also be remembered that the late Government had attempted to carry on two wars with a peace establishment, and he wished to know how it could have been expected that any system could have stood such a strain without showing signs of weakness; and, further, some of these defects were common to the long and short service, and could not, therefore, be fairly attributed entirely to the latter. The extreme youth of recruits had been urged as one of the results of the short service system; but the fact was that the age of the recruits was constantly rising. The average age of recruits during this year was 20 years and seven months. It was true that the growth of the Reserve was less rapid than had been expected; but the short service system had been instituted in 1870, and, consequently, the first men were passed into the Reserve in 1876 who had completed six years' Colour service; so that, practically, the system had only been in force for five years, and during that time more than 1,000 men had been summoned to rejoin the Colours. Moreover, a considerable number of men who would, in ordinary circumstances, have passed into the Reserves were still with the Colours in India. It had been suggested that a system of vaccination would be a check on desertion; but if it could not be done effectually, so as to produce a distinctive mark, no greater mistake could be made than to adopt it; and the medical authorities admitted that in many cases vaccination did not take in the case of adults; and in those cases it was obvious that it would not cause a scar by which a deserter could be identified. With respect to the length of service which had been fixed upon, he would remind their Lordships that it did not differ very materially from that recommended by Lord Airey's Committee. The regular term of enlistment would be for seven years with the Colours, followed by five years in the Reserve; and it was proposed that there should be an extra year in India always, and also in the Colonies, when the Secretary of State thought it expedient to extend the time. Recruits were not to be accepted before the age of 19. It might be desirable, if possible, to raise the age of recruits to 20 years; but then they would incur the risk of checking recruiting, or, still worse, of getting men who had failed in civil careers. They proposed that no man should serve in India before he was 20 years of age, and had had served for at least one year at home; and the statistics of mortality showed that the best length of service for men in India was about seven years. After that length of service in India, the figures quoted by Lord Airey's Committee proved conclusively that the rate of mortality and of invaliding increased very rapidly. It could further be arranged between the Secretary of State for India and the Secretary of State for War, that in certain cases, which it was believed would not be numerous, the men should be allowed to serve somewhat longer in India; but not beyond the original term of enlistment for 12 years. It was also proposed, in certain cases, to allow men in the home battalions to pass into the Reserve after three or four years. It had been asked to what regiments that principle would be applied. It would not be applied to the first 12 battalions, which would form part of the first *Corps d'Armée.* How far it would be applied must be left in the hands of the Secretary of State. The object was to give as much elasticity as possible to the system. It remained to be seen what the effect of the new limit of age would have on recruiting. It was an experiment which was generally admitted to be in the right direction. If it failed it would be possible to recur to the limit of 18 years; but he hoped and believed that, with the advantages to be given to non-commissioned officers, and with the other advantages held out to the Army, and with improved recruiting agencies and the greater publicity which it was proposed to give to the advantages of the Army, the recruiting would be kept up, and that in the next few years they would be fully able, as in the past, to meet the requirements of their establishment. With regard to the question of organization, Lord Airey's Committee had recommended, but not unanimously, that regiments should be unlinked. On the other hand, a few years ago an influential Committee, presided over by the late Secretary of State for War when he was Financial Secretary, unanimously recommended that the linking system should be carried to its legitimate conclusion, and that the regiments should always be double battalion regiments. That was the system which they proposed to carry into effect. There were many objections to the single battalion system; they would render necessary depôts of 12,000, 16,000, or, perhaps, 20,000 men to supply the foreign reliefs even in time of peace. Unless the Home Army was to be increased by that number of men—a supposition that was not likely to be realized—it was clear that a corresponding, or a nearly corresponding, reduction must be made in the home battalions; but the battalions now on the roster were, in the opinion of many officers, too weak already; and, consequently, the only alternative would be to reduce the number of regiments—a reduction which would amount to nearly 20 regiments 800 strong. This would clearly weaken the Army, by destroying so many *cadres* which, though weak in times of peace, could, by an infusion of Reserve men, be expanded into serviceable regiments in times of emergency and danger. On the other hand, double battalions had great advantages —they would facilitate reliefs for India enormously, and would enable us to obtain the full service of seven years from each healthy man in that country. It was all important that we should have a force at home which, coupled with the regiments in the Mediterranean, would form a *Corps d' Armée* which would be prepared to take the field at any moment. He was somewhat surprised to hear the statement that the territorial depôts had been useless for recruiting, as the Report of the Inspector General of Recruiting seemed to show the contrary. He had now endeavoured to point out the main principles on which the new scheme was based. It was not of a new or an original character. Its principles were those on which Lord Cardwell had acted, the details had been modified with a view of correcting the defects, and of strengthening the weak points which the experience of the last 10 years had discovered in the system on which our Army was organized. The most important changes were, as he had stated, the lengthened term of service and the localization scheme, both of which presented complicated and difficult problems that had not been worked out without very grave deliberation. He confidently believed that the result of these changes would be the attainment of the object they all desired—namely, the increase of the efficiency of the Army.

LORD STRATHNAIRN briefly called attention to the ill-effects of too early enlistment, and pointed out that recruits were not physically fit for service until they had reached the age of 20. However, the Army was filled with recruits under 18 down to 15 years of age, and that was the cause of the great waste in the Service. He hoped his noble Friend opposite and his right hon. Friend in the other House would direct their most serious attention to devising a remedy for this great evil.

CHARITABLE TRUSTS ACTS AMENDMENT BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to amend the Charitable Trusts Act, 1853, and the Acts amending the same—Was *presented* by The LORD CHANCELLOR; read 1ª. (No. 59.)

STOLEN GOODS BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to amend the Law respecting the recovery of Stolen Articles—Was *presented* by The LORD CHANCELLOR; read 1ª. (No. 60.)

House adjourned at a quarter past Twelve o'clock, till To-morrow, Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 5th April, 1881.

MINUTES.]—PRIVATE BILL (*by Order*)—*Second Reading—Committed to a Select Committee*—London City Lands (Thames Embankment).

PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Whiteboy Acts Repeal * [134].

Report—Metropolitan Commons Supplemental * [99]; Inclosure Provisional Orders (Scotton and Ferry Common) * [115]; Inclosure Provisional Orders (Wibsey Slack and Low Moor Commons) * [114].

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

LONDON CITY LANDS (THAMES EMBANKMENT) BILL [*Lords*] (*by Order.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. FIRTH said, he had placed an Amendment upon the Paper in reference to this Bill, which he begged to move—namely, that the Bill be read a second time on that day six months. The Bill was introduced this year by the Corporation of the City of London as a Private Bill; but his contention was that it ought to have been introduced as a public measure, so that a better opportunity would have been afforded of discussing it than the House could possibly have in its present form. The main object of the measure was the sale by the Corporation of the City of London to the Commissioners of Public Works of certain land on the Thames Embankment for the purpose of erecting a new Mint. The question of erecting a Mint on the Thames Embankment had been considered by the House before—namely, in 1871, when the subject underwent a very careful examination. At that time a Bill was brought forward for this purpose which was a Public Bill; but the measure was rejected by 118 to 95. It was now proposed to purchase a site for the same purpose, which, if carried out, would have the effect of overriding the decision arrived at in 1871; and it was further proposed to effect this object through the medium of the Private Bill now before the House. The Bill set out and confirmed an award which had been given by Mr. Edward Norton Clifton, architect, of London, by which three acres of land on the Thames Embankment were to be sold by the Corporation of the City of London to Her Majesty's Commissioners of Works and Public Buildings, for the sum of £254,475. In some sense it might be alleged that the Bill was merely to carry out this award. He believed that the late Administration were the means, or, at any rate, they were parties to the award being made; but he had always understood, and, indeed, a distinct pledge was given by the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, that the whole matter should be submitted to the careful consideration and decision of Parliament. One question for inquiry was whether the land the Government sought to acquire was worth the money proposed to be given for it. Although Mr. Clifton had decided that these three acres of land were worth the sum of £254,000, it was probable that an independent investigation would result in showing that it was worth much less. At any rate, there were two observations that might be made upon the matter. In the first place, in 1871 the value of land nearly close to this was fixed at a much lower figure than it was now proposed to give. Sir Henry Hunt valued the land in that year at £40,000 per acre; but it was now proposed to give £80,000 per acre for it, or exactly double. He had endeavoured to ascertain what the cost of this land was, and he had asked more than one Alderman of the Corporation of the City of London; but they represented themselves as possessing no knowledge upon the matter at all. He believed that that was a true representation; but he had been informed that for the whole eight acres of land possessed by the Corporation of London in this locality, a less sum had been given than was now proposed to be given out of the Public Exchequer for three acres only. This was a serious matter, and it was most desirable that there should be some sort of public discussion whether so large a sum ought to be given for a purpose of this kind. When the proposal was made in 1871, it was a commercial proposition for building a Mint on two acres of land, for which £80,000 was to be given, while £60,000 was to be expended in the building and £400,000 machinery, making a total of £180,000. As the three acres of land on which the Mint now stood was stated to be then saleable for £180,000, the account in that case would be squared, and there would be no loss to the Exchequer at all. But the House of Commons deliberately rejected that proposal, and the proposition now made was of a far less commercial character. In the first place, the value of land on Tower Hill had lessened rather than increased in value. It had lessened for this simple reason—that it was formerly available for the building of large bonded warehouses; but such warehouses were now generally built by the Railway Companies at their termini, and the present site of the Mint would be worth much less now than it would have been some years ago. In addition, the cost of erecting the building would be much larger than the original estimate. He had seen the elevation of the proposed building for the Mint on the Thames Embankment. It would, no doubt, be a very fine building; but it was absurd to suggest that it would be erected for £60,000, or for anything like that sum. But, supposing that it was possible to erect it for £60,000, and to put up the machinery for £40,000 more, the cost, including the site, would amount to £354,475; and if the building and site at Tower Hill produced £180,000, there would be an actual loss of £174,475. Surely a loss of that kind ought not to be incurred without careful consideration. As a matter of fact, however, there was every reason to believe that the loss would be more than £200,000. In 1871 the Chancellor of the Exchequer suggested that the new Mint should be erected upon the Thames Embankment, because it might be built compactly upon two acres of land. The proposal now before the House was to purchase three acres, so that the argument of having the building compact upon two acres would no longer apply. When the present Mint was built in 1810, it was placed near the Tower because it was considered convenient to have the troops at hand in case of an attack being made upon it, and also that it might be near to the Bank of England. Whatever might be the value of these two acres, he presumed that the site on the Thames Embankment would not be more commodious than the site on Tower Hill. Moreover, it could be demonstrated to a certainty that the Mint could be rebuilt on its present site. He was aware that there were people who objected to that proposition; but there were more than three acres of land on Tower Hill, and there could be no difficulty in rebuilding the new Mint gradually. The coinage would not suffer, because, so far as the silver and copper coinage was concerned, it had been repeatedly put out by contract at Birmingham and other places; and with respect to the coinage of gold, if building operations going on at the same time were likely seriously to affect it, there was this to be said—that for some time the coinage of gold had been suspended. He believed there had been no gold coined for nine months, and that from last July they did not propose to coin any until the present month. In the course of another nine months the rebuilding of the Mint could be far progressed; and it must, therefore, be admitted that the difficulties which formerly existed did not exist now. The nuisance arising from the smoke and fumes of the smelting operations would be no greater than they were at present; and the noise by working with leverage and new machinery would hardly be equal to that met with in the Western Prairies when they approached one of the great stamping mills. The commercial aspect of the question appeared to him to be one which ought to be carefully considered. There were one or two other points connected with the Bill to which he ought to make allusion. In the first place, the Bill empowered the Commissioners of Public Works to sell the Basinghall Street buildings to the Corporation of the City of London for the sum of £93,500. This was the site of the old Bankruptcy Court, which the Corporation wished to use for what they termed a temporary purpose. It was not for him to suggest that it was not desirable that the Corporation of the City of London should temporarily go into the Bankruptcy Court. He agreed with an observation made rather wittily—having regard to the place in which it was made—in the Court of Common Council, that unless the City altered its ways it would have to take up more than a temporary residence in a Court of that kind. The City proposed to purchase the old Bankruptcy Court, which was near to the Guildhall, and the purchase formed part of the transaction that was to be carried out in the Bill. There was also a proposal to sell to Sion College a piece of land on the north side of the Thames Embankment for a sum of £31,625. It did not appear in the Bill how it became requisite that the consent of Parliament should be given to such a sale as this; and, certainly, if the consent of the House of Commons was necessary, he thought the House should be put in possession of all the circumstances of the case, and be told for what purposes Sion College required this land. Sion College was founded 250 years ago by Dr. White, for certain specified objects—namely, for the maintenance of a popular preacher at St. Dunstan's, for the erection of alms-houses, the incorporation of lecturers or curates, the holding of quarterly dinners, and the propagation of pure truth and doctrine. At the present moment he was not aware whether or no there was a popular preacher at St. Dunstan's; there was certainly no almshouse, and no incorporation of lecturers or curates. He knew nothing about the quarterly dinners; and if pure truth and doctrine continued to be propagated, it was not through any special action of Sion College. He believed the only thing that existed now in connection with Sion College was a library of some 60,000 volumes, which, he believed, was established by one of the executors of Dr. White. The House ought to be told what was the object of this sale, and if it was necessary that they should give their sanction to it, no doubt they would give it. These were the whole of the proposals contained in the Bill. There was a power to the Corporation of the City of London to sell other lands, and he certainly did not see why that power was necessary. It ought, he thought, to be explained, and also the power to purchase other lands. With respect to the whole question of the sale and purchase of important lands by the Corporation of London, it must be borne in mind that the entire position of the Corporation was at the present moment *sub judice*, and it was a matter for consideration whether transactions of this sort ought to receive the sanction of the House of Commons until that question was settled. As to the application of the purchase money, one of the clauses of the Bill provided that the money payable by the Commissioners to the Corporation should be paid into the Bank of England as if it were paid in under the 69th section of the Land Clauses Consolidation Act of 1845. He was fully aware of the difficult position which the Government occupied in the matter. When they came into Office the question had been already referred to an Arbitrator, and that Arbitrator had now given his award. To a certain extent, Her Majesty's Government might feel themselves called upon to support that award; but he held that the proposal was one which was entirely for the consideration of the House; and he ventured to think that no wise Administration would associate itself with a decaying body like the Corporation of the City of London. He had thought it necessary to put the case clearly and fully before the House, inasmuch as the carrying out of the scheme proposed by the Bill would result in a loss of not less than £250,000. It would be much better that such a measure should be brought forward and discussed in a Public Bill. He begged to move that the Bill be read a second time on that day six months.

Mr. BRAND begged to second the Amendment which had been moved by his hon. Friend the Member for Chelsea (Mr. Firth). His hon. Friend had fully explained the reasons why this Bill ought to have been introduced as a public measure and not as a Private Bill. The Bill seemed to be a very simple and a very insignificant measure. It was a Bill, in fact, to enable the Corporation of the City of London to sell, and Her Majesty's Government to buy, certain lands on the Thames Embankment and elsewhere. Now, he did not wish to oppose, or in any way to restrict, the freedom of the Corporation of the City of London in buying or selling land, because he did not object to the Corporation and all its works in the same way that his hon. Friend did. But he objected to the Bill because by the 1st clause, and by the first part of the 1st schedule, Her Majesty's Commissioners of Works and Public Buildings were enabled to buy of the Corporation of the City of London certain lands on the Thames Embankment. Any hon. Member who casually looked at the Bill would not discover from anything contained in it what was the real intent and object of the measure. The real intent and object of the Bill was to enable Her Majesty's Government to build upon the site thus purchased of the Corporation of the City of London a new Mint. Now, if this was the first occasion upon which such a proposal had ever been brought before the House of Commons, he might still object on the ground that it would be a more legitimate and expedient course to have brought the measure before the House of Commons as a Public Bill. But the case was very different. This question was discussed in 1871. It was discussed then upon a Public Bill, and in 1871 the House of Commons rejected the proposal by a majority, and rejected it on the ground that even then it would cost a large sum of money to the English taxpayer. That being so, this was distinctly an attempt —and this was his objection to the Bill —it was distinctly an attempt to reverse the decision come to by the House of Commons on a public measure by a Private Bill. He maintained that it was a very inexpedient course to pursue. His noble Friend the Secretary to the Treasury (Lord Frederick Cavendish), or his right hon. Friend the First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Shaw Lefevre), who would answer for the Bill, would say, he presumed, that the circumstances were different now from what they were in 1871. It was perfectly true that they were different in this sense, that the economic arguments that were pleaded for the Bill of 1871 were no longer applicable. What was the condition of things then? The Chancellor of the Exchequer, in 1871, proposed to buy a site on the Thames Embankment, the value of which was £80,000. It was proposed to erect upon that site buildings that were to cost £100,000, and competent authorities stated that the sale of the old Mint building would more than cover the whole of the expenses of the new building. The case was very different now. The land was to cost not £80,000, but £254,000, and he maintained that that altered the whole of the circumstances, and that the Bill ought to be submitted as a public measure to the consideration of the House of Commons. There were only two other small points upon which he would touch. It might be said that there was a necessity for a new Mint. It might be so. He did not dispute the contention; but he should like to know whether the engineers had stated that it was impossible to adapt the old Mint to the new requirements. At any rate, it was a question for the consideration of a Select Committee, and if the necessity did exist it would not justify the introduction of this Bill as a Private Bill. He believed that the history of the Bill was this—the award was accepted by the late Government; and, therefore, the present Government thought they were bound in honour and good faith to bring the matter forward in this way before the House of Commons. He fully admitted that it was so; but there was no reason why the House of Commons should confirm the award, and, at any rate, there was no reason why the question should not have been brought before the House of Commons in a Public Bill. For these reasons he seconded the Amendment.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. Firth.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Sir THOMAS CHAMBERS said, the hon. Member for Chelsea (Mr. Firth) had failed to adduce a single argument which was not an argument in favour of the Bill being submitted to a Committee upstairs; and the whole proposition now before the House was that the Bill should be read a second time with a view to its being considered in Committee in the ordinary course. He believed the House had been informed that the Bill had already been investigated by a Committee of the House of Lords, and, having passed that House, it now came down to the House of Commons. Its object was to carry out an arrangement which had been entered into between the Corporation of the City of London and Her Majesty's Government, with regard to the acquisition of a site on the Thames Embankment for the erection of a new Mint. He had read over the correspondence which had taken place between the Government and the Corporation upon the subject. It extended over several years, and it showed that the Corporation had throughout been reluctant to sell; but that pressure had been placed on them by the Government to compel them to sell these three acres of land which they were in possession of upon the Thames Embankment. The negotiations arose in 1874 in consequence of a wish expressed by the Corporation to purchase the site of the Bankruptcy Court in Basinghall Street, the business of the Court having been removed to Lincoln's Inn Fields. After these negotiations had gone on for some time, the Government sounded the Corporation as to their willingness to sell the land on the Thames Embankment. Well, the Corporation were very reluctant to do so, and their objection to sell these three acres of land to the Government was because they were afraid that the erection of the Mint on the Thames Embankment might be the means of creating a nuisance to the adjoining property by the fumes from the works, the pollution of the air, the noise of the manufacturing processes, and the constant passing of a large number of workmen during certain periods of the day. It was only after these objections had been entirely removed by the frankness and fulness with which the Government explained the whole matter, and by the Reports of two very able scientific men, one of whom, a chemist, reported upon the effect which might be produced upon the air by the establishment of a Mint upon the Embankment; while the other, Mr. Bramwell, the eminent engineer, reported upon the other points of difficulty. It appeared, from the Reports of these gentlemen, that there was no foundation whatever for the apprehensions that were entertained as to the erection of the new Mint on this particular site being a nuisance. The Corporation, when they were satisfied upon that head, at once withdrew their objection, and became willing parties to the negotiations for the sale. As soon as they came to the conclusion that the Mint might properly be constructed on the Embankment, the Corporation referred the matter to their own City Architect, while the Government, on their part, referred it to an eminent surveyor and valuer, and these gentlemen appointed as Arbitrator another architect and valuer, Mr. Clifton. As the result of that reference to arbitration, Mr. Clifton ultimately gave his award, and it was to carry out that award that the present Bill had been introduced. He failed to see, inasmuch as it was purely a local matter for the purchase and sale of a piece of land, why the Bill should necessarily have been brought in as a public measure. It appeared to him much more natural that it should be introduced as a Private Bill. There could be no technical objection to the scheme being carried out in a Private Bill; and, therefore, it was submitted to Parliament in a Private Bill. It had already passed through the House of Lords, and its sole object was to carry out an arrangement in regard to which, in the first instance, the Corporation had been extremely reluctant to negotiate. Ultimately, their objections were removed, and they had made what they considered to be a fair and equitable arrangement. The only question now was whether the Government would be allowed to complete a negotiation which had been carried on for the last five or six years, and whether a Committee of the House of Commons should have the opportunity of considering the circumstances of the case, and expressing an opinion upon it. His hon. Friend the Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) had another Amendment on the Paper, in which he proposed, in the event of the Bill being read a second time, to refer it to a Special Committee, with special instructions to regulate their inquiry. He believed that neither Her Majesty's Government nor the Corporation of the City of London had any objection to the proposal of his hon. Friend; and, on the whole, he (Sir Thomas Chambers) thought the best course would be to read the Bill a second time, and then to refer it to a Select Committee constituted in the way in which his hon. Friend suggested.

Mr. RYLANDS said, his hon. and learned Friend the Recorder of the City of London had made a speech which no one in that House could take the slightest objection to. At all events, he (Mr. Rylands) did not intend to take the slightest objection to the statement made by his hon. and learned Friend. He entirely repudiated any disposition to charge the Corporation with anything in connection with the proposal before the House which reflected upon the course they had pursued. So far as they were concerned, he quite admitted that the first movement in the matter was on the part of the Government. He remembered the debate which took place on the matter in 1871, and he had watched it narrowly ever since. It was a most singular thing that outside the Government a certain amount of constant pressure—whether one right hon. Gentleman or another occupied the position of Chancellor of the Exchequer or First Commissioner of Works — a constant pressure was put upon the Government, by somebody outside the Ministry, to induce them to take a step which, in the judgment of the House in 1871, and, certainly, in his (Mr. Rylands') judgment, was a step not only unjustifiable, but which would entail on the country a very large expenditure, without any corresponding benefits. He must say he entertained a strong feeling that the Bill which was now before the House ought not to have been introduced as a Private Bill, especially after what had occurred last Session and in previous Parliaments. It was a remarkable thing that a Bill, the effect of which was to reverse the deliberate decision of the House, should have been introduced in an unostentatious manner in the House of Lords as a Private Bill, and then brought down to the House of Commons without a word of explanation from the Government, seeing that it proposed to commit the country to a large expenditure which the House had already refused to sanction. He ventured to say that no hon. Member who was not conversant with the circumstances of the case would gain the slightest knowledge of the nature of the measure from a mere examination of the provisions of the Bill itself. When the matter was before the House on a former occasion, there was only a very partial and insufficient inquiry. The Committee reported in favour of the removal of the site of the Mint from Tower Hill to the Thames Embankment. His hon. Friend the Member for Birmingham (Mr. Muntz), whose absence from the House on account of ill-health they all regretted, took a prominent part in the debate which followed; and he was able, from his great knowledge of the subject, to adduce substantial reasons against the adoption of the Bill. The House divided against the Government, and rejected the Bill by a majority. What happened then? The matter was settled as far as the House was concerned, and as far as the Government were concerned. The right hon. Gentleman the late Chancellor of the Exchequer then came into Office, and the same pressure was put upon him as was put upon his Predecessor to remove the site of the Mint. With his known good nature, the right hon. Gentleman was induced to give way, and negotiations were entered into with the Corporation of the City of London. The right hon. Gentleman would recollect that he (Mr. Rylands) put a Question to him—he thought it was in 1879—asking him whether it was the fact that negotiations were going on between the Government and the Corporation with a view to obtain a site for the new Mint. He further asked the right hon. Gentleman if he would give an undertaking that the House should not be committed to the purchase of a new site without having an opportunity for fully discussing the question. The right hon. Gentleman very fairly told him that negotiations were going on, that they were not concluded, and that he would take care that the House should not be bound by the negotiations, or precluded from considering the whole matter. The House were now in this position. They were entitled to consider the whole matter; but they had certainly expected that no Bill would be brought in for dealing with it except a Public Bill, and on that ground he might have been prepared to vote against the present measure. At the same time, he had placed a proposal on the Paper for the appointment of a strong Committee, with a special Reference to such Committee, which would enable them to take the whole circumstances of the case into consideration, and to see whether or not it was desirable to remove the Mint from its present site, and whether an improvement to meet the necessities of the case could not be made upon the existing site. He thought that a strong Select Committee, with such an extended Reference, might be able to sift the matter thoroughly. He understood that the Government had no objection to his proposal; and he thought that the hon. Member for Chelsea (Mr. Firth), in view of that proposition, might not feel disinclined to allow the Bill to be read a second time, on the distinct understanding that a Committee with an extended Reference would be appointed.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE said, he only wished to say a few words. No doubt, the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) had correctly stated what had transpired on the subject. At the same time, he (Sir Stafford Northcote) wished to state to the House what his position had been in the matter. It was one which had been constantly before him, and to which he had given very anxious attention, with every disposition to avoid the spending of the large sum of money which the operation was sure to cost. But he had the conviction entirely forced upon him that there really was a necessity, and a growing necessity, for a complete alteration of the Mint buildings; and, as far as he had been able to consider the question and investigate it, he did not believe that the alterations which were required could be carried into effect on the site of the present building. He meant by this that if they were able to shut up the Mint for a certain time and carry on the operations of the Mint somewhere else, it was possible to re-construct the building on the present area. But if they could not do this, the inconvenience and loss to the public would be such that it almost seemed impossible to do what was necessary without obtaining a new site. There had been a great many difficulties in the way of getting a new site, arising principally from the prejudices of those to whom the proposed site belonged, or the persons who lived in the neighbourhood. That had been one of the difficulties in the way of the arrangement which had been proposed; but he hoped that they were now able to see their way to a satisfactory arrangement in the future. At the same time, he was not at all disposed to contest the observations of the hon. Member for Burnley, that it was reasonable there should be another inquiry. There had already been a formal inquiry before a Committee of the House; but he saw no objection to the appointment of another Committee if the Government entertained no objection to it. Therefore, the course now proposed by the hon. Member for Burnley appeared to him, on the whole, to be the most satisfactory one. The object they had in view was a public object of very great importance. At any moment the most serious inconvenience might arise in consequence of the breaking down of the existing machinery. Under these circumstances, he was of opinion that if the Bill was allowed to be read a second time, and was then referred to a Committee with some such instruction as that proposed by the hon. Member for Burnley, they might be able to see their way to a satisfactory solution of the difficulty.

Mr. Alderman **LAWRENCE** failed to see the force of the argument of the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands), that the Bill ought to have been brought in as a Public Bill. It was a simple Bill for carrying out an arrangement for the sale of a portion of land belonging to the Corporation of the City of London to the Government, and the sale of another portion of land by the Government to the Corporation. As the learned Recorder for the City of London (Sir Thomas Chambers) had well stated, the arrangement was to be carried out for the convenience of the Government, and the Corporation of the City for a long time were unwilling sellers. It was only after strong pressure that the Government were persuaded to sell the Bankruptcy Court to the City, and that the Corporation were induced to sell to the Government the land which they held in their possession on the Thames Embankment. That, he contended, had nothing to do with the question whether it ought to be a Private or a Public Bill. No mention of the word "Mint" was contained in the Bill. It was simply a Bill to enable the Government to purchase a certain quantity of land from the Corporation; and, in order to enable them to build a new Mint, it would be necessary for the Government to bring in a fresh Bill, and obtain the sanction of the House to the arrangements for the erection of a new public Mint. So far as the Corporation were concerned, the Government might use the land for any other purpose. There was no limit in the conditions of sale, and no compulsion whatever. So far as the opposition of his hon. Friend the Member for Chelsea (Mr. Firth) was concerned, it was quite sufficient for his hon. Friend that the Corporation proposed to sell anything or to buy anything. His hon. Friend was quite ready to oppose any object they might desire to carry out; and, no doubt, from his hon. Friend's great knowledge of the value of property in the City of London, and particularly in Chelsea, his views upon the matter were worthy of consideration. The House, however, would bear in mind that the opinion of very eminent men had been consulted as to the value of this land, and that the Bill only carried into effect the award of the Arbitrator who had inquired into the whole question. If the views of his hon. Friend were to be adopted, the Government ought to have no dealings whatever with the Corporation of London, and all the property belonging to the Corporation ought to be kept fastened up until the hon. Member's views in regard to the establishment of a great Metropolitan Municipality were carried out. In the meantime, this particular portion of the property of the Corporation would have to remain an open space probably for the next 50 or 100 years. He believed that that was the real object of his hon. Friend, and he had no fault to find with it. If it amused his hon. Friend, it certainly did not injure the Corporation. With respect to the Bill, if it were sent to a Select Committee, the Committee would have all the merits placed before them. If the House should then decide that the Mint should not be removed from its present site, and that it should not be built upon the Thames Embankment, the Corporation of London would have nothing more to say in the matter. The only object of the Bill was to carry out the arrangement which had been entered into with Her Majesty's Government; and the question whether the Government were to carry out their present intention, and build a Mint upon the new site, would have to come before Parliament in a regular form after the arrangement with the Corporation was completed. When that was done, it would be for the Government to adduce arguments to satisfy the House as to the advantages which would arise from building the Mint on the Embankment.

Lord **FREDERICK CAVENDISH** remarked, that there were various important questions involved in the present Bill. He thought his hon. Friend the Member for Chelsea (Mr. Firth) had done good service in calling the attention of the House to the measure; but he could not agree with his hon. Friend that the Bill ought to be rejected because it was a Private Bill. If the Bill was rejected on that ground, it would not determine the question whether or not a new Mint was to be erected on what was called the Thames Embankment site. If it did, then he should be quite prepared to agree with his hon. Friend that the matter ought to be dealt with by a Public Bill. But even if the present Bill passed, the House would still have to consider and settle that question. The necessity for the measure arose from the fact that the Corporation of the City of London were the owners of a certain plot of land on the Thames Embankment, which the Government were anxious to obtain for public purposes, and they had no power to sell it without an Act of Parliament. The question whether a Mint was to be erected on the site would have to be decided when the House was asked to vote a sum of money for the cost of the building. The only question at present raised was whether the Corporation should have power to sell and the Government power to purchase. The House would always have another opportunity of passing a judgment upon the question of erecting a new Mint. He wished to explain now why it was that the Government felt themselves bound to support the Bill, and why they felt themselves bound to confirm the arrangement entered into by their Predecessors in Office with the Corporation of the City of London. They felt that it was absolutely necessary that one Government should adhere to the engagements, in matters of this kind, that were entered into by another, so that anyone who transacted business with one Government would know that the arrangements made would not be disturbed by another. Indeed, it would be absolutely impossible for Public Business to be conducted if each succeeding Government could release itself from the engagements entered into by its Predecessors. It was, therefore, perfectly clear that the Government were bound to support the present Bill. But, while the Government were bound, the House was free; because, in the arrangement entered into by the late Government, there was a special Proviso that an Act of Parliament would be necessary to make it obligatory, and all the engagements were to be conditional on the obtaining of that Act. The House was, therefore, perfectly free in the matter, and, at the proper time, would be able either to confirm or to reject the proposal for the erection of a new Mint on the Thames Embankment. He hoped, however, that the House would not refuse its assent without grave consideration; and he would venture to suggest a few reasons why the matter should be more fully considered than it was possible that it could be on this, the second reading, stage of the Bill, and why he hoped the Motion, which his hon. Friend the Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) intended to make after the Bill had been read a second time, would be accepted. The whole question was carefully considered by a Select Committee in 1870, and the Government of that day were fully impressed with the absolute necessity of a great improvement being made in the Mint buildings. The present Mint buildings were erected at the beginning of the century. The demands upon the Mint had, however, largely increased, and the present Mint was altogether unable to meet the demands that were made upon it. It was quite true that within the last few years the demands made upon the Mint had been much smaller than usual owing to various causes. But it was not likely that the demands upon the Mint would remain in that position much longer; and it was necessary, therefore, to make provision for meeting all the demands that were likely to be made upon it. In the year 1872 the demands which were made upon the Mint were such that the Mint was unable to fulfil them, and the Government were obliged to enter into contracts with private firms for assistance in the copper and silver coinage, and great inconvenience might have been the result. There was also another consideration which rendered it necessary that there should be an improvement in the existing buildings. The gold coinage, he was sorry to say, was by no means in a satisfactory condition. The proportion of light coin was very large, and it was absolutely essential that the whole question of the gold coinage must be taken in hand before very long. But it might and had been said by some of his hon. Friends that the requirements might be met on the present site, and that it was perfectly possible to improve the existing Mint. Now, that was not so easy a matter as might appear at first sight. It would by no means be easy to extend the Mint while its operations were being carried on. In the first place, there were grave objections to the closing of the Mint for any lengthened period. The Mint was obliged to convert into coin all the bullion that was sent to it; and the closing of the Mint for six months or for a year could not, under ordinary circumstances, be safely undertaken. Then, again, the gold coinage was a very delicate operation. It required to be carried on with the greatest accuracy and nicety; and it would be impossible to conduct such a coinage amid all the turmoil and bustle of pulling down one part of the building and rebuilding another. Therefore he did not believe, under ordinary circumstances, that it would be possible to make extensive alterations in the present Mint. But, on the other hand, it was perfectly true that the circumstances had very greatly changed since the proposal for the erection of a new Mint was originally made by the present Lord Sherbrooke, who was then Chancellor of the Exchequer. It was then hoped that the Government would be able to obtain the site on the Thames Embankment for £80,000; its present value had been estimated at £254,000. The hon. Member for Chelsea (Mr. Firth) said the present moment afforded a remarkably favourable opportunity for improving the present Mint. It so happened that the amount of gold coinage held by the Bank of England was larger than it had ever been. The amount of gold coin held by the Bank of England, under ordinary circumstances, varied from £10,000,000 to £12,000,000; but, at the present moment, it stood at £17,500,000. Under all these circumstances, it certainly appeared to him that the Mint question might advantageously undergo the careful consideration of a Select Committee. He hoped, therefore, that the House would consent to read the Bill a second time, and that it would then refer it to the Select Committee which would be proposed by his hon. Friend the Member for Burnley.

Mr. FIRTH said, that after the observations which had been made by his noble Friend he would not press the Amendment. The object he had in moving it would be completely attained by the appointment of the Committee suggested by his hon. Friend the Member for Burnley; and, on the understanding that that Committee would be appointed, he would now withdraw the Amendment.

Mr. SPEAKER: Does the hon. Member propose to withdraw the Amendment?

Mr. FIRTH: Yes.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* to a Select Committee, to consist of Fifteen Members, Ten to be nominated by the House, and Five by the Committee of Selection.

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they consider and report upon the condition of the buildings, machinery, and appliances of the Royal Mint, and whether such alterations and improvements as may be required in them can be made upon the present site of the Royal Mint, or whether it is desirable that new buildings should be erected upon the site proposed to be sold by the Corporation of the City of London under the provisions of the London City Lands (Thames Embankment) Bill, or elsewhere.

ROYAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND.

Copy *presented,*—of Scheme for the Organisation of the University as adopted by the Senate [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS.

BARONIAL WORKS (IRELAND)—BALLYDEHOB, CO. CORK.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the pay clerk to the Baronial Works at Ballydehob, county Cork, is paid a salary of £4 per week; whether, being principal merchant of the barony, he supplies all the tools, wheelbarrows, picks, crowbars, &c., to the workmen employed on the Baronial Works; whether the amount of wages paid to some of the labourers is not frequently as low as 9*s.* and 4*s.* per week; whether the payments of wages to labourers are not frequently paid in an irregular manner, so as practically to bring about the truck system, inasmuch as the labourers have to deal with the clerk for provisions, &c.; and, whether the labourers at Cappaglass, Dirrindnord, and Dirriconnell, within about two miles of Ballydehob, after being at work during five weeks, had only received two payments of wages in that time—one payment being made on the 27th February and the other on the 2nd March, both payments being thus made in the same week?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I find, on inquiry, that the division to which the Question refers is not comprised in the jurisdiction alluded to. As far as the rate of salary paid is concerned, I find that for similar services the Board of Works do not pay more than from 25*s.* to 30*s.* per week; but I do not know that the committee in this case cannot, if they choose, sanction the payment of a higher scale. It is the duty of the county surveyor and the standing committee to attend to these matters. It is open to all persons aggrieved to make complaints to the Board of Works or the Irish Executive, and in the event of their so doing such complaints will be fully inquired into.

MALTA—SALARY OF THE GOVERNOR—FOOD TAXES.

Mr. MAC IVER asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to give any practical effect to such portion of Sir Penrose Julyan's Report in regard to Malta, as recommended, that some considerable portion of the salary of His Excellency the Governor should be charged upon Imperial resources in consideration of Military services; and also as regards his recommendation that the existing exemption at present enjoyed by the British garrison from the whole of the food taxation, borne by the Maltese, should no longer form a source of profit to the Imperial Exchequer at the cost of the Native inhabitants, who require to make good the deficiency?

Mr. GRANT DUFF: No, Sir. Her Majesty's Government has no intention of making alterations either in the arrangements with respect to the Governor's salary or the supply of the garrison.

CORONERS (IRELAND)—ELECTION IN WEXFORD COUNTY.

Mr. HEALY asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, If it is the case that in the elections for coroner in Wexford county, the Parliamentary electors

of the Boroughs of Wexford and New Ross (who pay much of the rates towards his salary) have no voice; and, whether the same disability exists in boroughs in any other Irish county; and, if so, whether the Government will take steps to amend the Law on the subject?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Law): The right, Sir, to vote at the election of a Coroner in Ireland is vested by statute in those residents in the district who are entitled to vote at the election of Members of Parliament for the county; and as the county franchise is much higher than the borough franchise, it follows that borough electors, merely as such, cannot at Wexford or elsewhere vote at the election of a Coroner. With regard to the last Question of the hon. Member, I have to say that this matter is connected with the question of Irish county government, which the Government has under its consideration.

TREATY OF BERLIN—ARTICLE 61—ARMENIA.

Mr. BAXTER asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If Her Majesty's Government, in conjunction with the Governments of the other Great Powers, have considered, or will consider, the desirability, as the most efficacious, if not the only practical, mode of giving effect to the Sixty-first Article of the Treaty of Berlin, of trying to obtain for Armenia an administration similar to that which has worked so satisfactorily in the Lebanon?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: As I have stated on a former occasion, it has been considered advisable to postpone discussion on reforms in Armenia until the settlement of the Greek Frontier Question. When the proper time arrives Her Majesty's Government will be ready to consider any proposal that appears likely to bring about an improvement in the condition of the Armenian subjects of the Sultan.

ARMY—REGIMENTAL ORGANIZATION.

Lord EDWARD CAVENDISH, who had given Notice of a Question to the Secretary of State for War as to whether he will take into consideration the effect the proposed changes, as detailed at page 7 in the Memorandum lately issued on Regimental Organization, will have on the prospects of the senior captains in the Line who, under the existing Regulations, would in a short time become mounted majors? said, he would not put the Question in the form in which he had put it on the Paper, but would ask whether the House would have an opportunity of discussing the scheme before it was finally adopted?

Mr. CHILDERS: I am glad my noble Friend has not put the Question of which he has given Notice, inasmuch as it is extremely intricate and involved. In asking that he will communicate with me personally, may I say that when, after the Recess, the Army Votes come on, there will be ample opportunity for discussing the questions which he wished to raise?

STATE OF IRELAND—THE CONSTABULARY.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY (for Mr. Dawson) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the following occurrences:—On Sunday, 20th March last, the Sub-Inspector of Police at Carlow, having drawn the attention of Constable Colter to the fact of a chimney being on fire, the constable on going to the House said "Oh! it is only a Land Leaguer's chimney," and on second thoughts said "Perhaps though we had better rap them up;" and, if he is unaware of these circumstances, whether he would cause them to be inquired into?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: My attention has not been called to the matter, except by the Notice of the hon. Member, whose absence I regret; because I should like to tell him that, in my view, the occurrence is not one which ought to be made the subject of a Question in this House, or ought to occupy its time.

NAVY—CORPORAL PUNISHMENT.

Admiral Sir JOHN HAY asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether corporal punishment has recently been inflicted, with the approval of the Board, on three mutineers on board Her Majesty's Prison Ship "Liffey;" and, in case the Naval Discipline Bill should become Law, what punishment will be substituted in like cases? The right hon. and gallant Gentleman also asked, Whether it is intended to make provision in the Naval Discipline Act Amendment Bill, for the corporal punishment of boys in Her Majesty's Navy, with birch or other instrument?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The Board has been advised that the punishment inflicted on the three men on board Her Majesty's ship *Liffey* was in accordance with existing law and regulations; and, accordingly, it was not disapproved by the Board when reported to them from Coquimbo. The Naval Discipline Amendment Bill does not alter the power which the Board of Admiralty at present possesses to lay down rules for the discipline of naval prisons. Boys are punished under the regulations for minor punishments which the Board of Admiralty is empowered to lay down by Section 52 of the Naval Discipline Act; and we are advised that they will continue to be punished under those regulations if the Amending Bill becomes law in the shape in which it is presented to Parliament. There is certainly a much stronger legislative sanction for these punishments than for the flogging at Eton and Harrow.

ARMY—THE BRIGADE OF GUARDS.

Sir PATRICK O'BRIEN asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, in the event of his entertaining favourably the proposition of the honourable and gallant Member for North Leicester to add two battalions to the brigade of Guards, he will grant to these new battalions an Irish designation?

Mr. CHILDERS: In reply to my hon. Friend, I have to say that should two battalions be added to the Foot Guards his suggestion would be considered; but I have no present intention to increase the strength of the Guards.

LICENSING (METROPOLIS).

Sir PATRICK O'BRIEN asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he will consider the propriety of recommending to the Government to introduce a measure transferring to some administration responsible to the Government and to the Country, the power to grant licences for the sale of spirituous liquors and for the opening of music halls and other places of amusements in the immense area now under the jurisdiction of the "Middlesex magistrates," a body appointed by an individual, and responsible alone to the Lord Chancellor in case of proved malfeasance?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I cannot say that the Government have it in contemplation to deprive the Middlesex magistrates of their present jurisdiction as far as the granting of licences is concerned.

ARMY ORGANIZATION—THE NEW SCHEME—MAJORS OF ROYAL ARTILLERY AND ENGINEERS.

Mr. CARINGTON asked the Secretary of State for War, What will be the conditions under which Majors of the Royal Artillery and of the Royal Engineers who were promoted to that rank before October 1, 1877, will be compulsorily retired?

Mr. CHILDERS: As there has been a good deal of misapprehension on this subject, I will at once say that Majors of the Artillery and Engineers appointed before October 1, 1877, will be retired at 50. The seven years' rule does not now apply, nor is it intended to make it applicable to them.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—PATRICK DOWNEY.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he will state whether Patrick Downey, of Castletown Bere, who was previously arrested and brought for trial before the magistrates on the charge for which he was subsequently arrested under the Coercion Act, was afforded any opportunity of giving evidence in his own defence at the Petty Sessions Court; and, if not, whether he will now give the prisoner this opportunity of clearing himself of the charge?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: In answer to a previous Question put to me on this subject, I stated this was one of the cases in which a person was arrested on suspicion and dismissed, in the belief that it would be impossible to obtain evidence against him owing to the state of the country. He has since been arrested under the Protection Act. In reply to the second part of the hon. Member's Question, I have to state that it is not the intention of the Government to treat this prisoner differently to other prisoners. He will be treated under precisely the same rules as other prisoners confined under the same Act.

Mr. HEALY: Will he not be allowed an opportunity of clearing himself of the charge?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: Like other prisoners confined under this Act, he will have an opportunity at the end of three months of having his case considered.

Mr. HEALY also asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, in laying upon the Table of the House the statutable particulars as to the men arrested under the Coercion Act, he will cause to be added thereto a statement showing how many of the prisoners are town councillors, poor law guardians, and students of the learned professions, with the walk or condition in life in each case, and, if farmers, how many acres of land they hold?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I do not think it my duty to add to the Returns anything beyond that which is set forth in the Act which has been passed.

ACCOUNTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE IN CHANCERY (IRELAND).

Mr. FINDLATER asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, If his attention has been called to the report of the case of Williams *v.* White, in a recent number of the "Irish Times" newspaper, from which it appears that a solicitor having ascertained from a clerk in the Accountant General's Office of the Court of Chancery, who innocently made the disclosure that a sum of £8,000 was lying there unclaimed, communicated with the parties interested and obtained from them a third of the fund as the price of giving information of its existence; and to inquire, having regard to the judgment of the Master of the Rolls, in which he says—

> "He hoped that this was the last occasion on which either in casual conversation or by design any such communication would be made, and he also hoped that some steps would be taken to compel the publication of the accounts remaining derelict in the Accountant General's Office. This must be done by legislation as the Judges had not the power to do it. This case furnished a reason why such a thing should be done. It was monstrous for a solicitor of the Court of Chancery to trade on the Accountant General's Books;"

and, whether it is the intention of the

Government to bring in a Bill to effectuate the recommendation of his Lordship, or to take steps by periodical publication "of the accounts remaining derelict," to prevent the recurrence of so grave a scandal?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Law): Yes, Sir; I have seen the report of the case mentioned by my hon. Friend, and hope, during the Recess, to make inquiry into the matters referred to by the learned Judge with a view to consider the propriety of some legislation on the subject.

SCIENCE AND ART—THE GEOLOGICAL SURVEY.

Admiral Sir JOHN HAY asked the Vice President of the Council, When the Geological Surveys of England, Scotland, and Ireland will be completed?

Mr. MUNDELLA: I regret that I am not in possession of the requisite data to enable me to fix a time for the completion of the Geological Survey. We have carefully gone into the Question; and, not being satisfied with the present rate of progress, we are making arrangements which we hope will hasten the completion of the work. If the right hon. and gallant Gentleman will repeat the Question later in the Session I trust I shall be in a position to give him more precise information; at any rate, I will make a statement in moving the Estimates.

ARMY—QUARTERMASTERS—WARRANT OF 1880.

Mr. CAUSTON asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he is aware that a strong feeling of dissatisfaction exists amongst certain Quartermasters with regard to their classification, who consider that their being placed in the subordinate section makes a distinction between the officers who rise from the ranks and others, and which they regard as a caste brand; and, whether he will place those who by ability and efficiency have shown themselves worthy of such promotion in the superior section, or altogether abolish the distinction between superior and subordinate?

Mr. CHILDERS: I am fully aware of the objections which have been raised to the words "subordinate section" used in a former Warrant, for which I am not responsible; and the amendment of that Warrant, issued in January, 1880, will be considered when other pressing matters have been disposed of.

CHINA—MIXED COURT OF SHANGHAI —CHINESE CRIMINALS.

Mr. J. W. PEASE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he is able to lay upon the Table of the House, a Return of the number of Chinese criminals who have been tried at the Mixed Court of Shanghai during 1879, and the nature of the punishments inflicted upon those who have been convicted; and, whether any Report on the nature of the punishments inflicted by that Court has been received from Sir Thomas Wade, as expected by him in July last year; and, if so, whether he will lay that Report upon the Table?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: The Return of Chinese criminals tried before the Mixed Courts at Shanghai has not been received; but a Report on the nature of the punishments inflicted by that Court has been transmitted by Sir Thomas Wade, and will be laid on the Table.

NAVY—COURT MARTIAL AT SYDNEY — CASE OF C. P. STAMP — H.M.S. "WOLVERINE."

Mr. LABOUCHERE asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, If his attention has been called to a court martial held on board H.M.S. "Wolverine" on the 20th December last, when a chief petty officer was sentenced to twelve months' imprisonment; whether Captain Purvis, of H.M.S. "Danae," sat as President of the Court after he had been objected to, on the ground that he had, in reply to a memorial from the petty officers of his ship, stated his intention of doing all he could against the accused; whether the proceedings of this and of two other courts martial held on board the same vessel have been severely criticized in the Sydney press; and, whether Her Majesty's Government intend to take any action in the matter?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I replied at length some six weeks ago to the hon. Member for Stafford (Mr. Macdonald) about the court martial of the *Wolverine.* My hon. Friend will find the details in

Hansard of the 22nd of February. The prisoner has not yet arrived in England; but when he has arrived, his case will be considered. Captain Purvis sat as President; but no objection was made to his acting, and the prisoner pleaded guilty. Nothing is known as to the Memorial from the petty officers, nor as to the proceedings of this or any other court martial having been criticized by the Sydney Press. The fact is that the courts martial on the station have not been exceptionally numerous, and most certainly their sentences, which have been carefully examined at the Admiralty, have not been exceptionally severe. The last court martial on the *Wolverine* was held on a gunner in the Royal Marine Artillery, who, when on shore for rifle practice, got drunk, knocked off the helmet of his superior officer, and kicked it along the road, resisted the escort which was sent to arrest him, tried to jump overboard from the boat, and, when rebuked by the lieutenant in command, said—well, I had rather not tell the House what that gunner said—and for all this, the man only got 14 days' imprisonment. I must say that if Her Majesty's Government took any action in the matter it would not be to the advantage of the gunner.

NAVY—H.M.S. "INFLEXIBLE."

Mr. GOURLEY asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, When he anticipates being able to send the "Inflexible" to sea; and if, when commissioned, she will have the whole of her turret guns on board; whether any are to be breech, or if all are to be muzzle-loading guns; and, further, if he will be good enough to state how many men she will carry, distinguishing between Naval and Marine officers, engineers, firemen, seamen, and Marines?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The *Inflexible* could be sent to sea in a fortnight; but the ship will not require to be commissioned for the Mediterranean until July. All her turret guns are on board. She has eight 20-pounder breech-loaders; but her 80-ton turret guns are muzzle-loaders. Being twice the size of any guns hitherto mounted in our Navy, the number of seamen gunners requires so much consideration that the details of the complement are not yet decided. There will be a Marine officer on board, if that is what my hon. Friend wishes to know.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS ACT, 1868—DISQUALIFICATION FOR CORRUPT PRACTICES.

Mr. RYLANDS asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether the disqualifications attaching to candidates and others found guilty of corrupt practices by the report of an election judge also apply to the same persons scheduled by a Royal Commission; and, whether candidates, aldermen, and magistrates found guilty at Macclesfield and other Boroughs will be rendered incapable of sitting in Parliament, voting, &c. for seven years?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James): There are certain disqualifications attaching to candidates in consequence of being reported personally guilty of bribery by an Election Judge. These disqualifications are imposed by 31 & 32 *Vict.* c. 125, s. 43; but no disqualification of any kind attaches to any person so reported other than a candidate except the prohibition of his employment as an election agent during seven years. The reason for this is to be found in the wording of the 45th section of the Act I have mentioned, which says—

> "Any person other than a candidate found guilty in any proceeding in which, after notice of the charge, he has had an opportunity of being heard,"

shall be subjected to certain disqualifications. It has been determined by Lord Blackburn, in the decision given by him in the Bewdley Petition case—and it seems to me quite correctly determined—that a person giving evidence upon the hearing of an Election Petition has not had "an opportunity of being heard" in the legal sense, and that, therefore, unless tried and convicted before a jury the disqualifications do not attach. The same rule applies with greater force in relation to the Reports of Commissioners; for even candidates are subjected to no penalties or disqualifications in consequence of being reported by Commissioners as personally guilty of bribery. The result is that unless persons be prosecuted and convicted, which they cannot be in the face of a certificate of indemnity, no consequences of any kind result directly to anyone from being reported guilty of corrupt practices by Election Commissioners. As I mentioned on Friday, the Lord Chancellor has, of his own motion, taken, and is taking, steps in relation to magistrates who have been reported guilty of corrupt practices, and it rests with Parliament to determine what disqualification it will impose when Bills for that purpose are presented to it. The necessity for considering whether further disqualification than the usual one of mere removal from the register by statute should not be imposed becomes apparent when we know that in five Reports 20 Magistrates, 12 Aldermen, and 47 Town Councillors are found to be guilty of corrupt practices.

SOUTH AFRICA — THE TRANSVAAL COMMISSION—CONDITIONS OF PEACE.

Mr. MACFARLANE asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If, before finally entrusting the Government of the Transvaal, and the future welfare and liberty of its large native population to the Boers, he will instruct the Commissioners appointed to settle the conditions of peace to ascertain by plébiscite the wishes of the majority of its people; and if the surrender of the Transvaal, without some such precaution, to a fighting minority would be a fulfilment of the "honourable engagements entered into with the natives" to which he referred on the 25th of May last as a reason for maintaining the annexation, the original policy of which he condemned?

Mr. GLADSTONE: It has never been the practice, as far as I know, of the British Government to adopt a *plébiscite* upon occasions bearing any analogy to the present. There would have been an occasion when the Ionian Islands were surrendered, which would certainly have offered a much easier, better, and more certain opportunity for the application of such a principle; but it was not adopted, and I think was not recommended by anyone. The present occasion, in the view of the Government, would be a very suitable one for attempting to bring into notice the principle of promiscuous popular voting partly among the Boers and partly among the Native population of the Transvaal. With respect to the Question of which the hon. Member has given me private Notice, I certainly am of opinion that the methods which we are engaged in adopting, and which, of course, are not quite fully before the House, are those by which we shall be able most satisfactorily to discharge our engagements to the Native population.

TURKEY—BRITISH TRADE AT SMYRNA.

Mr. W. H. SMITH asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If arrangements have yet been made to restore to the commercial community of Smyrna the 100 pics of harbour frontage free of quay dues which was reserved to them in the concession granted by the Porte to the Smyrna Quay Company; and, if not, what steps Her Majesty's Government have taken to protect the interests of British trade at Smyrna?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Her Majesty's Government have protested against the closing of the 100 pics at Smyrna in contravention of formal engagements entered into by the Porte; and they have called upon the Turkish Government to restore the space thus arbitrarily closed. Mr. Goschen, since his return to Constantinople, has addressed a further Note to the Porte, to which we hear by telegraph to-day that a reply has just been received. The Correspondence will shortly be laid before Parliament.

PARLIAMENT—RULES AND ORDERS—QUESTIONS—PRINTING REPLIES.

Mr. LEAKE asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, in consideration of the time occupied by Members of the Government in answering questions put by Members of the House, and also of the considerable difficulty of hearing many of the replies given, it would be possible, at the discretion of Ministers giving such replies, to print them and put them in the hands of Members at the commencement of the sitting of the House; and, whether he would consider, if such a practice were adopted, it might be sufficient for an honourable Member, on his name being called by Mr. Speaker, to rise in his place in silent recognition that his question had been duly answered?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, I cannot be surprised at the feeling which has induced my hon. Friend to put this Question; but, on the whole, I do not think that his object would be promoted by my giving an answer in detail to it at the present moment. It appears to me that some general consideration might very appropriately be given to some of the Rules affecting the putting of Questions in this House; and probably a result of that general consideration might be arrived at which would give satisfaction to my hon. Friend.

ARMY—THE ROYAL ENGINEERS (EXTRA PAY).

Mr. **LEAKE** asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the men of the Royal Engineers who were engaged in the Zulu War have been refused working pay in addition to their Regimental pay, and whether they do not receive such pay when peacefully employed on works at home; whether they have been refused a gratuity for service in the field to which, according to precedents, they would seem to have been entitled; whether time-sheets or checks of the time during which the men were engaged on active operations in the field were not kept by their commanding officers and forwarded to head-quarters; and, if so, if he could state the purpose for which they were so kept and forwarded; and, whether the officers of the Royal Engineers who were engaged in the Zulu War have received working pay and a gratuity for service in the field in addition to their Regimental pay; and, if so, if he could explain why rewards granted to the officers should be withheld from the men?

Mr. **CHILDERS**: The men of the Royal Engineers engaged in the Zulu War did not receive working pay, which is only given to soldiers, whether of the Royal Engineers or of other arms, when employed upon permanent military works; or when performing services for the various Army Departments. It is not given to them on ordinary military duty including the ordinary services required of them during a campaign. This has always been the rule in the Army. Neither officers nor men become entitled to any gratuity for service in the field in the Zulu War; unless, indeed, allusion is made to an allowance of £1 which has been made to each soldier on account of damage to clothing. I have no knowledge of the time sheets to which my hon. Friend's third Question refers. If they exist, it is a matter of internal arrangement of which the War Office has no information. The officers of Royal Engineers received the extra pay to which they have always been entitled under the Warrant when employed on the duties of their corps, but no gratuity or working pay. In fact, the payments to officers and men of the Royal Engineers during the Zulu War—except the allowance of £1 to the men—have been those uniformly allowed for many years.

BRITISH BURMAH—CONSUMPTION OF OPIUM.

Mr. **J. W. PEASE** asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether he has received a Copy of a Memorandum on the Consumption of Opium, forwarded in the spring of 1880 by C. U. Aitchison, Esq., Commissioner of British Burmah, to the Government of India; whether he is in possession of any information as to the action taken by the Government with regard to the Opium Houses in that Province consequent upon the recommendations contained in that Memorandum; and, whether he can lay that Paper, and any others connected with this subject, upon the Table of the House?

The Marquess of **HARTINGTON**: Yes, I have received a copy of that Memorandum, and there will be no difficulty in laying it upon the Table if the hon. Member will move for it. The increase of the consumption of opium in British Burmah has been for some time under the consideration of the Government of India, with the view of checking it.

TUNIS—DISTURBANCES ON THE FRONTIER.

Baron **HENRY DE WORMS** asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether any report has been received from Her Majesty's Consul at Tunis, relative to the alleged outbreak on the Tunisian frontier; and, if so, whether he can communicate such information to the House?

Mr. **MONTAGUE GUEST** asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the attention of Her Majesty's Government has been directed to a Protocol of the Sublime Ottoman Porte of the 28th of July, 1868, which explicitly declares all foreigners possessing real property throughout all the Turkish Dominion to be subject to the local Courts and local laws, even where all parties interested are foreigners; whether Her Majesty's Government has always recognized the Regency of Tunis as an integral part of the Ottoman Empire; and, if Her Majesty's Government officially congratulated the Bey in 1871 on his obtaining from the Sultan a firman ratifying and confirming that position; whether this Protocol has been laid before the Law Officers of the Crown with the Papers on the Enfida case, and if they have arrived at any decision; and, if Her Majesty's Government will now lay the Papers upon the Table?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Her Majesty's Government have received no Report as to the disturbances on the Tunisian Frontier. With regard to the Question of my hon. Friend the Member for Wareham, I may state that the Protocol in question has been referred to the Law Officers, whose Report has not yet been received. Tunis has always been recognized as a vassal State; but it possesses the right of self-government, and of concluding with foreign Powers Treaties not of a political or military character. The case has not yet reached a point at which Papers can with advantage be laid before the House.

ARMY—NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS.

Mr. O'CONNOR POWER asked the Secretary of State for War, If it is not usual to allow non-commissioned officers of good conduct and exemplary character to remain in the Army after the full period of twenty-one years' service if they wish to remain; and, whether commanding officers of regiments have any authority to discharge such non-commissioned officers so long as they are able and willing to serve?

Mr. CHILDERS: In reply to the hon. Gentleman, I have to say that all non-commissioned officers who express a desire to continue in the Service after the full period of 21 years, and whose applications are approved by the competent military authorities, are usually allowed to remain in the Army, under Section 82 of the Army Discipline and Regulation Act, 1879. Should a non-commissioned officer not express such a desire, his discharge is proceeded with on the completion of his term of service. But should he express such a wish, it rests with the competent military authorities to approve, his commanding officer being bound to forward his application to the War Office.

TURKEY AND GREECE—THE FRONTIER QUESTION.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If he can give any authority besides that of Mr. Kirby Green for his statement that five-sevenths of the population in the districts proposed by the Berlin Conference to be ceded to Greece are Greek; and, whether he will, following the example of the French Foreign Minister, M. Barthelmy St. Hilaire, publicly, with or without the concert of Europe, advise Greece to moderate her excessive demands?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: The information to which the hon. Member refers was not received from Mr. Kirby Green, to whose Reports, however, both Her Majesty's late and present Governments have attached great value, but from officers who have visited the country in question, and derived their information from statistics gathered on the spot. With regard to the second portion of the hon. Member's Question, I cannot state in detail what is the course that is being taken by the Powers at the present time.

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL—VIOLATION OF THE ARMISTICE.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether it is true that a severe engagement has taken place at Pretoria since the Armistice, and whether the Government intend to take any notice of this act on the part of the Boers, as well as of their conduct at Brunker's Spruit and at Potchefstroom; whether the Government have received information confirming the statement in the "Times" and other papers that the gravest discontent at the terms of peace prevailed among British Colonists, that the British Flag has been insulted, that the Colonists propose to continue the struggle themselves, and that loyal Dutch and British settlers in the Transvaal are being persecuted and driven from the country; and, whether Her Majesty's Government will take steps to maintain the honour and influence of Great Britain in South Africa, or whether they will allow the loyal Dutch and British residents in the Transvaal the same privilege that they gave to the "friendly" inhabitants of Candahar, viz. that of retiring with the retreating British garrisons out of the country altogether?

Mr. GRANT DUFF: In reply to the hon. Member's first Question, I have to say that, under the authority of Her Majesty's Government, the Commission will consider what acts which may have been done at Potchefstroom or elsewhere are covered, and what are not covered, by the amnesty. In reply to the hon. Member's second Question, I have to say "No." In reply to his third Question, I have simply to say that Her Majesty's Government has maintained, is maintaining, and will maintain the influence of Great Britain in South Africa.

Lord COLIN CAMPBELL asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether it is the case, as reported by telegrams to the "Standard" published on the 2nd instant, that the Boer leaders have not observed, or are powerless to compel the observance of, the agreement to the effect that there should be "no molestation for political opinion on either side," and that many who were loyal to the late Government are now flying from the country in consequence of the gross violation of the agreement; and, if so, whether the Government will represent to the Boer leaders that such a state of things, if allowed to continue, will render the Treaty ratified on the 23rd of March no longer binding on the Crown?

Mr. GRANT DUFF: I will first reply to my noble Friend's second Question. I think it would be most undesirable to say, on a hypothetical case, what it might or might not be proper to do if the Boer leaders did something which we have no evidence they have done—the more especially as it is my duty to reply to the first Question of my noble Friend by saying that we have no information confirmatory of the statement therein contained. Of course, in a disturbed country it is perfectly possible that violent things may happen; and it will be the duty of the Commission to review all such things, if brought before them, before a final settlement is arrived at.

STATE OF IRELAND—SPEECH OF MR. DILLON, M.P., AT THURLES.

Sir HENRY FLETCHER asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the reports of the speech of the honourable Member for Tipperary at Thurles, in the "Freeman's Journal" and "Nation" newspapers of the 2nd instant, where he is reported to have said as follows:—

> "One farm empty and turned into a commonage—and there were more than one in Tipperary to-day—had more effect in bringing the landlords to terms than all the talk on all the platforms in Tipperary. He warned them to keep up that system—to let the land-grabber know that, no matter what Mr. Justice Fitzgerald or Lord Justice Fitzgibbon might say, he would be Boycotted, and Boycotted worse than ever he was before coercion. The moment it went out that the people are afraid to Boycott the land-grabber, that moment they would see the rents go up again, and the land-grabber at his work. (Hear, hear.) He was happy to say that in Tipperary no man had taken a farm from which another had been evicted since he came into the country;"

And, whether, having regard to the previous speeches of the honourable Member at Borrisokane and Woodford of the same tendency and effect, he proposes to take any action in reference thereto?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: The Report furnished to the Irish Executive by the Government reporter is substantially the same as that mentioned by the hon. Baronet, although it does not contain the words alluded to in the report quoted in the House a day or two ago by the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton). As to what action the Government intended to take in regard to the speech of the hon. Member for Tipperary, I do not think it is for the public interest that Questions should be asked, the answers to which must fetter the Government in the fulfilment of its duty—the preservation of law and order in Ireland. I must, therefore, respectfully decline to answer the Question.

NAVY—THE MARINES.

Sir HENRY FLETCHER asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, If it is the case that, whilst the promotion of the Subalterns of the Royal Marines is admittedly very slow, and behind that of the average of other branches of the Service, two Lieutenant Colonels have been passed over for command of Divisions of Royal Marines, and yet allowed to remain serving under officers who formerly were their juniors; and that one of these superseded officers has months ago applied for retirement; and, whether he has taken the case into his consideration?

MR. TREVELYAN: It is the case that two lieutenant colonels have been passed over for the command of divisions of the Marines; but I cannot help thinking that it is a pity to call attention to the fact in Parliament, as, where promotion by selection exists, the choice of one officer for promotion is no reflection upon another. Since the Order in Council of 1878, the command of divisions in the Marines is given, "without reference to seniority, to officers whose services and qualifications best justify their selection." One of the lieutenant colonels, some months ago, applied, not to retire, but to know what retiring allowance he would receive in case he retired.

PUBLIC HEALTH—PUTRID AMERICAN HAMS.

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether he has seen that at the Guildhall Police Court on Friday last, Alderman W. Lawrence ordered six casks, containing 200 putrid American hams, weighing about 18 cwt., to be destroyed, which had been exposed for sale in the Central Meat Market; and, whether he is prepared to recommend that communication should be made with the American authorities with the view to their taking some steps to prevent similar exportations?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN, in reply, said, as far as he was able to gather the particulars of this case from the Question of the hon. Member, it appeared that the existing law was sufficient for the protection of the consumer. He had no information whether the hams referred to by the hon. Member were obtained from America in a bad state, or whether they became putrid in this country. If the latter, of course no restriction upon exportation would have any effect; and if the former, he was of opinion the action of the consignee would be more influential upon the consignor than anything Her Majesty's Government could do.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE BANKRUPTCY BILL.

MR. MONK asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether it will be in his power to introduce the proposed Bill to amend the Law of Bankruptcy before the Easter Recess?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN, in reply, said, he was extremely anxious to be able to introduce the Bill before Easter, in order that its provisions might be considered by the House and the country during the Recess. He was afraid that would only be possible if the House would be willing, as he hoped it might be, to take a Morning Sitting on Friday. If that should be the pleasure of the House, then it would be necessary formally to make a Motion for the introduction of the Bill on Thursday night. That would be made without debate; the Motion would be adjourned, and then it would become the Order of the Day on Friday morning.

EVICTIONS (IRELAND).

MR. O'CONNOR POWER asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, since the Compensation for Disturbance Bill and the Royal Commission refer to many Irish rents as excessive, the Government will bring in a short Bill to suspend evictions, or will refuse to lend the assistance of the military and the police to the landlords, with a view of avoiding further effusion of blood?

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I wish to ask, in reference to that unfortunate affray near Ballaghadereen, county of Mayo, Whether it is true that the number of wounded is not two, as the right hon. Gentleman stated, but something between 20 and 30; whether it is true that the process-server fired and reloaded his revolver several times; and, whether the object of the crowd originally was to get possession of the ejectment processes; and, whether the tenants on the estate were all miserably poor, and all of them, up to September last, were in receipt of relief?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: I think the House will see that it is utterly impossible for me to answer such a Question as that without any Notice whatever. The hon. Member did not even give me private Notice. How is it possible for me, simply sitting here, to know the exact position of these tenants? Of course, I should have to send to Ireland to obtain it. I wonder the hon. Member did not, at least, give me private Notice of the Question. With regard to the circumstances of the collision, if the House does not object to my repeating what I stated yesterday, I must reiterate the statement that the attack was made upon four police going in company with the process-server, before they reached the place in which there was a considerable body of police for the purpose of protecting the process-server in serving the processes. But at the time of the affray there were only four policemen present. With regard to the Question which the hon. Member has put down on the Paper, it would be very difficult for me to answer fully without anticipating what we might expect on the immediate discussion upon the Land Bill of the Government, and especially without anticipating the Statement of my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister. With regard to whether the Government intend to bring in a short Bill to suspend evictions, it is not the intention of the Government to do so. If they were to do so, it could only be by displacing the Land Bill for a long time, in all probability putting off the power of being able to bring that Bill before the House. As regards the second part of the Question, which the hon. Member words in this manner — Whether the Government

> "Will refuse to lend the assistance of the military and the police to the landlords, with a view of avoiding further effusion of blood?"

I suppose the hon. Member means whether we would give directions to the constabulary and the military not to assist the officers of the law in the recovery of rent or debts by legal process. The Government have not the power of doing that; and if they had the power of doing that, they could not do it without an entire disappearance of law in any district in which it was done.

THE LEGACY AND PROBATE DUTIES.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I wish to put a Question to the Prime Minister, of which I have given him private Notice, with respect to a statement in his Budget Speech of last night, which appears not to have been properly understood. I refer to the statement with regard to the proposal as to the Legacy and the Probate Duties. Will the right hon. Gentleman kindly state How he arrives at the net result that £390,000 will be gained on the Probate Duty; also what the Probate Duty would have produced if it had been left alone, and what it will produce as altered? I would also put the same Question as to the Legacy Duty.

Mr. GLADSTONE thanked the right hon. Gentleman for giving him the opportunity of answering the Question, as evidently, probably owing to his own fault, what he had said had not been correctly understood. The Probate Duty, according to the Estimate, if it had been left alone, would have produced £3,100,000 for the year. As it was, it would produce, not for the year, but for the 10 months with the two additional months, £3,613,000, or an augmentation of £513,000. The Legacy Duty, if left alone, would have produced £3,650,000. With the alteration in operation for 10 months, it was estimated it would produce for the year £3,525,000. The result was a gain on the Probate Duty of £513,000, and a loss upon Legacy Duty of £125,000, leaving a net gain of £388,000, or, in round numbers, £390,000. That, he thought, was exactly the information which was desired, and it would be understood that the date on which they expected to bring the new system into operation was the 1st June. He might have mentioned that the gain upon Probate Duty would have been much larger than he had represented; but he had taken the net gain after deducting £400,000 on account of debts, and likewise £30,000 which represented the loss upon small estates.

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL COMMISSION — THE INSTRUCTIONS.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I wish to put a Question to the Prime Minister with regard to the Instructions to be given to the Commissioners in South Africa. The right hon. Gentleman told us that he would consult with the Colonial Secretary as to laying these Instructions on the Table. Is the Prime Minister able to tell us now, Whether we are likely to have these Instructions before us previous to the Recess?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I mentioned the other day that the Instructions could not yet be laid before the House, and the Question was asked whether it would not be practicable to lay a portion of them upon the Table. I have considered the matter with my noble Friend, and we find that the Instructions so completely form a whole, and being now only on the way to the Commissioners, we could not make any separation between them. To produce them at the present time would be disadvantageous to the Public Service.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH asked, Whether the Government would produce before Easter any despatches which might have been received from Sir Evelyn Wood?

Mr. GLADSTONE hoped before then that the Government might be in possession of despatches which could be laid before the House; but they could not now speak positively on the subject.

RIVERS CONSERVANCY AND FLOODS PREVENTION BILL.

In reply to Viscount Folkestone and Mr. Heneage,

Mr. DODSON said, that it was proposed, with the consent of the House, to refer this Bill to a Select Committee, and he should not feel justified in departing from the intention which he had expressed of bringing the measure forward on the first opportunity. He could not promise not to take the second reading before Easter.

PARLIAMENT—ORDER OF BUSINESS.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: The House is aware that the Land Law (Ireland) Bill is to be introduced on Thursday. May I ask what other Business will then be taken, and what Business it is proposed to take on Friday morning? Is the Bankruptcy Bill to be brought forward on Friday, and is it intended to have an Evening Sitting on Friday?

Mr. GLADSTONE: On Thursday the Land Law (Ireland) Bill will be brought on, as is well known, and in case, as is quite possible, the discussion upon it does not occupy the whole evening—indeed, I rather conjecture that Gentlemen would wish to see the Bill in print before entering on its discussion—there will be time available for my right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board to propose the second reading of his Bill (the Rivers Conservancy Bill). As to Friday, a tentative answer was given by the President of the Board of Trade to the Question put to him with a view to gather the general inclination of the House. Supposing the general inclination of the House should be to have a Morning Sitting on Friday, then the proposal would be to bring in the Bankruptcy Bill to-morrow or on Thursday evening, taking the usual stage without discussion, and then to read the Bill a second time on Friday. [*Murmurs.*] I beg pardon, I did not intend to pledge the House to the principle of the Bill; but the discussion on the second reading might be begun on Friday, and the debate could be adjourned. Of course, a Morning Sitting on Friday would also entail an Evening Sitting; but that would be at the discretion of the House.

ELECTIONS IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES—CORRUPT PRACTICES AND THE BALLOT.

Mr. CAVENDISH BENTINCK asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he will extend the official inquiries as to election expenses in foreign countries which he has promised to the hon. Member for Galway so as to include information concerning corrupt election practices and the working of the ballot in those countries?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: It will give me great pleasure to comply with the valuable suggestion of my right hon. Friend with regard to information as to corrupt practices in elections abroad; but I am unwilling to add to the trouble which the proposed Circular will cause to Her Majesty's Representatives by asking for particulars as to the working of the ballot.

EVICTIONS (IRELAND).

OBSERVATIONS.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR rose to bring under the notice of the House the unsatisfactory manner in which the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant had answered Questions with respect to affairs in Ireland addressed to him recently by Members of the Irish Party. He said he put a Question to the right hon. Gentleman that evening, which was one of several he had been obliged to address to him last week, and his answers were so utterly unsatisfactory that he must take this opportunity of bringing the matter before the House, and, in order to put himself in Order, he should conclude with a Motion. [" Oh, oh!"] He was sorry to take this form of bringing his statement before the House; but he had no other course left open to him after the answers given to his Questions. He had reason to find fault with the general tone of the answers of the right hon. Gentleman to those Questions. The whole tendency of the language of the right hon. Gentleman had been to minimize, as far as possible, every act brought before him. For the purposes of his answers, he had derived his information from the police; while the information on which the Questions addressed to him were based was derived from local sources of a more reliable character. He might instance a case which he brought under the notice of the House the other day in reference to evictions on the Mountbellew estate. He then stated that an old man, the father of one of the persons about to be evicted, had his death occasioned by the action of the bailiffs and police; and the right hon. Gentleman got up and immediately stated that the old man knew nothing about the transaction—that he was kept in perfect ignorance of it before his death. Now, how did the right hon. Gentleman know that? The only means of ascertaining it he had was by the police report, which he accepted as thoroughly *boná fide*, and gave to the House as if he were acquainted with the facts himself. Since he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) asked the Question he had received information from Mr. John Kennedy, Secretary of the Land League branch in Mountbellew, a gentleman who lived in the district, and who knew all the circumstances, and he stated that the excitement caused by the entry of a force of police with a notorious rascal of a process-server into the house in which the old man lived undoubtedly accelerated his death. He only gave that as one of the many cases in which the right hon. Gentleman had taken the statement of the police as gospel, and had endeavoured to minimize the evictions brought under his notice as much as possible. Whenever he ventured to call his attention to the number of ejectment processes served, the uniform answer of the right hon. Gentleman had been that these processes were rarely pushed to the final extremity. In fact, the general tone of his remarks was that, if there were any arrears of rent, it was because the large majority of the Irish tenants were what was called rent malingerers. He had two telegrams from the Land League in Dublin which would bring to the mind of the House some idea of the evictions going on in Ireland at the present moment. Yesterday he received a telegram stating that, during the last week, 150 writs, 500 ejectments, and 500 civil bills had been reported; and that morning he had received a telegram from his hon. Friend the Member for Tipperary (Mr. Dillon), stating that over 100 threatened evictions were reported to the office that morning. From all parts of the country the information in the hands of the Irish Members was exactly the same. He appealed to his hon. Friends of the Irish Party on the opposite side of the House if their information was not the same as his—namely, that in all parts of the country the landlords were serving notices of ejectment as fast as they could, in order to drive out as many of their tenants as possible before the passing of the Land Bill. He had quoted a few, relatively speaking, of the number of ejectment cases brought under the notice of the Land League; but they by no means represented all the cases. In several parts of the country where the Land League did not exist, and where ejectments were more numerous in consequence, they were never reported to the public at all. His hon. Friend the Member for Tipperary wrote to him that in other cases notice of the writs did not reach the League for 10 days after their service. That was the state of things going on all over the country; and when he ventured to bring it under the notice of the Chief Secretary, the whole effort of the right hon. Gentleman was to delude the House, and especially his own Party, with the belief that these statements were so exaggerated that, practically, no evictions were going on at all. He had the honour of addressing a meeting which was largely attended by his Orange fellow-countrymen in Enniskillen a few days ago, and from Orangemen, speaking from an Orange platform, he heard the statement that the landlords in that district were serving notices as they had never done before. According, he might add, to another telegram which he had received, 13 families had been evicted in Mayo, in circumstances the description of which would, he thought, shock any human being. In *The Freeman's Journal* of the previous day he found a heartrending description of an eviction scene at Westport and Newport, where the police in large numbers assisted the Sheriff and bailiffs. In one case the unfortunate man evicted was the father of 11 children, one of whom was ill with fever, and it was only by the humanity of the Sheriff that the poor girl was not sacrificed in order to carry out the details of the law enforced by English police and soldiers, and supported by the taxes of the English people. The right hon. Gentleman that evening, when he asked him whether he was going to suspend evictions, said it would take too much time to pass a Bill of that kind. If the right hon. Gentleman had known his duty to his Party and the traditions of his Party, if he had known his duty to the Irish tenants, he would have passed a Bill for the suspension of ejectments long ago. When the Compensation for Disturbance Bill came down last year, if he had taken the course of an English Minister worthy of the best Liberal traditions, he would have sent it up again and forced it down their Lordships' throats. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to change the attitude of his mind on the subject of the condition of Ireland in exact accordance with Party and Ministerial exigency. He minimized the result and extent of the evictions now, and by-and-bye, when it was necessary, he would maximize them. That was not an honest or straightforward course for a Minister of the Crown to pursue. He ought to speak the truth at all times and under all circumstances. Some time ago a gentleman whom he knew, Mr. Patrick J. Sheridan, went and found the poor evicted tenants taking refuge from the inclement weather under the bushes. He went to Dundalk and made a speech on those unfortunate victims of oppression, and, no doubt, moved the hearts of his hearers. On the Wednesday or Thursday following that Mr. Sheridan was within the walls of Kilmainham Gaol. Thus the man, because he was generous, and Christian, and patriotic, and took compassion on the poor creatures, was ordered by a Liberal Lord Lieutenant and a Liberal Chief Secretary to remain in prison. He had no hesitation in saying that the warrant under which Mr. Sheridan had been imprisoned was one of the most scandalous and shameful documents that had ever emanated from a Liberal Government. The right hon. Gentleman appeared to be quite another person from the man who stood up in the House of Commons 12 months ago, and spoke so feelingly of the sufferings of the Irish tenants. It would seem as if he had since thrown himself into the hands of their worst enemies. The right hon. Gentleman had told them that they must wait for the Land Bill of the First Lord of the Treasury. He would willingly wait for it, if he thought that the right hon. Gentleman would recognize the importance of the struggle that was going on. But every indication was against that likelihood; and in the meantime property was being confiscated and lives lost, and by the time the Land Bill became law what would become of these poor creatures? The Chief Secretary had begun to maximize evictions the moment the Compensation for Disturbance Bill was rejected, and had continued to do so up to the present time. But there was another document besides the evictions Returns, which threw a strong light on the situation. The published Returns as to emigration showed that in the year 1880 there sailed from the Irish shores 95,857, or nearly 100,000 peasants out of a population of 5,000,000, an increase of 100 per cent on the previous year, and the largest number for the last 26 years. Since 1851 to the end of 1880 there was a total of emigrants from Ireland of 2,631,187, or upwards of 2,500,000, of the people who were expatriated by the land system; and still the cry was wait for the providence of a Liberal Administration! The Chief Secretary said he could not bring in a Bill to stop ejectments, and he said he could not refuse to give the aid of the military and the police in order to carry out the law. But the right hon. Gentleman said on one occasion, if he remembered rightly, that if he found landlords carrying out a harsh, stringent law, in a harsh and unjust manner, he would cease to be the executor of the harsh and unjust law. Were they not carrying out the law now in a harsh and unjust manner? If the right hon. Gentleman's conscience reproached him for being the instrument of turning dying people out of their homes, why did he not refuse to be the executor of legislation which sanctioned such a proceeding? What were they going to do with regard to the people who were being evicted? They were going to bring in a Land Bill; but, supposing it was the best Bill in the world, what would become of the people who were being turned out? What good would the Land Bill be to the 100,000 emigrants and to the 5,000 evicted persons? Were they going to take the last farthing for rent which they themselves had declared unjust? He found it was the opinion of the Committee, presided over by Lord Bessborough, that rent had been increased since the last Land Act to an excessive degree; and in the Report of the Duke of Richmond's Commission the opinion was given that there were serious abuses owing to the arbitrary increase of rents. That was the statement of the Conservative majority; while the opinion of the Liberal minority was that there was strong evidence that rents had been raised to an exorbitant degree. Would the Government aid unjust landlords to exact such rents? If rents were not excessive, what was the meaning of the Compensation for Disturbance Bill? It was brought in because bad years had rendered ordinary rents excessive, and to save the tenants who could not pay them from being driven from their homes. Well, the Compensation for Disturbance Bill was thrown out, and had the position of the tenants improved? They were still under what had been described from the Treasury Bench as a sentence of starvation, and 5,000 of them had undergone that sentence by being evicted. The right hon. Gentleman shook his head; but he would find the passage reported in *The Times* of the 6th of July—

> "The act of God and the failure of the crops had placed the Irish occupier in the same position in which he stood before the Land Act. Because he was deprived of his usual means he had to undergo eviction, and in consequence of eviction starvation. The occupier might regard a sentence of eviction as coming very near to a sentence of starvation."

Ireland in 1879 and 1880 was very near to the sentence of starvation; and yet right hon. Gentlemen sat on the Treasury Bench without moving hand or foot in order to save the people from that sentence of starvation. He was at a loss to understand how the right hon. Gentleman and his Colleagues could reconcile such a position to the most elementary dictates of an honest conscience. In the case of the debates on the Compensation for Disturbance Bill they had from the Treasury Bench the most picturesque accounts of the misery in Ireland. He remembered the Chief Secretary for Ireland quoting from his friend, Mr. Tuke, an excellent passage, in which the Irish tenant clinging to the soil was compared to a sailor on the beam clinging to the last raft. What had become of the sailor clinging to the raft now? What had become of the picture of misery drawn by the right hon. Gentleman last year? The Treasury Bench were in this dilemma. Their language was either mere rhetorical flourish, meant to gain a petty victory in the course of debate, or, as he was sure was the case, it was sincere and genuine. If it was sincere and genuine, how could they now leave these people to perish? Ministers were either sincere or insincere. If, as he believed, they were sincere, then they stood condemned by their own utterances. The right hon. Gentleman, last night, in the course of his speech made a remarkable statement. He said that his Financial Account showed an addition of £55,000 under the head of Irish Constabulary. That was a statement he could not have made with satisfaction. It showed a state of things which a responsible Minister ought not to allow the existence of for a day. Ireland was now in a state of siege. The liberties of the people had been taken away. Hon. Members below the Gangway assented to the passing of the Coercion Bill in the belief that it was necessary for the protection of life and property. Would they have assented to it, if they knew that it would be used to enable landlords to exact exorbitant rents, and others to clear their estates? Yet, that was what the Coercion Bill was being used for. They were putting into prison honest and respectable citizens like his friend, Mr. Walsh, a man of respectable position, who had gained the confidence of his townsmen in municipal matters. That was the use to which the Bill was being put; and the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary had always evaded the question whether the men now in prison were the village ruffians, the village tyrants, and the *mauvais sujets* who he had so eloquently described in his speeches. He would ask hon. Members below the Gangway who voted for the Coercion Bill against their better judgment if, when they gave their votes, they thought that the Act would be used to put into prison honest men who were endeavouring to better the condition of their fellow-countrymen? Was it not the contention of the Government that only scoundrels and miscreants would be imprisoned? The question of eviction had been pressed on the attention of the Government by the senior Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), who sought to get a clause inserted in the Coercion Bill for the protection of life and property of the Irish tenants as well as of the Irish landlords. His hon. Friend the Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings) had endeavoured, in various ways, to get some statement from the Government with regard to their intentions. His hon. Friend the Member for County Longford (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) moved an Amendment on the Address asking the Government to establish some sort of armistice between the parties until the Government had signed the treaty of peace. What was his reward? The Prime Minister, in that ungracious manner which, I am sorry to say, he has more than once shown to numbers of Irish Members, using all the vast resources of his rhetoric, replied to the hon. Member for County Longford on mere points of form and order, and never said a word about the real question at issue—whether he would allow force to be used in order to carry out sentences of starvation against the Irish tenantry? The Irish Members had done everything possible to bring this question forward, and the only answers they got had been the minimizing answers of the Chief Secretary, or the oratorical flourishes of the First Lord of the Treasury. With regard to the observations of his hon. Friend the Member for Tipperary (Mr. Dillon), he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) would be sorry to say that he altogether approved of his action or of his words with regard to the First Lord of the Treasury or the Chief Secretary respecting the affair in Sligo; but the hon. Member for Tipperary was only expressing the bitterness which at that moment was in the hearts of the Irish people with regard to the action taken by the two right hon. Gentlemen. The hon. Member for Tipperary said that the blood which had been shed in Sligo would be on the heads of the two right hon. Gentlemen. He (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) could not accept that view; but the right hon. Gentlemen themselves would be sorry if their tenure of Office should be associated with bringing to the minds of the Irish people a conviction of that kind. But if the right hon. Gentlemen did not interfere in some way to stop the wholesale evictions going on in Ireland, they would be responsible, before impartial history, for the blood that would be undoubtedly shed in Ireland. By no single word or action would he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) do anything that might tend to increase the excitement now in Ireland; but he must say that he was not at all surprised that when those poor people were fighting for their very existence, for their homes, for the lives of themselves, their wives and children, when they found themselves deserted by all, even by a Liberal and friendly Administration, it was no wonder that they fell into a sort of madness, and that such scenes as took place in Sligo occurred. If such crimes were there committed the responsibility rested, not upon the people, who were maddened by misery, but on the Government, which having omnipotence to deal with their grievances—and the present Government was omnipotent to deal with them if only it would use the strength that lay behind it in the House and in the country—failed to deal with them. He wished to conclude with what he thought was a practical suggestion. No measure of Land Reform, no matter how comprehensive, would be of the smallest use to the vast mass of the Irish tenants at the present moment unless it was of a retrospective character. If they allowed the landlords to destroy all this interesting soil which the legislation of 1870 was meant to give, and the intended legislation of 1880 to enlarge—if they allowed landlords to exact rents, the exorbitances of which was now admitted both by Conservatives and Liberals, such legislation would not be of the smallest use to the large majority of the Irish tenants. If they did not attach to the measure some provisions dealing with the deeper evils, the legislation would be of no avail. Their coercion might succeed, but their remedial legislation would fail; and if there was to be peace it would be a peace of solicitude, and if there was to be order it would be order of a kind, and would not much commend itself to a wise Government. The hon. Member concluded by moving the adjournment of the House.

THE O'GORMAN MAHON seconded the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. T. P. O'Connor.*)

MR. W. E. FORSTER: The remarks of the hon. Member will show to the House how impossible it is for me or for any Member of the Government to follow him into the discussion which he seems to wish to bring before the House. In his closing remarks he made statements with regard to the Land Bill which is to be brought in the day after to-morrow. He asked me in the course of his speech a question with regard to the Land Bill. He must be perfectly aware that nothing would be more contrary to custom, precedent, or convenience than for me to attempt to answer such a question, or to make any remarks this evening having reference in any way to the tenour or meaning of the Land Bill to be brought in the day after to-morrow. I suppose he really wished to show to the House and to the persons outside what the Land Bill ought to be; but he cannot expect that we should make a sort of partial statement of this measure in consequence of his Motion of adjournment to-night. He has made one or two remarks with regard to evictions in Ireland at present, and in the early part of his speech he thought fit to allude to my own conduct—[Mr. BIGGAR: Hear, hear!]—and he stated that I had minimized this year what I had stated last year, and that he thought it would have been a more honest and straightforward course if I had spoken the truth in these matters. [Mr. BIGGAR: Hear, hear!] I would wish the hon. Member, or any hon. Member, to bring forward a single statement in which I have minimized or maximized——

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I said I should be very sorry to attribute untruth to the right hon. Gentleman. I said his endeavour was to minimize them, and that is a question of colouring. I denied all intention of saying anything offensive of the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. W. E. FORSTER: It is quite true the hon. Gentleman said he did not mean to be offensive; but, almost immediately afterwards, he said it was better to speak the truth. I am very glad the hon. Member is not aware he used those words, because I suppose, therefore, he did not mean to use them. But when I am told it would be better for me to have taken an honest and straightforward course, I challenge hon. Members to show where, throughout these serious matters, I have in the slightest degree deviated from the truth. He said I attempted to minimize the number of evictions directly after the Compensation for Disturbance Bill was thrown out, and then he brought forward this extraordinary proof that the number of evictions were 5,000 and the number of caretakers were 5,000. The hon. Member must be aware that the evictions enormously diminished from the very time he said I began to minimize them, and I was correct in stating that evictions were diminishing. He said I had minimized them during this year. Well, the evictions in January were 43. I suppose I may have stated that fact; if so, it was no minimizing, but simply stating the precise fact. In February they were 92; and I am now very sorry to have to state—but it is quite as well I should have the opportunity of giving the information I only received this morning—that they are increasing and have increased. In March they were 215; but I defy the hon. Member to show that I have ever attempted to minimize them. I look upon evictions with the greatest possible anxiety. The hon. Member said my uniform answer had been that they were not pushed to extremities. I have given that answer once, and I should like him to prove that I have given it more than once. I gave it in answer to one particular question, and in answer to that particular question, I believe it was true. What we have to deal with is a much more important matter. It is not a question whether evictions have been minimized; but an important fact is that they are increasing, and it is one the Government are looking at with the greatest possible and anxious attention.

The hon. Member made allusions to our responsibilities. We are well aware of them; but we are not the only persons who have responsibilities. He made an allusion to the remark of the hon. Member for Tipperary (Mr. Dillon). I am sorry the hon. Member made that remark. He may have said things of me, and me of him; but I think he will regret having made the remark. [A Home Ruler: No, no!] I might know that the hon. Member who cries "No!" would not regret it. I do not think he would. The hon. Member for Tipperary said the responsibility for the murder of the two men rested on the Prime Minister and myself. [Mr. Biggar: Hear, hear!] Well, what happened was this. The four policemen were escorting a process-server along the high road. A mob attacked the five men, and in self-defence one of them had to fire, and was almost immediately knocked down and so injured that he can hardly live. In what way we can be held to be responsible for that matter I cannot imagine. The hon. Member said these men were going to serve processes to recover unjust rents. Is there not also this fact—that a great many persons have been told in Ireland not to pay rent, and that there have been refusals to pay rent? [Mr. Healy: Unjust rents.] Yes, unjust rents; and a great many of the poor people to whom that is said think any rent unjust; and we know for a certain fact that since these recommendations have been given there have been wholesale refusals to pay rents which were fair and reasonable. For the bad state of affairs in Ireland, if there be one set of people more responsible than another, it is the set who have advised the people to take that course; but we cannot forget that there is a great deal of misery in this matter all round. I have not had time to inquire into this particular case, and therefore I will make no further reference to it; but I will say that many landlords and other persons have been reduced by these refusals of rent to the greatest poverty and want. These are the facts—the sorrowful, miserable, and disturbing facts—with regard to land tenure in Ireland with which we have to deal. They are the facts, amongst others, that have made us determine to make the Land measure for Ireland the great measure of the Session—they are the facts that have made us anxious to bring in the Land Bill long before we have been able to do so; and if we had had the same assistance that has been given by hon. Members below the Gangway for the last two or three weeks earlier in the Session, we should have been able to have brought the Bill on before this. We are in hopes our measure will introduce a different state of things in Ireland. We look upon the matter of evictions with the greatest possible anxiety; but the House will not for a moment expect me to make any statement anticipatory of what we should do on Thursday.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY desired to say a word or two in justification of the course which had been taken by his hon. Friend near him, in endeavouring to call the attention of the House to the serious condition of things that now existed in Ireland. There was great truth in the hon. Member's remark that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary had changed his attitude towards the Irish tenants during the last few months. Until the Compensation for Disturbance Bill was rejected in "another place," the right hon. Gentleman had figured as the tenant farmer's friend; but since then he had come forward as the advocate of the landlord's rights, and upon every possible occasion had spoken in a spirit of hostility to the tenant. The hon. Member, therefore, was quite justified in saying that there had been a complete change in the attitude of the right hon. Gentleman, and that he was now disposed to minimize, as far as possible, the tenant's claims. The right hon. Gentleman had expressed his anxiety to have the Land Bill brought in without delay, and had stated that if Irish Members had exercised throughout the Session the reticence they had shown during the last two or three weeks, that Bill might have been introduced long ago. What he (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) and his hon. Friends complained of was that the Land Bill was not introduced at the beginning of the Session. The Chief Secretary for Ireland evidently thought they should have observed a graceful reticence in order that he and his Colleagues might hurry through their most unnecessary and wanton Coercion Bill, simply because they had a promise that when that was done the Government would turn their attention to remedial legislation. But it was the paramount duty of Irish Members to resist coercive measures, and in so doing they considered themselves perfectly guiltless. The right hon. Gentleman had drawn a picture of a process-server being attacked as he was going along the high road guarded by several policemen in the discharge of his duty.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I did not say that they were protecting him in the discharge of his duty. What I said was, that they were walking by his side along the high road.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY said, he would take it they were promenading the high road; but the right hon. Gentleman had omitted to state that the business of the process-server was necessarily and inevitably hateful to the people of Ireland. The duty he was called upon to discharge was one which struck terror into the heart of every tenant and peasant in Ireland. The appearance of the process-server was regarded as a visible sentence of expulsion or an embodied sentence of starvation by the people he went amongst. The Government, by carrying out their unjust and tyrannical decrees, had figured before the population of Ireland as the friends of the landlords and their tyrannical machinery. When it came into Office, the Government was almost omnipotent; it had a majority loyal almost to the depths of servility; and were the Government now going to say that they had no way of interfering between these extreme evictions and the people with whom they dealt so heavily? The Government had not done their duty; almost every attempt made to prevent the oppression in Ireland was met in a minimizing tone, and often in an indignant manner, as if to point out the Irish Representatives as people who merited the hatred and contempt of this House and of all proper persons. He had no hesitation in saying that the Government had, by their attitude, language, and policy last Session, done all they could to foment this very agitation all over Ireland of the tenants against the landlords. They acted, no doubt, with the best intentions; but their action, their language, their attitude did tend to excite fond hopes in the hearts of the Irish people; then, when it served their turn, they held off from their former attitude, denounced the very agitation they themselves had set going, and charged the movers in the agitation with being criminals, and they brought in a Coercion Bill which repressed by force that very land movement which they themselves had encouraged and fostered and brought to such a crisis. On this ground, he thought the Representatives of Ireland were entitled to complain of Her Majesty's Government; and his hon. Friend was well warranted in calling the attention of the House, before they broke up for the Holidays, to the serious nature of the crisis now going on. He (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) would do all in his power to support him.

Mr. GLADSTONE: It appears to me a course unworthy of a Party who think they have such crimes and misdemeanours to charge against Her Majesty's Government to make a statement of these charges upon a Motion for the adjournment of the House. If these are the conscientious convictions they entertain, it is their duty to put forward these conscientious convictions in some tangible form in which they can be met and grappled with—in which those who advance the charges and who are cheered by the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock can be confuted, and the opinion of the House, if necessary, taken upon them. What says the hon. Gentleman who last sat down? He says that in the last Session of Parliament we fomented the agitation in Ireland against the landlords. What proof does the hon. Member adduce of that fact? [Lord Randolph Churchill: The Compensation for Disturbance Bill.] Compensation for Disturbance Bill? Does the hon. Gentleman, whom the noble Lord cheers, say that that Bill fomented agitation? If so, then the hon. Gentleman and his solitary cheerer must part company. The hon. Gentleman will not say that that Bill was calculated to foment agitation against the landlords. On the contrary, we know, by the very frank confession of those who act with the hon. Member, that if that Bill had passed it would have very materially put down that agitation; and it was with the intention of putting down that agitation that we introduced it. I do not say that that was the sole intention with which we introduced it; but, at all events, it was introduced in the interests of peace and order in Ireland, and those interests, we believe, would have been fully secured had that Bill happily become law. I must say, in answer to the hon. Member for Longford, that from him and from his Friends we got very little assistance in passing that Bill. Whether it was because they thought it fomented agitation or not I cannot tell; but I must say that it would have been very hard for an impartial observer to make out, in the course which they pursued, whether they desired that Bill to pass or not. However, having first of all abstained from giving any efficient assistance to that Bill by which we sought to afford relief to distress, and still more to afford support to public order, the hon. Gentleman now says we did it to foment agitation against the landlords—a charge which, in the first place, is totally without foundation, and a charge which he himself has not ventured or attempted to adduce one syllable of proof in support.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY: I did not charge the Government with bringing in that Bill to foment agitation; but I said that by their attitude and speeches they aroused strong hopes and passions in the Irish people, and so fomented agitation.

Mr. GLADSTONE: It amounts to the same thing. But the hon. Gentleman ought to have shown what he meant by our attitude, and how our attitude fomented agitation. It is easy for any man, under cover of words so vague and unintelligible, to make any charge whatever; and I might say, if I thought fit, that the hon. Member, by his attitude, is doing anything I please to impute. If it is from our speeches that the agitation is said to have proceeded, the hon. Member ought to show from our speeches what language it was that we used which tended to foment agitation in Ireland. But he has not done so. Without having done that, what did he say? First of all, that we fomented agitation, and then, he says, as soon as it served our turn, we turned round upon the promoters of that agitation which we had fomented. Why, Sir, how did it serve our turn? We never turned round at all. We pursued one and the same course all along. But, even supposing it could be shown that the course which we have taken in proposing measures for the security of life and property in Ireland was at variance with what we had said and done before, how did it serve our turn? Does the hon. Member really think we had a political object to serve in proposing these measures on which we have spent nearly three months of the present Session? Is he so blind; is he so incapable of observing what passes under his eyes; is he so without the faculty of comprehending — I am sure he is not without the faculty of comprehending that and a great deal more—the political position as not to know that with the views with which this Government took Office, with the views they entertain of addressing themselves to useful legislation, nothing could so ill serve the turn of the present Government as to spend three or four months of this Session upon the coercive task which it has been our duty to undertake? It served our turn to set ourselves against this agitation! I really do not recollect what was the next charge which the hon. Member compressed into the short speech which he has delivered, and in which he contrived to concentrate as much of unfounded accusation as I have almost ever heard delivered by any Member of this House in an equally small number of minutes. But, Sir, the hon. Member behind him (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) has spoken of my ungracious and discourteous manner in conducting these controversies. I have only to say in reply to that charge that if, upon any occasion, any excess of language or any defect of courtesy can be pointed out to me by that hon. Member, or by any other of those with whom he acts, I shall respectfully submit myself to the rebuke, and endeavour to repair the wrong. It may be perfectly true, for aught I know, that my manner has not always been gracious in the conduct, so far as it devolved upon me, of these controversies; but this I must say—that I have exercised much self-repression to keep my language within the bounds to which it has been confined. I shall continue to do so. I have felt how great mischief any man does, and especially how great mischief is done by any man in Office, who needlessly mixes his own excited feelings, or his own private or political purposes, with the grave and serious questions now depending between England and Ireland. We have allowed ourselves to be torn from the purposes which we most cherished upon taking

Office, in order to apply, what we thought, needful remedies to the momentary and immediate wants of Ireland, and upon that work we have spent the first half of the Session. [Mr. BIGGAR: Hear, hear!] We are now going to make an effort to deal with the sorest of the social wants and grievances of Ireland; and never in my knowledge—I will not say what the character of that effort will be, I will not prophesy its success—but I will say that never in my knowledge, extending over my whole life, has a Government, at any rate, bestowed greater care, labour, and anxiety in the consideration of the proposals which we shall have to submit to the House. I am quite prepared, after the speech of the hon. Member, to hear that we have done all this to serve our turn. [Mr. BIGGAR: Hear, hear!] That is the sort of reception I am taught to expect by the kind of sentiment that the hon. Member (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) has delivered to-night. Sir, that reception of our measure will have no effect whatever upon us. We shall endeavour, as we have endeavoured in the past, to maintain the principles of public law and order, and to apply to the rooted evils of the country those searching remedies which justice and policy alike demand at our hands.

MR. PARNELL: I think the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister has attributed motives to the hon. Member for Longford which the hon. Gentleman did not entertain in the delivery of his speech. I think my hon. Friend the Member for Galway has performed an exceedingly useful function in making inquiry from the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant as to the possible character of the proposed land legislation of the Government. It is true the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant advanced a technical point when he deprecated answering such a question before the introduction of the Land Bill; but the House will recollect that the Land Bill which is about to be introduced the day after to-morrow cannot be discussed on that evening. In the first place, it will not be printed, and, in the second place, anything like a general discussion at that stage of the measure would simply result in the postponement of its introduction until after the Easter Recess. It follows, then, that some three weeks must elapse before we are to have an opportunity of laying the point to which my hon. Friend has directed the attention of Parliament before the House of Commons, and during these three weeks immense—enormous—damage may be done in Ireland and very great suffering inflicted, owing to the possible want of consideration of this point by the Government; and, therefore, I think the Irish Members would not have been doing their duty if they had allowed the House of Commons to separate before the Easter Recess without putting this matter before the Government and drawing their most earnest attention to it. Nay, more, notwithstanding the excited manner of the speech of the Prime Minister, I do trust that between now and the introduction of that Bill the Government will give serious attention to the point which has been urged by my hon. Friend as to the retrospective nature of their legislation. I think that, to a great extent, Ireland is entitled to have some consideration for the throwing out of the Compensation for Disturbance Bill of last Session. I am not one of those who consider that that Compensation for Disturbance Bill would have been of very much value in Ireland. Of course, regard to its passage through the House was criticized by the Prime Minister, and he said they did not receive much assistance from the Irish Members during its passage. Well, I can recall the House to the fact that while the Bill remained in its original condition the Irish Members did all they reasonably could be expected to do for the purpose of assisting the Government in its passage by voting for the second reading and by remaining silent. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant has told us this evening that the Irish Members can best assist Government by remaining silent, and more particularly with regard to land legislation. I will only say we anticipated this advice during the earliest stages of the Compensation for Disturbance Bill, and that we assisted the second reading of that measure by our silence and by our votes; and it was only when the Government appeared to us to depart from their original intention with regard to the measure that we felt bound to protest and walked out of the House in a body without voting. But how does the matter stand? I think that the Irish tenants who have been ejected since the Government have come into Office are entitled to whatever protection the land legislation of the Government may give them, because the tenants are not ejected in Ireland if they are able to pay their rents. I know, as a fact, that even notwithstanding land legislation, that tenants in Ireland at the present moment do not submit to ejectment if they can by any possibility scrape together the means of paying their rents. Those tenants are ejected who have no stock for sale by the State, and the value of the interests in their farms is of no use. If tenants have stock to sell the landlords will sell it by a forced sale in preference to ejecting them; and if the tenant is paying a reasonable rent the landlord will sell out the interest of that tenant in order to obtain payment of that rent rather than eject him for non-payment of rent. Two hundred and fifteen tenants have been evicted during the month of March, the month succeeding your Bill for protection of Person and Property; 215 families, numbering altogether over 1,000 souls; and taking that for the average during the year, 12,000 persons would be ejected during the coming year if this average is maintained; and I say these persons are tenants, almost without exception, who are unable, either from poverty or rack-renting, to pay the rents demanded of them; and why should not these persons have the protection of the intended legislation of the Government if their rents are high, too high? If their rents are too high, why should they suffer simply because the Government failed in passing their Bill of last Session owing to the action of the House of Lords? Surely that is giving a premium to similar action in future; and surely the Government will consider the matter, and will see the very grave importance of the question which my hon. Friend has brought under its attention. As to the right of the Irish tenants to retrospective protection, I may, perhaps, be told that the tenants have six months to redeem their holdings after being ejected; but it is very little use for a tenant to be allowed to redeem his holding after his house has been levelled to the ground, and more especially when it is impossible for him to pay the rent. These rents for which the tenants are ejected are rack-rents; and if your land legislation is to be of any use at all, it will have to be such as will enable tenants in such circumstances to obtain a reduction of such rents. If your land legislation is to be of any use to rack-rented tenants in Ireland, it ought to enable them to place themselves in that position which would render it impossible for the landlords to evict them, as they are doing at the present moment. If the Government had intended a month ago to introduce a Bill having a retrospective character like the Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, what could have been more easy for them than to have announced that fact, which would have at once prevented the bad landlords from pressing their eviction suits against their tenants, because they would have known that if they persevered they would have to come under the penalties, if penalties are to to be provided in the proposed legislation of the Government? On the other hand, it would have tended materially to smooth matters as regards the action of tenants. The tenants would have known that they were going to receive some protection in the proposed legislation of the Government, and would not have been driven in their despair forcibly to resist the serving of processes. They would have submitted more peaceably and tranquilly to the enforcement of the law, and we would not have such scenes as, unhappily, occurred the other day in the county of Sligo. I admit it is exceedingly inconvenient to raise a question of this kind on a Motion to adjourn the House. I do not wish to make any charge against Her Majesty's Government; I wish to hold my opinion as to the proposed legislation of the Government in suspense until I see the provisions of the Bill before the House. But I think we have a right to draw the attention of the Government to this matter before they introduce the Bill; because I often see that when a strong Government introduces a good measure they do not like to entertain representations afterwards; and I trust that what we have said to-night may bear fruit, and that if the Government had not intended that the legislation should be retrospective, that they will give the matter their most careful consideration within the next few days, with a view of seeing whether they can satisfy the justice of the case by leaving the 12,000 persons who were evicted last year without the protection which they propose to afford to the tenants in future, and by leaving those 215 families who were evicted during the month of March without the protection of the proposed Land Bill.

Mr. HEALY, referring to a Resolution which had been passed in the House, declaring that the serious condition of the West of Ireland deserved the attention of the Government, said, that the Resolution was passed on the Motion of the hon. Member for Mayo (Mr. O'Connor Power); and that the Chief Secretary for Ireland, so far as he was concerned, allowed the Resolution to remain a dead letter. The Chief Secretary, when he assented to the Resolution, must surely have had some intention of doing something with regard to it. The right hon. Gentleman had charged Members connected with the Land League in Ireland with a great deal of responsibility in connection with the present evictions. He would read to the House the words of the hon. Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney), another Member of the Government, as to what the action of himself and his fellow-Members had been in Ireland. It was quite true that they told the tenants not to pay unjust rents. He (Mr. Healy) himself had told some of the poor people in a remote part of the County Cork (Castletown-Berehaven) not to pay any rent at all, and he was prepared to reiterate that advice. [The hon. Gentleman read an extract from a publication of a statement made by Mr. Courtney with regard to Mr. Parnell and his followers, in which he stated that he could find no fault with Mr. Parnell in the policy which he had adopted, except in so far as he was not sufficiently explicit in his meaning, and he could not charge him with any attempt to mislead.] The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary ought to have known that, rather than submit to ejectment, the unfortunate tenants would be only too glad to pay their rents, no matter what they told them, and no matter whether they were just or unjust, if they could only scrape the money together. The right hon. Gentleman admitted that the evictions had increased from 92 in February to 215 in March. He supposed the right hon. Gentleman would put the blame of that, not upon the Protection of Person and Property Bill, but upon the advice given by the Land League to the Irish tenants before Christmas. That was another of the advantages the Government had in having a Chief Secretary in Office who did his duty by closeting himself up in Dublin Castle whenever he visited Ireland, instead of taking steps personally to see what the wants of the Irish farmers were. If the right hon. Gentleman and the Prime Minister would go into the distressed districts of Ireland and see for themselves the extreme misery and destitution in which the people lived in their wretched hovels, eight or ten persons being huddled together in one room, with such domestic animals as they might possess, and often having only one meal of Indian corn per day, they would then better understand the stand which the Irish Members were making on behalf of those poor tenants who were being driven from their homes. The right hon. Gentleman admitted, in the previous Session, that if he had to administer injustice he would leave the Treasury Bench; but though he acknowledged that the law of disturbance was unjust, and though he had administered injustice since, he had not left the Treasury Bench. Not only did he do his best to resist every attempt made to keep the people in their homes, but he had caused an addition of £55,000 to be made to the cost of maintaining police, presumably for the purpose of additional weapons and machinery for the carrying out of evictions. He (Mr. Healy) was happy to be able to state that the odious duties which had been thrown on the police by the right hon. Gentleman's Government had caused numerous resignations; and in physique and general character the police force was greatly altered since the duty of driving the unfortunate people from their homes had been cast on them. The right hon. Gentleman had blamed his hon. Friend for bringing forward this Motion in an irregular manner; but he seemed to forget that the course pursued by the Government left no other course open to the hon. Member for Galway, who was perfectly justified in seizing upon the first opportunity of defending the homes and property of his countrymen from the destruction which the Government policy permitted and encouraged.

Mr. O'DONNELL thought that the indignation which had been exhibited by the Goverment that evening was quite misplaced. The good which might be found in the promised Land Bill was one thing; but the protection of the existing tenants in Ireland was quite another. If a good Land Bill were passed, all the tenants who might still be in possession of their holdings would, for all future time, be protected from non-payment of exorbitant rents; but at the present moment, from inability to pay exorbitant rents, there were thousands of the Irish tenants liable to eviction. He held it to be an error of policy on the part of the Government to be always repeating the parrot cry that they were only executing the present law in Ireland.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: I rise to Order. Every single Member of the Government having left the House, there are not 40 Members present.

House counted, and 40 Members not being present,

House adjourned at half after Seven o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Wednesday, 6th April, 1881.

MINUTES.]—Public Bill—*Second Reading*—Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual) (61).

ARMY DISCIPLINE AND REGULATION (ANNUAL) BILL.—(No. 61.)

(*The Earl of Morley.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

The Earl of MORLEY, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, he regretted that the Bill having come up late from the Commons on the previous night was not in such a complete state as could have been desired. The Amendments on the Bill had not yet been printed, and accordingly the Bill had not been circulated among their Lordships.

Lord CHELMSFORD said, he understood that the Bill was not on the Table of their Lordships' House.

The Earl of MORLEY said, that it had been laid on the Table, and was then lying upon it. According to the arrangement come to the previous night, he would propose to take the discussion to-morrow on the Motion to go into Committee, and before that time the Bill in its present shape would be in the hands of their Lordships.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^{a}."—(*The Earl of Morley.*)

The Earl of LONGFORD said, he would not oppose the second reading of the measure; but he must repeat what he had said in former Sessions—that this Bill always came up to their Lordships with a rope round its neck, and they were called upon to dispose of it at once. He was aware Public Business this Session had been interrupted in a manner injurious to the interests of the country, both public and private, and that this Bill had accordingly been postponed. But the present was a very unsatisfactory mode of proposing the second reading of such a Bill, and means ought to be taken in future to afford their Lordships an opportunity for a fuller discussion.

Lord DENMAN said, that, instead of speaking before the Motion for the Bill going into Committee, he would say a few words on the second reading, having just obtained a copy of the Bill. He believed that if the right hon. and gallant Member the late Secretary of State for War would have declared that he considered corporal punishment necessary for the discipline of the Army, the late Leader of the Opposition would have said in 1879 that he would support him. He (Lord Denman) had quoted from Horace, but ought to have quoted the words before—

> "Nec vincet ratio hoc tantundem ut peccet idemque,
> Qui teneros caules alieni fregerit horti,
> Et qui nocturnus divum sacra legerit.
> Regula peccatis quæ pœnas inroget æquas,
> Ne scutica degnum horribili sectere flagello—adsit."

He was of opinion that the alternative punishment of flogging ought to be restored by the insertion of a provision to that effect in the Bill before their Lordships. That punishment had been well described by the noble and gallant Lord (Lord Abinger) the other night as exercised in the last Civil War in America as a merciful substitute for death for crimes of lesser gravity than murder; and the proposed substitution of imprisonment for flogging was very unsatisfactory, inasmuch as where no prison existed, as was the case in the field, it took away the services of several men to attend upon the soldier arrested. This was, in fact, a punishment to the whole Army. If a man got drunk, he ought to be flogged, by which he would at once be made sober; and the unpopularity of the punishment was not a sufficient reason for its abolition. If flogging in the Army were given up, we might be expected to give it up in the case of garrotters also. Now, if a soldier was flogged for drunkenness, other soldiers would see that it was not worth their while to get drunk. There was an instance of a man who had become a good soldier, thanking the officers who had made him so by the punishment of flogging; for he had heard from Sir George Lawrence of a Native officer in India who, having risen from the ranks, laid his sword at Sir George's feet, and said he owed his commission to the good effects produced by a flogging inflicted on him when in the ranks. He (Lord Denman) knew an instance of two brothers, at a long interval of time, each thanking the same mother for having whipped them. He had seen a man in Windsor street flogged, who scarcely winced. He had also witnessed in Windsor Barracks part of the lashing of a private soldier of the Guards punished for theft by 300 lashes, and had seen the same man in the ranks with his coat turned. The power given to the Secretary of State for War in the Bill was of a most indefinite description; and in Committee he (Lord Denman) should move the re-insertion of the flogging clause.

Lord CHELMSFORD said, he would not oppose the second reading of the Bill; but he must take exception to their Lordships being asked to pass it without having before them the Amendments made in the Bill by the House of Commons. Such a course was most inconvenient. As their Lordships' House contained so many officers who were specially qualified to deal with such a question, he was of opinion they ought to be afforded more time for discussing a Bill gravely affecting the maintenance of discipline in the Army and the good conduct of our soldiers in the field.

Motion *agreed to:* Bill read 2ª accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House *To-morrow;* and Standing Order No. XXXV. to be considered in order to its being dispensed with.

Lord DENMAN said, he would press his Amendment for the restoration of the alternative of flogging; and if it was carried, he trusted there would be a conference between the two Houses on the subject, even if it made the Vacation shorter.

Lord STRATHEDEN and CAMPBELL said, that on the Paper for Thursday were subjects for discussion relating to South Africa, Eastern Correspondence and other matters. Considering the variety of matters for debate, and the amount of Business to be done, he hoped the Government would consent to the House meeting at 4 instead of 5 o'clock.

The Earl of MORLEY said, that as none of the Leaders of the Opposition were present it would not be possible to adopt the suggestion of the noble Lord, the understanding being that the Mutiny Bill would not be taken before the usual hour for Public Business.

House adjourned at a quarter past Eleven o'clock, till Tomorrow, Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 6th April, 1881.

MINUTES.]—New Writ Issued—*For* Sunderland, *v.* Sir Henry Marshman Havelock-Allan, baronet, V.C. C.B., Chiltern Hundreds.

Public Bills—*Second Reading*—Lunacy Law Assimilation (Ireland) [75]; Copyhold Enfranchisement [117]; Petty Sessions Clerks (Ireland) [41]; Summary Jurisdiction (Ireland) [33], *debate adjourned;* Church Patronage [30], *debate adjourned.*

Considered as amended—Inclosure Provisional Orders (Wibsey Slack and Low Moor Commons) * [114].

Third Reading—Inclosure Provisional Orders (Scotton and Ferry Common) * [115]; Metropolitan Commons Supplemental * [99], and *passed.*

Withdrawn—Middlesex Land Registry [87].

QUESTION.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) BILL.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he wished to put a Question to the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland; but in his absence perhaps the Solicitor General for Ireland, the only Member of the Government connected with Ireland present, would be able to give him an answer. He wished to know, Whether the article which appears in the "Standard" of this morning purporting to give a description of the coming Land Bill may be taken as on the whole accurately describing the character of the Bill; and, whether he can explain how the "Standard" has been enabled to give this summary; and, whether the explanation be that a draft of the Bill has been submitted to and approved by the Leader of the Conservative Party?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): If the hon. Member will ask me that Question after my right hon. Friend (Mr. Gladstone) has made his statement to-morrow I may be able to answer it.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

LANDED PROPRIETORS (IRELAND) BILL.—[BILL 63.]

(*Mr. P. J. Smyth, Mr. Patrick Martin, Mr. Fay, Mr. Litton.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. P. J. SMYTH: Mr. Speaker, I think I shall best consult the interests of the House, and the interests of the cause which I have so much at heart, if I refrain from availing myself of this opportunity for raising a discussion on the great question which will be presented to us to-morrow in all its fulness and details by the right hon. Gentleman at the head of Her Majesty's Government. I propose, therefore, to postpone the second reading of this Bill. I may, perhaps, be allowed to say a word in explanation of the Bill, which was introduced in the Session of 1875. It consists of two parts, of which the one claims to give practical effect to the beneficent clauses of the Land Act of 1870, which are associated with the name of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright), and the other the utilization of the waste lands of Ireland, of which there are upwards of 4,000,000 acres, 2,000,000 of which are believed to be susceptible of reclamation. I believe the Bill in both these details is sound in principle, and would be beneficial in its operation; and I postpone it in the confident expectation that the genius of the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government will surmount the tremendous difficulties that encompass the Land Question, and will show to-morrow that society may be saved in Ireland, and the tenantry secured without the infliction of any loss on my fellow-countrymen.

MR. SPEAKER: To what day does the hon. Gentleman propose to postpone the second reading?

MR. P. J. SMYTH: To the 29th of June.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he was sorry his hon. Friend the Member for Tipperary (Mr. P. J. Smyth) postponed the second reading of the Bill, which he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) thought would be very beneficial, especially to the smaller classes of tenants. Moreover, he thought the reason for postponing it was not a good one—namely, that the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government would deal with the question in a satisfactory manner. It was by no means proved that the question would be dealt with by him in a satisfactory manner.

Second Reading *deferred* till *Wednesday* 29th June.

LUNACY LAW ASSIMILATION (IRELAND) BILL.—[BILL 75.]

(*Mr. Litton, Mr. Findlater, Sir Thomas M'Clure.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. LITTON, in rising to move that the Bill be now read a second time, said, its object was to improve the system under which lunatics, and especially neglected and pauper lunatics, were cared for in Ireland, by adopting certain portions of the English and Scotch system; and he would show that it was a question of great social importance throughout Ireland, for he proposed to improve the treatment of a class of persons, which, of all others, was entitled to the attention, the care, and the sympathy of the House and the country at large—he meant the class of unhappy persons who had once enjoyed the blessings of health and mental activity, and of that other class which was, perhaps, still more deserving of their pity—those who were idiots or imbecile, and who were not reached by the existing law. He would show that, under the present law in Ireland, a large proportion of this helpless and unfortunate class was either most inadequately or totally uncared for, suffering from a great amount of neglect, and, in some cases, of cruelty; and the object which he had in view in that Bill was to apply for their relief certain portions of the English law. The importance of the subject would at once appear from a few of the matters which he ventured to lay before the House in connection with the subject. In the year 1857 a Royal Commission inquired into this subject of neglected lunatics and "lunatics at large" in Ireland. By lunatics at large was meant those lunatics who were not in either private or district asylums. At that time the lunatics at large were no less than 3,352; of these 1,583 were returned as neglected lunatics, the residue being in some way provided for by residing with their friends or families. Nothing had been done to meet that serious and growing evil for a period of over 20 years, down to the time at which the Commission of 1879 made its Report—namely, in the month of February of that year, and, he might add, nothing had been since done. That Commission was entitled the Poor Law Union and Lunacy Inquiry Commission, and it was presided over by a gentleman of the highest authority in Ireland. According to that Report, it was stated that on the 31st of December, 1877, whilst the number of lunatics provided for in the district lunatic asylums, in the Criminal Lunatic Asylum at Dundrum, and in private asylums, was about 11,000, the number at large, either inadequately cared for or neglected, was 6,709. Out of this number of 6,709, it was stated that 1,243 were epileptic imbeciles, 4,479 idiots, and 987 lunatics. Of that total the asylums and workhouses afforded accommodation to 3,365, leaving over 3,000 as at large and neglected. These figures showed that there had been a great and very serious increase in this unfortunate class of persons since 1857, amounting to over 100 per cent increase in a period of 20 years, as would be seen from a comparison of the following figures:—In 1857 the number at large was 3,352, of whom 1,583 were neglected; in 1877 it was 6,709, of whom 3,000 were neglected. So that, in addition to 11,600, for which accommodation was provided in the district lunatic asylums, there were no less than about 6,000 uncared-for lunatics—that was, uncared for in the proper sense of the word; while there were 3,000 of these 6,000, speaking generally, in a state of neglect, as against 1,583 in 1857. Such was the present state of things in Ireland, and that remarkable increase was very striking, and showed that the lunacy administration in Ireland had not been such as it should have been. It would be instructive if he explained to the House how the law stood at present with respect to the treatment and custody of lunatics in Ireland. There were several Acts of Parliament under which the custody and care of lunatics were rather neglected than provided for. The first was the Act 1 & 2 *Geo.* IV., which established district lunatic asylums. By the 1 & 2 *Vict.* c. 47, dangerous lunatics might be committed to gaols, and under the 8 & 9 *Vict.* they might be transferred to the Central Criminal Asylum at Dundrum. In 1867, by 30 & 31 *Vict.*, c. 118, the first provision for sending this class of lunatics to gaol was repealed; and in 1875, by 38 & 39 *Vict.*, c. 67, it was provided that chronic lunatics, not being dangerous, might be consigned to the poorhouses. Where there was no attempt at classification these poorhouses only accommodate 3,365 persons, so that there were still, as he had already pointed out, over 3,000 of these helpless and unfortunate persons neglected and at large. The result of that Act was that overcrowding in lunatic asylums was to some extent relieved. He would next point out the evils of the present system. The asylums were now so overcrowded with chronic and incurable cases that the percentage of cures was very low, for it was obvious that if the asylums were filled with chronic incurable cases it was difficult to properly provide remedial treatment with respect to the cases not chronic but curable, and hence cure became hopeless, if not impossible. The asylums were blocked by cases which should be sent to incurable asylums. A further evil was the want of supervision of neglected lunatics throughout the country, there being no supervision or control exercised to show they were cared for, and the consequence was that they were generally utterly neglected, and in some cases subjected to cruel treatment. This state of things, which had existed so long in Ireland, would not be, and was not tolerated in England. He proposed, therefore, to extend to Ireland the provisions of Sections 66 to 68, Sections 70 to 72, and Sections 78 to 81 of the English Act, 16 & 17 *Vict.*, c. 97—

> "To consolidate and amend the laws for the provision and regulation of lunatic asylums for counties and boroughs, and for the maintenance and care of pauper lunatics,"

subject to certain changes, which were explained in Clause 2 of the Bill. He doubted that powers to enlarge the existing asylums would meet the case, and the process would involve a large expenditure in costly buildings and would take years to complete. The Bill would provide that the system of boarding-out, which had worked so well in England and Scotland, should be adopted in Ireland, which was impossible under the present law; and powers would be given to the Governors of lunatic asylums, in order to relieve the present overcrowding, of placing lunatics in the care of their relatives, or other private persons, upon conditions as to their proper care and treatment. Due provision was also made for the inspection of lunatics so boarded out. Another provision, which was much wanted, was the power among Poor Law Guardians in Ireland to afford relief to the head of a family one of whose members was a lunatic or idiot, which at present could not be done unless the head of the family was the person afflicted. In England the Poor Law Guardians could afford out-door relief where any member of the family was an imbecile or subject to mental disease. In order to show the evils of overcrowding under present circumstances, the Report of the Commissioners to which he had referred afforded ample evidence. At page 62 it was stated that the asylums "were constantly overcrowded with chronic and incurable cases." In page 66 he found the following passage:—

> "The annual Reports of the inspector contain abundant and striking evidence of the recent overcrowding of the asylums with incurable cases."

Again—

> "There is the same complaint—the monotonous repetition of overcrowding with incurable and unsuitable cases."

These evils, although complained of by the Committee of 1843 and the Royal Commission of 1857, were still unredressed. One of the causes of overcrowding resulted from the fact of a difference in the law in Ireland and England. It was rather striking. It resulted from the fact that all committals of dangerous lunatics which took place throughout the country on the warrant of two magistrates were bound to be cases in which the magistrates were satisfied upon evidence that the person was dangerous, and had, in addition, shown an intent to commit an indictable crime. He would read the words of the clause. The 10th section of the Act, 30 & 31 *Vict.*, c. 118, enacted that—

> "The lunatic must be shown to have been apprehended under circumstances denoting a derangement of mind and a purpose of committing some crime for which he or she might be indicted."

The result was that the magistrates would not commit either man, woman, or child, unless they were satisfied on this point; and although in many cases the disease might be curable, they could not be committed, so that they kept out until their disease became confirmed and their cure became impossible. The law in England, on the contrary, did not require that it should be shown to the magistrates that the person had the intention of committing a crime. The consequence of the present system was that a person suffering from mental disease in its earlier stages, and being in a harmless condition, was compelled to remain outside the asylum until the disease had been confirmed, at which time only it was in the power of the justices to commit him to a lunatic asylum, in which he ought to have been placed months before, and where, had he been so placed, he might have been cured and restored to his family, instead of being sent to the asylum in such a condition that the chances of his ever being sent out again were very greatly diminished. The Report of the Commissioners asserted that—

> "The Superintendent of the Limerick Asylum attributed the small percentage of cures to the long duration of the disease before admission."

In the Report for 1880 of Dr. Oscar Woods, the medical officer of the Killarney District Lunatic Asylum, it was stated that of the patients admitted into the Irish asylums in 1879, 1,277 were committed as dangerous lunatics. Dr. Hancock, in one of his Reports, stated that only three patients were committed as dangerous lunatics in England and Wales, as compared with 1,204 committed to asylums in Ireland, and that the reason for this was the great delay in making the applications rendered necessary by the state of the law in Ireland. There was further evidence of this state of things in the Report of the Irish criminal statistics, which set forth that of the entire number of lunatics in England and Wales in 1877 only three out of 889 were committed as dangerous; while, in Ireland, the number so committed was 1,204 out of 1,343, and that while 77 per cent of those committed to the asylums and treated within three months after the symptoms of disease had first shown themselves were returned from the asylums to their friends as recovered, only 20 per cent of those who were committed to asylums after a lapse of 12 months left the asylums as recovered patients. There were only two conclusions to be drawn from these facts; the first being that the system of waiting till the patients had got into the condition of incurability was most injurious to the patients themselves, and had the effect of blocking up the asylums with persons who, under a different system, might be speedily cured, while it consequently narrowed the circle of relief. The second conclusion to be drawn was as to the great importance of the boarding-out system. This system had been adopted both in Scotland and England, and had in both countries been found to work well. The measure he had brought before the House proposed to extend the powers at present in existence as to allowing lunatics to be taken out of asylums by their friends or relatives, with the approbation of the authorities, on satisfactory surety being given that they were able to look after the patients, and by enabling the Governors of asylums to board out patients with persons who might be selected by them on such terms and conditions as they might think desirable. The effect of this would be that, assuming this provision to be acted on to the same extent in Ireland as it was in England, taking the whole number of lunatics in asylums in Ireland at 11,616, which was the number returned for 1877, and taking the proportional average according to a similar number in England and Wales, it would be found that 9,236 would be in the asylums, 1,730 would be boarded out, and 650 would be in private asylums. So that there would be, under the boarding-out system, an amount of relief given to the accommodation provided for in asylums in Ireland to the extent of 1,730 patients, and there would be vacancies for the reception of a similar number. That, he thought, was an important argument in favour of the adoption of the boarding-out system; but the boarding-out system would not be adequate to meet all the cases of neglected lunatics, who were mostly of the imbecile class. He had stated that they were neglected in the sense that they were under no supervision or medical control. That was not the case in England. It was the duty of the medical officers in England, in their respective districts, to visit at stated intervals every lunatic or imbecile within their district; and therefore supervision was one of the matters for which, whether the asylum accommodation was increased or the boarding system adopted, the necessity remained as strongly as ever. On this part of the subject the Commissioners, at the conclusion of their Report, recommended that—

> "The inspection of lunatics at large should be made one of the duties of the dispensing medical officer, who should be remunerated for his trouble, and whose certificate that anyone of this class is neglected or improperly treated should be made ground for action by the lunacy authorities."

Although, generally speaking, there was a strong interest taken by the poor of Ireland in these afflicted persons, there were, nevertheless, cases in which they suffered great neglect and sometimes cruelty; and, therefore, it was a most necessary enlargement of the law that supervision should be exercised over them. At one time, though happily not in recent years, a mode of treating neglected lunatics was to dig a round hole in the cabin floor, sufficiently deep to just allow his head to appear above the level of the ground, and to cover the entire over with a large wicker basket. There was only one other point to which he would call attention, and that was with reference to the power proposed to be given to the Poor Law Guardians. In England the Order issued in the year 1844, regulating the administration of out-door relief, contained these words—

> "When such person shall require relief on account of any sickness, accident, or bodily or mental infirmity affecting such person or any member of his family;"

whereas in Ireland the Act of Parliament limited the relief to

> "Persons permanently disabled from labour through mental defect."

Therefore, when one member of a family became afflicted with lunacy or imbecility —and it might be the principal bread earner—another member of the family was rendered non-earning in consequence of having to take charge of him or her; therefore, out-door relief under such circumstances was of the greatest importance and necessity. It would be advisable, therefore, to have some provision in the Bill giving power to the Poor Law Guardians to grant out-door relief in such cases of that description as they might think required it. He accordingly asked that the House should apply to Ireland those four provisions. First, the supervision of neglected lunatics; second, the boarding-out in suitable places, under the direction of the Governors of district asylums, of such patients as they might select for that purpose, in order to open the asylums to a greater number of cases requiring relief; thirdly, an alteration in the law of committal, so as to allow of patients being committed before they became incurable; and, fourthly, power to the Poor Law Guardians to give out-door relief under the circumstances he had stated. Those were the objects of the Bill which he had the honour of moving the second reading of. He should state that he claimed no credit whatever for the Bill, because it was not his. With the exception of one clause, it was identically as it was introduced in "another place" last year, on the Motion of his noble and learned Friend the Lord Chancellor of Ireland. Lord O'Hagan had taken a very great and anxious interest in the matter of lunatics in Ireland, and some years ago he applied himself with great attention to the study of their case. He came to the conclusion that the provisions of the English system ought to be applied to Ireland; and he accordingly embodied them in a Bill which he introduced into the House of Lords, and which, as he (Mr. Litton) had said, was identical with the present Bill, with the exception of one clause with reference to the summary jurisdiction of County Courts in dealing with the property of lunatics. He would not have presumed to have brought the Bill before the House now, knowing the interest Lord O'Hagan took in the matter, had he not his full assent to do so, and an expression of his anxiety that the Bill should be accepted by the House. The Bill had also received the approval of the Social Science Congress Committee. Moreover, it had received the good wishes of several of the officers of the district lunatic asylums in Ireland; and Lord O'Hagan had promised to take charge of the measure should it be sent to the House of Lords. His Lordship had said, in speaking on this subject in August, 1879—

> "The want of identical legislation, when the needs and conditions of England and Ireland require and justify it, is of incalculable mischief."—[3 *Hansard*, ccxlviii. 1824.]

Fully indorsing that view, and putting the measure before the House on the ground of humanity to a class of persons whose condition required the greatest consideration, he trusted the House would assent to its being read a second time.

SIR THOMAS M'CLURE, in seconding the Motion, observed that there was an urgent necessity for a change in the Lunacy Law in Ireland such as that proposed by the Bill of his hon. Friend the Member for Tyrone (Mr. Litton). The consequence of the existing state of the law was that the asylums which should be open at all times for the reception of patients attacked with mental disease were overcrowded, and the mingling of curable and incurable lunatics greatly lessened the chance of recovery of the former. That was very different from the Scotch system. He had carefully examined that system, and found that, whenever the relieving officer became cognizant of any person being attacked with lunacy within his district, he had to give immediate notice to the Commissioners, who at once caused the case to be inquired into, and took charge of the lunatic, and the utmost was done that could be effected to secure his recovery. The lunatics in that country were divided into different classes, and there were the curable, and what might be called the chronic cases, the latter being kept apart from cases in which recovery was thought likely or possible. Their object was to place certain cases in separate institutions, where they could be maintained at a less cost than in the asylums, and kept under restraint; and when these institutions were not to be had they selected the workhouses. That was a system which ought to be adopted in Ireland, as well as the boarding-out system, which had been successful, and to which his hon. Friend had referred. It had been found that the Scotch system was far more efficient than that of Ireland, and that the patients had a better chance of being cured, and so kept off the rates; while, on the whole, the system adopted in Scotland was also more economical than that which prevailed in Ireland. For the sake of humanity and economy he thought the Bill ought to be carried.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Litton.*)

Sir HERVEY BRUCE said, that as a Governor of the Asylum at Londonderry, he thought the House and all Governors of lunatic asylums, and friends of the lunatic class in Ireland, had reason to be grateful to the hon. Member for Tyrone (Mr. Litton) for the anxiety he had shown in behalf of that class; but, at the same time, he could not concur in the necessity for the Bill the hon. Gentleman had brought in, not on account of the quarter of the House from which it proceeded, because if he (Sir Hervey Bruce) believed the Bill would really benefit the lunatics of Ireland, he should support it, no matter from what quarter it came, but because he objected to some of its leading provisions. He agreed with the hon. Gentleman in regarding the mingling of curable and incurable patients as bad; but the Bill contained no provision for the separation of these cases, except those of boarding-out, and the power to grant out-door relief. As to the alleged difficulty of admission to lunatic asylums in Ireland, he could not agree with the remarks which had been made on that point, for he had not, as Governor for many years' standing of one of those asylums, found any such difficulty. On the contrary, speaking from personal experience and not from theory, he had found it very easy and simple. He objected decidedly to the power given by sub-section 5 of Clause 2 to Governors, on the representation of two visitors who were not required to be medical men, to order the discharge of patients as a provision fraught with great danger. He also thought it would be a dangerous thing, as proposed by Clause 4, to board-out patients in private houses. Such a power must be accompanied by regular medical supervision, and the cost of this would throw an enormous extra expense upon the rates. Besides, it was not said whether they were curable or incurable. It was a dangerous extension of what was a bad principle. The food provided in the asylums was better than the patients would generally receive outside; and he held it was better for the patients themselves, and better on every ground, that the lunatics should be kept in asylums where they were properly attended to, and where they were sure of good and sufficient food and maintenance. As it was, the Governors had the power of sending to workhouses those lunatics who were not dangerous; and, in his district, many lunatics were so sent. But, on the whole, this system had not proved satisfactory, and he had known cases where the lunatics had been obliged to be sent back to the asylums. He was sorry to have to object to the main provisions of the Bill; but the hon. Member had simply left the curable and incurable lunatics as they were, and had made no provision for supervision. He believed the Bill, so far from bettering the condition of lunatics in Ireland, would injuriously affect them.

Colonel COLTHURST thought the last speaker (Sir Hervey Bruce) had entirely misconstrued the *raison d'être* of the Bill. The boarding-out provisions were only part of the principle of the Bill, the justification of which was mainly that there were at that moment about

6,000 lunatics at large in Ireland, of whom 3,000 were of the class termed neglected, and, consequently, under no supervision. There was no provision made for their support, or for their being looked after. He argued that the admission of lunatics to asylums in Ireland ought to be altered, and made comformable to the system prevalent in England. It should not be dependent on their being dangerous, and he knew a case in which a female patient was rendered a lunatic for life entirely in consequence of her having to be taken before the magistrates and committed as a dangerous lunatic when she was not in reality dangerous; but that was the only means by which she could be sent to an asylum. Many such cases happened thoughout the country. Of course, there were private asylums; but the friends of the patients could not afford the expense. He quite concurred in the view that lunatics should, if possible, be separated; and the Commission appointed by the late Government had recommended that asylums should be set aside for dangerous patients, others for curable patients, and others for those who were hopeless and incurable, and that, to save the expense of boarding out, workhouses should be utilized. He also thought every possible step should be taken to assimilate the Poor Law in Ireland to that in England, as regarded out-door relief; for wherever the former differed from the latter it differed in point of rigour and in elasticity. He thought they were entitled to ask for the powers contained in the measure, and hoped the House would accept the Bill.

Mr. BLAKE said, he thought that there were many cases in which lunatics could be far better treated by private persons than in lunatic asylums; and he therefore supported the Bill, and particularly that clause which provided that lunatics, under certain conditions, might be placed under the care of their friends. In Ireland, persons mentally afflicted were regarded with great commiseration. One who would be called a "fool" in this country would be termed an "innocent" in Ireland; and lunatics, under such circumstances, were likely to gain more sympathy, and to have their individual wants and peculiarities attended to. As an instance of the sort, he would refer to the case of the lunatic colony, which had existed for 200 years at Ghel, in Belgium, where the lunatics were kept in a number of farmhouses, under a system of supervision which had answered admirably, the number of cures being far greater than in most of the asylums in that country. Why not use some of the smaller poorhouses, which were at present useless, for the purpose of chronic cases? He had for a very long time observed the defects of a part of the system in Ireland, and that something of the same description as existed in Belgium and Scotland was wanted in that country. He was therefore exceedingly glad the Bill had been brought forward, for the changes proposed tended, in his opinion, in the right direction. With regard to cost, he believed the average cost of the lunatics in the Richmond Asylum at Dublin was £24 per head. ["Oh, oh!"] He spoke of some years ago, and the cost might be a little more now. He was sure there was a vast number of people in Ireland capable of efficiently looking after lunatics, in whom they were interested, for less than the cost at the Richmond Asylum, which might now be £30 per head. He approved of the suggestion that the lunatics so boarded out should be periodically visited by medical officers or inspectors of asylums. He certainly would not leave it to the discretion of the Governors altogether as to what kind of lunatics they would send out either to board or discharged as cured, because they might, with the best intentions, discharge patients whom it would be better to retain. With the general principle of the Bill, however, he perfectly agreed.

Mr. GIBSON said, everyone knew the warm interest the hon. Member for Waterford County (Mr. Blake) took in the subject, and they were all obliged to him for the benefit of his experience. He (Mr. Gibson) was also sure the hon. Member for Tyrone (Mr. Litton), who introduced the Bill, would not misconstrue any criticism he might offer on the proposal. Everyone must sympathize with the object in view, and appreciate the clear and sympathetic way in which it had been presented to the House; but it was to be regretted that the hon. Member had found himself unable—and perhaps, as a private Member, it was not in his power—to present to the consideration of the House any of those important and valuable proposals contained in the Report of that Royal Commission to which he had referred. That Commission went into the question exhaustively, and examined a vast amount of evidence in every part of Ireland; and their proposals, whether they commanded unanimous approval or not, at all events contained many suggestions of a valuable nature, and as to which there ought to be no difference of opinion whatever. But in the Bill—and he (Mr. Gibson) very much regretted the fact—there was not a single clause carrying out, or attempting to give effect to, the recommendations of that Commission. The most important of these recommendations was that one laid down as a vital necessity in all legislation dealing with lunatics, and regarded by the Commissioners as a cardinal matter—the principle of classification. But the Bill, which was entitled to be spoken of with much respect, as being so well meant, did not propose one single step towards classification. On the contrary, it would render the absence of classification more glaring than it was at present. His hon. Friend (Mr. Litton) said the Bill was not his own, but a kind of bantling adopted from "another place." Everyone must respect the philanthropy of Lord O'Hagan in introducing the Bill; but, after all, the noble and learned Lord had only introduced it into the House of Lords as a protest that something should be done, and pending an authoritative dealing with the proposals of the Royal Commission, and not exactly as proposals he was prepared to recommend for the adoption of Parliament. The hon. Member for Tyrone also said that the Bill came commended with the approval of several superintendents of lunatic asylums in Ireland. The opinion of those superintendents, many of whom he (Mr. Gibson) knew, was entitled to a good deal of weight; but on this subject so largely affecting their own duties, it should, of course, be regarded as not exactly decisive. He would not say anything about the Social Science Congress, which had been rather hesitatingly mentioned by the hon. Member for Tyrone. That was a body which was coming to Ireland next October; and, in view of that fact, he (Mr. Gibson) should be sorry to say anything that would arouse even a momentary feeling of hostility. There were two proposals in the Bill about which he wished to say a word or two. The first was as to the boarding-out of patients. That was a matter requiring immense caution. It was obviously susceptible of the greatest abuses. He was not against boarding-out *per se*; but it was a question that required to be considered with the greatest care, for it might lead to the greatest abuse as against the lunatics. That was a point of view from which they must all view the question. The figure of £24, which the hon. Member (Mr. Blake) had mentioned as the nominal expense of maintaining a lunatic at the asylums, was, he believed, under the mark; £26 or £27 was nearer the correct figure. Now, a lunatic could be maintained as a pauper at a workhouse for less than half that sum; and there would be great temptation for the Governors, who were allowed great discretion in the matter, to make a contract to board out, by which they might be substantial gainers, though it might be rather against the interest of the lunatic. That was a circumstance to be strongly borne in mind. Again, it was hardly enough to say that the poor boarded-out pauper lunatics would be sufficiently protected by an occasional visit from the dispensary doctor, unless they provided that the houses where they were to be boarded out must be licensed, and have a recognized status. He was not at all opposed to the proposal to give legitimate aid and assistance to those who, by temporary infirmity, were unable to work. Indeed, he thought the Poor Law might well be more generous in that respect than it was. But these provisions were not really the principle of the Bill. The more important clauses were those contained in the earlier part of the Bill; and if the Bill was to be read a second time, and afterwards considered in Committee, it would be necessary to have an understanding of what was the proposal contained in those earlier clauses. For his part, he thought they were of a very sweeping character. They would work a very great change in the existing lunatic arrangements in Ireland, and they ought to be examined with the greatest caution. The drafting of the Bill was open to the objection that, in adopting several sections from an English Act, it did not show at a glance what the meaning of those sections was; and, moreover, no changes were made to adapt them to the Irish system. It was necessary that the House, referring to those sections, should know exactly what they had to consider, and whether they were suitable for immediate adoption in Ireland. Immense powers would be given by the Bill to a series of classes—magistrates, relieving officers, and clergy—to make orders for admission into lunatic asylums. That was an immense power to give, and the House ought to reflect seriously on the consequences it might entail on the rates, the Treasury, and the discipline of the establishment that might be affected. He did not propose to make any criticism on those clauses; but he thought it right, if the House adopted that legislation, that it should know clearly that it was giving a power which was practically without restraint to a great many classes in Ireland to send people to district asylums. It also gave them the power to send to hospitals and licensed houses. The English Act of Parliament, the sections of which were adopted in the Bill, alluded, over and over again, to the existence of places called, not district asylums or asylums, but hospitals and licensed houses, and the hon. Member proposed to keep these terms in the present Bill. But where was the machinery to erect these hospitals or licensed houses? He (Mr. Gibson) could not find it; but if it was there, at whose expense were they to be erected? Were they to be erected at the expense of the ratepayers, or the long-suffering Treasury? These were matters of great importance, and showed the inconvenience of presenting a Bill to the House which did not contain on the face of the clauses their full intent and meaning. There was another point to which he should like to direct attention. He agreed that the present state of the law was not satisfactory; but, on the other hand, he did not think that the Bill dealt with the subject in a satisfactory manner. The way in which it proposed to deal with the Medical Profession was such that, if it had been known, they would have heard something from that quarter. The unfortunate dispensary doctor in Ireland was not at present very well paid; but the Bill would require him to visit the pauper lunatics in the district for the handsome remuneration of 2*s.* 6*d.*, and for that sum, in addition to the visit, he was to send a list reporting the name, and, he (Mr. Gibson) supposed, some particulars in reference to the case. The mere statement of this unfair mode of treating the Medical Profession was enough to command the attention of the House. There was another matter which required attention. At present the Treasury gave a subvention of 4*s.* per head per week on each lunatic kept in these asylums. It was very proper that such a payment should be made; but if the Bill became law, and the check of requiring two doctors to give a certificate was removed, and if the magistrates, the relieving officers, and the clergy were to have the power of sending people to district lunatic asylums in Ireland, that was a circumstance that would have to be taken into account in the reduction of any surplus there might be next year. He personally approved of subventions in Ireland, and he should be glad if the 4*s.* was made 5*s.*; but it was a circumstance to be borne in mind. He did not know what course the Government intended to take in reference to the Bill; but he was disposed to think that the question was one which ought to be dealt with by the Government on the lines of the more important proposals of the Royal Commission. If the Bill was to be read a second time, with a view to its being referred to a Committee, he would not oppose that course; but he hoped the Committee would be appointed at a time when the question could be thoroughly sifted, so that Amendments might be proposed which would remove some of the objections he had referred to. One very small matter he would be glad to have considered in reference to criminal lunatics. At present, if a lunatic was arrested for a murder in Ireland, and was committed for trial, he was bound to be committed under a warrant of the Lord Lieutenant to a district lunatic asylum in the place where the crime was committed, until he was discharged in due course of law to be brought up for trial. That form of bringing him up had to be gone through, although he would be immediately acquitted, on the ground that he was not answerable for his actions, and would be ordered to be detained during the Lord Lieutenant's pleasure. He thought it would be desirable in any new legislation to provide that that painful form should be abolished in cases where there could be no question about the man's lunacy, proper safeguards being always insisted upon.

Mr. SHAW thought the subject was too wide to be dealt with by a private Member, and he hoped the Government might take it up. He agreed with the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) that if the boarding-out system were adopted it should be surrounded with complete and perfect safeguards. He had seen unfortunate people of this class, who had been at large, made subjects of great persecution and annoyance every time they went out of the house. The part of the Bill relating to that subject he regarded as very imperfect indeed. There were other points referred to by the Royal Commission, the most important among which was classification. In the Cork poorhouses there were between 3,000 and 4,000, and there were hundreds of lunatics who could not be admitted into the workhouse lunatic asylum, and he believed they were not cared for at all in any proper manner. There was no classification, and it was hardly possible to have even separation; and it was seldom that the medical officer had a special faculty for treating this particular malady—in fact, the medical officers of the workhouses, as a general rule, were overworked, and in large and small poorhouses, the latter especially, lunatics were allowed to mix generally with the paupers. He believed the state of the lunatics in these workhouse asylums was deplorable, and required immediate attention; but he hoped the Government would not hesitate to deal with it, because they had ample materials before them already in the Evidence and Report of the Commission. If they would bring in a Bill dealing with the whole subject, or, at any rate, with the material parts of the Report, they would get support from hon. Members on both sides of the House, and the measure would be a real benefit to Ireland. The subject of granting out-door relief was one which must commend itself to the mind of every right-minded person. The cases might be few; but the real object they should have in view was classification. They had in Ireland a large number of poorhouses which were perfectly useless. Why not use some of those poorhouses as schools, such as had been referred to by the hon. Member for Waterford County (Mr. Blake)? They were generally in healthy country places, where all the surrounding country would tend to the cure of the patients, instead of cooping them up in immense establishments where cure was almost impossible. He hoped the Government would take up the measure, and if they did so; he was sure the hon. Member for Tyrone (Mr. Litton) would withdraw his Bill and allow them to deal with the matter.

Mr. MACARTNEY said, he perfectly agreed with the last speaker (Mr. Shaw) that a Bill dealing with such a subject was for the Government to take up. As to the Bill now before the House, he strongly objected to sub-section 5 of Clause 2, by which any two Governors of a district asylum, if they agreed, would have the power to discharge a lunatic from the asylum on the understanding that his friends would take care of him. By that provision any two of the Governors might discharge a patient, although all the other Governors were against such a course. The usual course, when it was proposed to discharge a lunatic, was to have the case brought before the Board of Governors, who investigated the facts and consulted the medical officers. But although the Board might in this way decide not to discharge a particular lunatic, it would be possible for any two Governors, out of perhaps 16 or 17, to contravene the decision of the Board and allow the discharge. He also objected to Clause 4, on the ground that it was not desirable to multiply private lunatic asylums in Ireland; but, under the clause, it would be competent for the Governors to hand back a lunatic to the care of his relatives, paying the latter for his maintenance, so that it might happen that a lunatic who would not now be sent from home would be sent to an asylum for a short time, in order that application might afterwards be made by his relatives for his return and the allowance for his keep. Then, again, Clause 5, he observed, provided for the maintenance in the workhouse of those mentally unfit for work, by which was meant, he supposed, harmless idiots; but there were already quite a sufficient number of those in the workhouses, and, as the hon. Gentleman the Member for Cork (Mr. Shaw) suggested, they should be supported in some of the superabundant Irish workhouses. In the last Parliament, he obtained a Royal Commission to investigate the subject of workhouses, with a view to the division of the lunatic classes into dangerous, curable, and incurable. If the Government would take up the subject with the evidence then collected before them, and legislate on the lines suggested by that evidence, they might effect a material improvement in the administration of the Irish Lunacy Laws, and to such a proposal he hoped his hon. Colleague (Mr. Litton) would agree.

Mr. FINDLATER said, he was afraid that the desire expressed by the Opposition, that the Government should take the question up, really arose from a wish to delay legislation altogether. The boarding-out system, which had been so much objected to, had proved highly successful in Scotland. Out of a total of 11,535 pauper lunatics in that country, 2,097 were harmless, and were boarded out. The provisions of the present Bill were intended only for harmless lunatics. As to the objection made to boarding-out, he pointed to the success of the system in Scotland. Dr. Mitchell, who had devoted much attention to the subject, and was an acknowledged authority upon it, did not approve of large asylums, and pronounced in favour of institutions of a moderate size. Of course, he admitted the necessity of classification, and the separation of the dangerous from the harmless class of lunatics; but why, then, did not the Government take it up, and why should the Bill be thrown out because it did not provide all that was required? Why on earth they in Ireland should be in a worse position than the people of England he could not conceive. He thought that hon. Members would admit that a real and substantial Irish grievance had been brought before them on the present occasion, and he trusted they would assist in every possible way his hon. Friend (Mr. Litton) in carrying the Bill through the House. He deserved credit for the efforts he had made, and Ireland would be grateful to him. If the Government did not see their way to dealing with the whole question at once, they might accept the present measure, which would deal, as he thought effectively, with some branches of the question which were crying evils in the country, and demanded immediate attention. He therefore hoped the Bill would be read the second time and allowed to go to a Committee.

Mr. FITZPATRICK said, that, in his experience, during the last 10 years there had been three dangerous lunatics at large in the district in which he lived. They had to be looked for; and, when found, were in a most destitute and frightful condition, but were brought back by the police. He was of opinion that unless a very careful classification was made dangerous lunatics must often break loose. In the wild country districts of Ireland it was impossible for the police to watch every case; and surely it would be better to place these lunatics in asylums where they would be carefully guarded and properly attended to. He approved of the principles of the Bill; but he considered that the subject involved was one which ought to be dealt with by Her Majesty's Government. It was altogether too large a subject to be dealt with in such a harum-scarum and cursory manner. The hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Findlater) had imputed to those on the Conservative side of the House motives which he had no right to impute. They were just as anxious as he was to have the question settled, but they wanted it settled on a good and permanent basis. Immense interests were involved. A great outlay of money was involved, and the necessary machinery under a Bill of that kind must be very great. He would, therefore, respectfully ask the Government to bring in a Bill themselves—to bring it in as soon as possible—and to take into consideration what had been gathered together by all the Commissions there had been on the subject.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson) said, it was not his intention to oppose the Bill going into Committee; but it must be distinctly understood that he offered no approval whatever of the principle involved in the measure. He felt, however, bound to express the opinion that it would require very large amendment in Committee to make it workable; and he must reserve on the part of the Government the power, which, of course, the Government would possess, to oppose it, in case they thought it necessary to bring in a Bill themselves on the subject. He was informed by those in charge of the Department that there were several matters not merely of administration, but of great importance, going to the root of the system, which ought and must be dealt with, and which it was impossible in the present state of the law to deal with. He regretted that the hon. Member for Tyrone (Mr. Litton) had not drafted the Bill himself, because he was convinced that, from the hon. Gentleman's accuracy and professional ability, he would have been able to have framed a better Bill than by adopting parts of other Acts. It was an inconvenient mode to take out parts of Acts relating to another country, and worked on a different principle and by an entirely different class of people, and set about making a patch-work Bill. The English Act which was proposed to be incorporated by the referential section was an Act grounded on the English Poor Law which was wholly different from the Poor Law in Ireland; and he thought the result of the present Bill would be to increase the charge to the amount of £50,000 per year, of which the local rates would have to bear £28,000, and the Treasury the difference between that and £50,000. At present, from whatever cause he was unable to say, he was assured that the lunatics in Ireland in these lunatic asylums had increased during the last six years at the rate of 2,000 in number. That was an alarming state of things; but he could not accept the explanation of the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Findlater), that because he found a large number of figures in one county and a small number in another, that necessarily all the large number of figures were those of lunatics who ought to be admitted into asylums. He was afraid that those lunatics, whose friends found it inconvenient to keep them, were becoming to be considered dangerous; but what would go to the root of the system was really the classification of the lunatics under the head of dangerous or incurable or curable. It appeared to him that, in any amendment of the Lunacy Laws, they ought to keep that fundamental condition in view as the groundwork of amendment. The present Bill failed in that respect, because it dealt more with matters of detail than with fundamental principles. With regard to the supervision which the Bill suggested, he felt bound to point out that the medical men were excessively hard worked and notoriously under-paid, and he did not think that the Bill was upon this point so satisfactory as it might be. With reference to the boarding-out system, he thought the matter was one which ought to be very carefully considered by the House. He did not propose to offer any opinion on the part of the Government; but, generally speaking, he was afraid the system would be open to very grave abuse. He really believed that many of those persons who now had the means of keeping their relatives affected mentally, but nevertheless harmless, would put them on the country and still maintain them at home. The ratepayer was a very heavily burdened person in Ireland. Whether it was that money was scarce or rates were heavy he did not know; but the fact remained that they were heavily burdened, and while everyone would desire that those who were mentally unable to take care of themselves should be taken care of by society, it would be rather a dangerous measure to put the power of boarding-out in the hands of the Governors of lunatic asylums. In England the power was worked by the Guardians. The Guardians were persons who were locally acquainted with all the requirements of lunatics; but the Governors of district asylums were totally different. A district asylum was a building erected and maintained to supply the wants not merely of a county, but of a combination of counties, and Governors were appointed by the Lord Lieutenant; and, therefore, although those Governors in some instances came possibly from the localities, they would not have as intimate an acquaintance with the wants of the individual lunatics as the Guardians would locally have. He would repeat, in conclusion, that he would not oppose the Bill going into Committee. It would require very large amendment; but he hoped it would be in the power of the Government to introduce a Bill themselves of larger scope, and supplying not only the fundamental wants, but the administrative improvements, which it was found were necessary to the fair working of the system.

Mr. LITTON thanked hon. Members on the opposite side of the House for the manner in which they had received the Bill, and said he would name a distant day for the Committee stage.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Wednesday* 1st June.

MIDDLESEX LAND REGISTRY BILL.

(*Mr. Hopwood, Mr. Gregory, Sir Thomas Chambers, Sir Sydney Waterlow, Mr. Lewis.*)

[BILL 87.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. HOPWOOD, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, he did not conceive, considering the well-worn nature of the topic, that it was necessary for him to offer any lengthened remarks to the House in commending the Bill to its attention. The House probably was well aware that for more than a century and a-half a Land Registry had existed in Middlesex, and that the experiment was made at very nearly the same date in Yorkshire, first in one Riding and then in another. In recent times there had been inquiries into the Middlesex Registry; but, so far as he knew, they had led to no legislative Acts for the improvement of its procedure. That had gone on down to the present time; the old state of things, which was a rather cumbrous mode of registering the assurances or deeds in regard to land, had continued without change. What might have been a useful mode of registration in the time of Queen Anne, when the Registry was established, must obviously be inadequate when they considered the enormous growth of population in the Metropolitan area, accompanied as that was by the distribution and the division of landed property of every kind in the shape of house property, garden property, and small plots of land of every description. What had happened had been this, and it had been long pointed out in regard to the Middlesex Registry. The system was that the purchasers of property—or anyone who took a mortgage on property—accepted the transfer of it, and for his own security should, and was by the statute of Anne, bound to register the fact and the deed in some form in the Registry. He did that, generally speaking, by a very full memorial, setting forth the names of the parties to the deed with some description of the property. That was all that was done; but if they considered the enormous sub-division of property that had taken place in Middlesex, especially through the operations of spirited building societies from time to time, they found that these purchases and these assignments were multiplied in extraordinary numbers, and the sole index to them was the name of the purchaser. Anyone who had had to refer to the Middlesex Land Registry for a client, or for himself, knew that such a mode of registration became perfectly useless. There were such names as Smith and Jones multiplied enormously in London; and although there might be added the first name of George or John to Smith, yet as Smith was the guide in the Index, it was impossible to identify the property to ascertain whether it was or was not that which you were searching for. In the same way, with such enormous estates as those of the Duke of Westminster, the moment one knew that he must seek for information under the nominal appellation of the Duke for some key to an assignment of estate he gave it up as hopeless. It was the same with such names as Cubitt and others, who had covered the Metropolis with buildings, and sub-divided property to the enormous extent they saw. That being the state of things, the law in Middlesex saying that you should register an assignment made to you, and that if you did not someone else might get the advantage of you, acted very cruelly on the whole of those who had to resort to the Registry to ascertain what it was safe for them to buy, and how far, their own deeds being registered, were made evidence so strong that anyone would be prevented from dealing with such property with forged leases or transfers. There had been in the Metropolis a number of forgeries by skilled agents, enjoying sometimes professional knowledge, which they had turned to account by forged deeds in respect to the same property in such a way as to multiply mortgages and assignments upon them, each time acquiring a certain amount of purchase money or other consideration. That had been done by men whose names had been familiar to the House in past times. There was one case especially within the last few years in which an adventurer named Dimsdale succeeded in mortgaging some property at Penge, in Surrey, 22 times over, and on each occasion he obtained some valuable consideration for the mortgage or assignment. That occurred outside the area of the Middlesex Land Registry. It was in a part of Surrey adjacent to Middlesex, but which was not under the Middlesex Registry.

He succeeded; and that he should have chosen, and that all the other forgers he (Mr. Hopwood) had alluded to should have chosen, a district outside the Middlesex Registry was, he thought, silent testimony of a very strong character that the Middlesex Registry was of considerable benefit to those who were accustomed to lay out what money they had in investments in land. There had been, no doubt, others who acted in the same way, who had not been discovered; and he thought it would be found that they had invariably chosen a limit of the Metropolis which was not within the bounds of the Middlesex Registry, and that their reason for that was that the Land Registry did constitute additional safeguard to the holders of property. That furnished one with two arguments—first, that the registration in Middlesex was so far valuable, and would be, as he conceived, much more valuable, if the Registry was of a practical character, so that it could be made use of as the Bill proposed; and, secondly, that the Bill should rightly be extended to the district which it named. The Bill proposed to extend the district for registration of assurances and deeds of assignments, so as to include not only Middlesex proper, to which the original Registry was limited, but the whole Metropolitan district included under the Metropolis Management Act. It also proposed to improve and amend the existing Register, by a provision that the index should not only be an index to names, but also to the districts in which the property was situated. The situation of the property should also be indicated by reference to the Ordnance Map, so that anyone wishing to ascertain whether a property had been already the subject of assignment or assurance to anybody else would be able at once to find it out. For a fixed fee, the applicant might receive a certificate of the state of the Register in regard to incumbrances on the property about which he was inquiring. Thus the Registrar would certify as to the last registered incumbrances on the property, and the applicant might proceed with confidence to make the investment, or might decline it. That was the state of the question as regarded the Registry. With regard to any alteration in the law, he thought the only point he need enter upon was this—and it was a matter upon which some argument might be presented—whether the fact of the entry of the deed or assurance and its ownership, being once entered, should be conclusive; or whether he, having the right in all other respects to enter the fact of the assignment to himself, having heard that there was an equitable mortgage in someone else's hands, he should be permitted—as the Bill proposed—to go to the Registry, and, getting his on the Registry first, take priority. He believed he was right in saying that a complete system of registration prevailed in Ireland and Scotland, and the Registry was held to be conclusive, and afforded all information to an intending purchaser as to the devolution of property. Then he came to the ways and means of the question. The state of the case was this. An Act having been passed instituting this Office as long ago as the reign of Queen Anne, a number of Registrars had been from time to time appointed. At one time the number was five; but when they came down to 1867 they found there were three, but in that year one of the number died. In 1872 another died; and between those years an arrangement was made by which the vacancies were not filled up, except by the Queen's Remembrancer, as Trustee for the Crown; and the Treasury succeeded to, or was invested with, the right to receive all the fees accruing from time to time. At present Lord Truro was the sole Registrar; the Crown, or the Treasury, or the nation was, in fact, the other Registrar, and between the two there was a considerable sum to be divided annually. In 1877 it appeared that the amount received by each was £4,835. The amounts received by the Registry had been increasing from 1867, when the receipts were £13,000, down to 1877, when they were £14,000. The last Return showed about £15,000, the net receipts being somewhere about £10,000, and divided between the Crown and Registrar. The Office was at present a sinecure. There was a Registrar who was entitled to receive his share of the money, and was not bound to give any service in return. The Bill arranged for the future; it provided that the Registrar should be pensioned off with a sum calculated on the net amount received by him annually during the 10 years preceding, and it empowered and regulated the appointment of a new Registrar and officers under the guidance and the direction of the Lord Chancellor, by rules to be prescribed by him. He submitted that he had first shown that that Middlesex Registry, imperfect and complicated as it was, still afforded some protection to those who were bound to register there. That had been shown by the fact that the forgers, on a large scale, had found it more safe to extend the field of their operations to portions of the Metropolis outside the limits of the Act, and so avoiding that which was subject to the law. Having shown that there was that advantage in the Registry; finding that there were ample funds derived from it which were paid by those who had the benefit of it, and that, therefore, the institution, as he might call it, was self-supporting, he put it to the House whether it would not be useful to extend its limits to all portions of the Metropolis, and whether, if the principle of extension were once acceded to, it would not be wise to choose for the purpose the unit already instituted by previous legislation—the Metropolitan area? He next showed that the process was simple—that it was a mere question of a moderately good index. The answer might be made—quite independently of whether the Bill was sufficient or not—that that was part of a large subject. In reference to a Bill discussed the other day on another large subject connected with the Land Question—he meant the Agricultural Holdings Act Amendment Bill—the Government said that although they were pledged to deal with that subject, they would not be dogs in the manger to oppose an instalment of it, for they could see that the Bill could be made a useful Bill. So, in this case, he knew the Government had an immense variety of matters to attend to, and were not likely to be able to redeem their pledge to deal with the whole subject of land transfer; but why should they put anything like a veto upon the Bill, which, he submitted, was useful and practical, and, as long as it lasted, even if it were but a temporary measure, would be useful to the community, and would not in the least obstruct any larger idea of registering titles instead of assurances, or any other beneficial action the Government might think it right to take in regard to the transfer of land. That, he believed, was what might be in the mind of the Government; but he thought he had shown that those who dwelt in Middlesex, or made assignments or instalments in Middlesex, ought to be allowed to have this Registry improved; that it was by their very hardly extracted money that the office was kept going; and that a very considerable surplus now went annually to the Treasury. If they did not approve of the extension outside Middlesex, at least let them have so much of the Bill as provided for an improved index, and the right to obtain a search certificate, and all other working and administrative improvements suggested by the Bill. He trusted the Government would accede to the proposal, and allow them to have the sanction of the House to the Bill, so far as that might be said to be obtained by passing the second reading.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Hopwood.*)

MR. W. FOWLER said, that the Bill, though extremely modest, was a very important one. He wished to know what the effect of the Registrar's search, as proposed by the Bill, would be, because it seemed at present that if the Registrar made any mistake in his certificate, there would be nothing to protect the purchaser from the consequences of that mistake. The Bill appeared to him defective in not providing for registration of titles, his impression being that there could be no good and workable system of registration unless it included both titles and instruments. He should not oppose the second reading; but he had great objection to extending its provisions without more consideration to the City of London, where land was sold not at so many pounds per acre, but at so many thousands of pounds per acre. In fact, it had become of such fabulous value that any attempt to deal with its transfer ought to be seriously considered. He thought the Bill defective, inasmuch as it only provided for the registration of documents. He also anticipated that it would entirely destroy equitable mortgages. It was desirable that money should be borrowed on land with simplicity; but the Bill would create great inconvenience in that respect. He looked forward to a great system of registration, and doubted the utility of dealing with a single case by a separate Bill.

He could not help thinking that they were touching the fringe of a great subject, and that they would have to deal with it on a large scale. Other parts of the world had dealt with the subject of registration with great success. He did not know why we could not do the same. Registration in Middlesex had done some good; but if we were to have a real, complete, and proper system of registration the true principle would be to provide for the destruction of all documents which were not registered as affecting the title, so that no unregistered document should affect title; and he believed that if they once applied the system to the whole Kingdom it would be self-supporting, and would, at the same time, confer immense benefit upon the community. He should vote for the second reading of the Bill, although he objected to the idea of abolishing by a side wind all the power of equitable mortgage.

Mr. GREGORY cordially agreed with the principle put forward by the hon. Member for Cambridge (Mr. W. Fowler), that no document which did not appear upon the Registry ought to have any value in regard to landed property; but no doubt, if that principle were carried out, it would have the effect of abolishing the power of equitable mortgage. That was a power which he would not be sorry to see done away with, for within his own experience he had known repeated instances of double transactions upon the same property. The doctrine of tacking was monstrous. Under it a third mortgagee, by acquiring the interest of the first mortgagee, could tack his third mortgage to the first mortgage, and squeeze out the second mortgagee. A proper registration would prevent that, because every deed would appear on the register; and that fact, he thought, would fully justify an attempt to have a register of deeds. We had registration in Yorkshire and in Scotland. As far as he knew, the frauds to which the hon. and learned Member for Stockport (Mr. Hopwood) alluded had not taken place in a register county. He knew few things that had given greater rise to fraud than the system of equitable mortgage. He asked whether it was right that a man should stand as the owner of a large property which he really did not own, and he ventured to think that equitable mortgages should not stand in the way of an efficient system of registration. Such a system would prevent fraud in connection with land. He admitted that he would greatly prefer a general system of land registration to a purely local one of this character; but he would point out that such a general system for the whole of the land could only be carried out by the Government and not by a private Member, and he accepted the measure as an instalment in the right direction. The step proposed by the hon. and learned Member was, he believed, perfectly feasible, and he trusted it would receive the support of Her Majesty's Government.

Mr. COURTNEY said, the Land Transfer Commission reported, in 1870, that the system of registering deeds caused great expense, that it afforded no additional security, and that it ought not to be continued. They, therefore, recommended that the registracy office should be closed, so far as concerned deeds executed after a certain date. The late Lord Chief Justice, therefore, refused to fill up one of the two registrarships which fell vacant. There were now only two nominal Registrars—namely, Lord Truro and the Queen's Remembrancer; and Lord Truro's share of the fees was £4,000 a-year. His Lordship admitted that he never went to the office, because it was more trouble than profit, and simply interfered with the clerks, and said he thought it was better to stop away. The office involved a considerable tax of money and expense, without any corresponding benefit whatever to persons interested in land in Middlesex. It only resulted in the exaction of fees from the purchaser. Yet, by this Bill, it was proposed to recast and renovate this useless and injurious institution, which seemed to exist only for the purpose of taking fees. He could not agree with the hon. Member for East Sussex (Mr. Gregory) in thinking that the system of equitable mortgage was to be condemned. Although, of course, there were frauds in connection with it, as there were, perhaps, in connection with other transactions, yet, comparing the number of frauds with the number of transactions, the former were small. The hon. Member for East Sussex had spoken of the immense advantage of a registry of deeds; and if all property was held by fee simple, and if there were no transactions but purchase or mortgage, it would be easy to ascertain by looking at a Register what the exact title was; but if a varity of charges were allowed, portions, jointures, terms of years, and so on, which occurred in all settlements of family estates, people would not by registration of deeds be able to obtain that certainty which they looked for. They would have to trust to a lawyer to ascertain what the exact title was at the moment of their examining the property. The system of registration of deeds would not present at a glance the exact state of a title. He declined to admit, therefore, as a general rule, that the registration of deeds would secure that convenience which the hon. Member for East Sussex had claimed for it. With regard to the doctrine of tacking which had been alluded to; he (Mr. Courtney) did not defend it; but that doctrine might be abolished without requiring deeds to be registered, and a simple Bill of one clause might put an end to it. There could be no doubt that the registration of title had been advocated by many great law reformers in this country, and was the aim for which Commission after Commission had strenuously striven. The hon. Member for East Sussex appeared to give up that scheme as being impracticable, and he might be right; but the Government had not come to that conclusion. It was impossible for them to accept the principle that the registration of deeds was the policy which they were to pursue in dealing with the question of the transfer of land. In conclusion, he hoped that the hon. and learned Member for Stockport (Mr. Hopwood) would rest content with the reception which had been given to his Bill that day, and not press it any further.

Mr. HOPWOOD said, he would consent to withdraw the Bill in the hope that the discussion that day would be an additional incentive to dealing in future with the subject.

Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN remarked, that it had been the intention of the Government during the present Session to have dealt in a comprehensive way with the question of land titles and transfer in England. No one could be astonished that they had been unable to do that; but the fact that they had been obliged to put it off did not prove that they were not going to deal with it. The matter would come on the earliest opportunity under the consideration of the Government, and then Parliament would have to decide between the system of registration of deeds and the registration of title.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Bill *withdrawn.*

COPYHOLD ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.

(*Mr. Waugh, Mr. George Howard, Mr. Stafford Howard, Mr. Ainsworth, Mr. Ferguson.*)

[BILL 117.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. WAUGH, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, it had for its object the simplification of the enfranchisement of copyholders, with a view to the abolition of copyhold tenure as far as possible. The subject had been before the House of Commons ever since 1838, when a Select Committee made a Report upon it. On that Committee sat the late Sir Robert Peel, Mr. Goulburn, Sir James Graham, Mr. Cobbett, and other distinguished men. In 1841 an Act was passed appointing a Commission to carry out the enfranchisement of copyholds, a form of tenure which was ill adapted to the wants of the present day, and which was a blot on the legal system of the country. Little, however, was done under that Act, which was voluntary in its operation; and in 1851 another Committee was appointed to consider the question, which reported much in the same terms as the previous one had done. They declared that copyhold tenure was an impediment to improvement of land, and inconvenient to the lord of the manor as well as to the tenant, and they recommended that enfranchisement should be made compulsory. In 1852 an Act was passed by which enfranchisements were made partly permissive and partly compulsory; but the machinery of the measure proved too cumbrous, and failed to have the desired effect. In 1858 another Act was passed, giving greater facilities for enfranchisements; but its provisions also were insufficient. No great deal had been done towards enfranchisement under that Act, for although the area of copyhold tenure was diminishing, he doubted whether the number of customary tenants was diminishing. The object of the present Bill was to bring that matter to a conclusion. In a short time, perhaps 10 years, the Ordnance Survey would be ready; and if copyholds were also extinguished, they would then have the course clear for a proper registration of all the lands in this country. The hon. Member, having explained in some detail the provisions of the Bill, remarked that after nearly 40 years it seemed that the period had arrived when an entire enfrancisement ought to be effected within a reasonable time, and one not longer than a lifetime. He concluded by moving the second reading of the measure.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Waugh.*)

Sir GABRIEL GOLDNEY, in moving that the Bill be read a second time that day six months, said, that people in the South and West of England were much wedded to the copyhold system which existed there, on account of its great simplicity and of the facilities it afforded for the transmission of their property. A compulsory Bill, like the present one, therefore, ought not to be applied to those who did not wish to have it forced upon them. Moreover, almost all the measures proposed in connection with copyhold enfranchisement had hitherto been introduced as part of a great scheme by the Ministry for the time being, and also founded on the Report of a Commission. He maintained, further, that the existing legislation with regard to the voluntary enfranchisement of copyholds, instead of being inoperative, had been very largely acted upon, and transactions of that kind involving several millions' worth of property had been carried out at a very small cost. He had no objection to the details of the Bill, if the principle were accepted; but he must protest against the principle of compulsion. Since 1838, the period of the great Land Commission, the question had been dealt with and reported upon on four different occasions, and the enfranchisement had been left optional to the copyholders and the lords of the manor under the Act of 1858. He therefore thought it had best be left with them, for they best knew their own interests. The Copyhold Commissioners had stated that since 1857 there had been no less than 14,147 voluntary enfranchisements, of which 650 had been done during the last year. The amount of money invested in those transactions was large enough to show that the process was going on with reasonable quickness and sufficient to negative the prophecies that if people were left alone they would do nothing, and there was no need to accelerate the natural process. He could instance two large parishes and districts which were known to himself, and upon each of which there might be 2,500 copyhold tenants. The mode of dealing with that was exactly the mode Lord Brougham spoke of in his speech on Land Law reforms. The man who had actual possession of the land simply went to the steward's office, or to the Court, and said—"I agree with Mr. Jones to sell my property for £5,000." The steward turned to the registry of the copyhold manor, and found that the name of the person who came to him was there as a tenant on the roll. Without any investigation of title, and without any further inquiry, beyond the purchaser being willing to pay the money, the vendor there and then surrendered the property to the purchaser, the money was paid over, and he simply made a declaration to regulate the *ad valorem* stamp, and the whole matter was completed. The people in the parishes he had referred to knew the custom, and were in the habit of dealing with their property under it; and he (Sir Gabriel Goldney) said, with confidence, that although that large quantity of property on an average passed from hand to hand, either by death or by sale, once every 11½ years, he did not know of any dispute having occurred in any portion of that property, nor had any person expressed dissatisfaction with reference to it for a period of 35 years. The Bill sought to provide that after next December no person should be able to transfer his property in the mode he had spoken of. That, he thought, was unnecessary, as enfranchisement was proceeding fast enough under the present Acts in force. He hoped this measure would not be pressed upon the House, but that it would be withdrawn, as it only touched part of a very large question. It was the more advisable to do so, inasmuch as a measure dealing with the whole question of land tenure was in prospect. The hon. Member concluded by moving the rejection of the Bill.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Sir Gabriel Goldney.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Mr. GRANTHAM said, he objected to the Bill as an attempt to interfere unduly with the liberty of the subject, and to force compulsory enfranchisement upon people who had no particular desire to be forced, and who would find it difficult to make the requisite compensation to the manorial lords. In exceptional cases, such as some of the copyholds of Cumberland, such legislation might be justifiable; but it could not be justified as universally applicable. It could not be said that the present Acts were in any way dead letters; for the question was settling itself, and under the existing system the voluntary enfranchisements were as numerous as the compulsory. Manors were becoming smaller and smaller every year, and it was much better to allow the provisions of the Acts which were in force to exert that quiet influence which they were exerting on the country. In the case of land near towns, which was in a transition state between agricultural land and building land, great injustice might be done both to lord and tenant if enfranchisement took place before the land was properly developed, or had reached a value to which it was rapidly tending. The lord would not get proper compensation for probable increased fines, or the tenant for prospective improvement in the value of his land. If the existing Acts were not strong enough to insure enfranchisement, let them be amended by all means; but, although he disliked copyholds, he could not say that it would be to the interest of the country that a compulsory Act such as this should be passed.

Mr. COURTNEY thought that the hon. Member for Chippenham's (Sir Gabriel Goldney's) objection to the Bill, on the ground that it only touched part of a large question, was really an argument in its favour. Before dealing with the Land Question as a whole, the Government thought it better to deal separately with some questions of land reform, and this was one of them, the object being to convert copyhold tenure into common socage tenure, thus making the different tenures uniform. The argument of the hon. and learned Member for Mid Surrey (Mr. Grantham) was also in reality an argument for the Bill. One great obstacle in the way of land reform was that so much of it was held by copyhold tenure. As Fellow of a College, he had had some experience in one case of the obstacles which copyhold tenure presented to the development of land. His College possessed some property in the North of London, admirable as building land, but which, until the passing of the College and University Estates Act, it had been impossible to turn to a good account. As an illustration of how the copyhold system operated, he would mention that in the case of a certain manor, a person going over it could detect and separate by sight parts of the land which were enfranchised and those parts which were not enfranchised, merely by comparing the uses to which the land was put; so that enfranchisement was to be promoted on the ground of public benefit. The principle of the Bill of the hon. Member for Cockermouth (Mr. Waugh) was that the course of enfranchisement hitherto had been too slow, and he wished to accelerate it, and to convert, as soon as possible, the whole of the copyhold land into the condition of common socage tenure. With that aim, he (Mr. Courtney) entirely agreed, sympathizing with him in the object he proposed. It might be a matter of consideration with the Committee whether the term fixed upon was not too short, and there were other matters which would require consideration—for example, under the 3rd clause difficulties might arise in the preparation of marriage settlements and wills, as it was proposed to abolish trusts in respect of the copyholds. He confessed he did not understand how that would work in the case of copyhold trust. He would also point out an apparent blot in the 20th clause, which saved to the lord of the manor compensation for fine even after enfranchisement was effected. If that was the meaning of the Bill, then undoubtedly the mischief of copyhold was preserved even after enfranchisement was effected. Another difficulty might arise in regard to marriage settlements, and in respect to that the measure should be a little more elastic, so that as settlements were often drawn up in a hurry, conveyance might take place even after the date of the marriage settlement. These, however, were only details, which might be amended in Committee; and he hoped his hon. Friend would fix a convenient day for that stage. He had great pleasure in accepting the Bill as an honest and fair proposal to accelerate enfranchisement, which it had been the aim of the Legislature to promote ever since the first Land Commission, and he should, therefore, support the second reading.

Mr. GREGORY agreed with the object of the measure; but would call attention to the case of tenures other than, but similar to, copyholds, such as freeholds of manors held by heriots and quit rents, which also required to be dealt with.

Sir GABRIEL GOLDNEY said, that he did not wish to press for a division, and would, therefore, ask leave to withdraw his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Wednesday* 1st June.

PETTY SESSIONS CLERKS (IRELAND) BILL.—[Bill 41.]

(*Mr. Litton, Mr. James Richardson.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. LITTON, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, its object was to apply to the petty sessions clerks of Ireland the principle of payment by salary, instead of their remuneration being dependent on the amount of fees received by the Courts. That principle was adopted with regard to justices' clerks in England in 1877, and petty sessions clerks in Ireland corresponded with justices' clerks in England, being appointed under the Petty Sessions Act. The Lord Lieutenant had power to classify the petty sessions clerks in proportion to the importance of the districts in which they served. The salaries of petty sessions clerks were provided out of the fines and fees, and hon. Gentlemen would thus see they were open to the objection of fluctuation. At the end of every three years, the Registrar of petty sessions allocated to each class of clerks a certain proportion in advance of the salary; or, if it should have so happened that the fees were not sufficient to cover the advance, a diminution was made. That was the objectionable part of the system, and could not be better illustrated than by the fact that Mr. Wingfield, the Registrar occupying an official position over the entire body, had written a circular to the petty sessions clerks of Ireland, in which he said it was evident that the amount of salary must depend on the amount of the fund arising from the productiveness or not of the petty sessions stamps; and in case of any diminution of fees, the salaries would have to be reduced in proportion. Mr. Wingfield added that the clerks would thus see that the amount of their salaries largely depended upon their own efforts to increase the fines and encourage an increase of the litigious business of their Courts. He (Mr. Litton) was happy to be able to say that the petty sessions clerks in Ireland acknowledged the evil, and felt how objectionable the system was, inasmuch as it placed them in a false position. They were open to the suspicion, no doubt unjustly, of issuing two summonses instead of one in cases which were capable of being regarded as a double offence, although arising out of one transaction, for the purpose of increasing the amount of the common fund. In further confirmation of the evil arising from the present system, he would read an extract from a letter he had received from one of those gentlemen, whose name he could not give, but who put the case very fairly and strongly. The writer said—

> "I think it would be just, and an encouragement to hard working clerks who have been endeavouring for the last three years to increase the consumption of stamps, &c., in order that their salaries should be increased."

So the very reason why he asked the House to pass the Bill was the fact that it was assumed, under the present system, that the clerks worked hard to increase the fees and fines, and through them their stipends. He had said enough to show how objectionable the system worked in Ireland, and he had only to say that his Bill had received the approbation of all the petty sessions clerks in Ireland. Mr. Humphries, of Cork, President of the Society of Petty Sessional Clerks, and Mr. Atkinson, of Maryborough, the Secretary, were both in favour of the Bill as representing the clerks of the country, and they had come over here to show their interest in the passing of the Bill. They had suggested one or two Amendments with regard to superannuation, which he (Mr. Litton) would be very glad to propose for acceptance when the Bill got into Committee. With that exception, the Bill had been universally approved by all parties, and he understood Her Majesty's Government was prepared to support the Bill in principle. There was only one objection to the Bill, and that was standing in the name of the hon. Member for Armagh (Mr. Beresford); but it did not seem directed against the principle of the measure. He had handed over the duty of making the objection to the hon. Member for Portarlington (Mr. Fitzpatrick). The principle of the objection was this—that in order to have a sufficient fund out of which to pay the salaries, it was proposed to take advantage of portion of the dog duty. That was a duty amounting to £30,000, and it was objected that certain local authorities, to whom portion of the dog tax was allocated, might be deprived of the benefit of it towards the relief of local taxation. The Town Commissioners of Armagh made an objection to the duty being so appropriated through their Representative; but it should be remembered that the Lord Lieutenant already had the power, under the Dog Licence Act, to take a portion of the tax for the payment of the petty sessional clerks, and hand over the balance to the local authority. There was, therefore, no substantial objection to the Bill in principle, and he hoped the House would read it a second time.

Mr. J. N. RICHARDSON seconded the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Litton.*)

Mr. GIBSON said, he did not think it was desirable to interfere with the progress of a measure which was likely to improve the position of the petty sessions clerks in Ireland. He was aware the Town Commissioners of Armagh had some objection to the 2nd clause, on the ground that it interferred with fines which would otherwise go to them. That, however, was a matter which could be dealt with in Committee.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson) said, that, on the part of the Government, he entirely agreed with the objects of the Bill. Nothing was more undesirable than to have the salary of any public official depending upon the contingencies of fees. At one time, public officers were generally paid by fees; but it was found the system so interfered with the public interest that, almost in every instance, they had been commuted for salaries; and there was no case in which it was more important that fixed salaries should be paid than in that of petty sessional clerks. As regarded the opposition made to the Bill, it would be time enough to deal with the Amendment to the 2nd clause when they got into Committee. On the question of superannuation, it was, he thought, only proper, in the interests of the public, that some scheme of the kind should be provided. Through the absence of such a fund at present the petty sessions clerks were obliged, in some cases, to continue in office when they were past work. For these and other reasons he would agree to the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. BYRNE also supported the second reading, considering that it afforded some measure of justice to the petty sessions clerks in Ireland. No portion of the remuneration of public officers should be derived from fees. He ventured to hope further that, in Committee, the Bill would be improved in one or two directions with regard to superannuation, so that those who had devoted their lives to this particular work should, when worn out, be rewarded for their services.

Mr. CORRY was very glad to find that the Bill had received such a unanimous approval. He hoped that it would soon become law.

Mr. FITZPATRICK thought that these officers ought to have their salaries fixed. A bad effect was produced by fluctuating remuneration, such as had existed, where these officials were paid by fees.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Wednesday* 4th May.

SUMMARY JURISDICTION (IRELAND) BILL.—[Bill 33.]

(*Mr. Litton, Mr. Errington, Mr. Broadhurst.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. LITTON, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, if the Government would agree to that course, he was satisfied the Bill should go to a Select Committee. The object of the measure was to extend to Ireland some very valuable provisions of the Summary Jurisdiction Act, passed in 1879 by the late Secretary of State for the Home Department (Sir R. Assheton Cross). It was, in his (Mr. Litton's) opinion, of the highest importance that the beneficial reforms introduced by the Act into the English system of Criminal Law should be extended to Ireland. The Bill, in fact, proposed to assimilate the law of the two countries; and there was no reason why these provisions, which were good for England, should not be good for Ireland. He had introduced no new matter in the Bill except a clause, which he believed would meet with general approval, with regard to the recovery of small debts, which would protect debtors from being liable to such heavy costs as they at present were. It was desirable to relieve the County Courts in Ireland of a certain amount of the business with regard to the recovery of small debts, by giving a small increase of jurisdiction to the Petty Sessions Courts. The jurisdiction, in case of debts, he proposed to extend from £2 to £5. The cost of proceeding at the County Courts was much more than at Petty Sessions. He had no doubt the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) would support the Bill, as he did the measure of the Secretary of State for the Home Department in the late Government. The important features of that measure were that it would enable fines to be reduced at the discretion of the magistrates; it would enable them to direct that fines should be paid by instalments; it would allow security to be given for penalties or fines; it provided that there should be no costs against the accused in cases were the fines fell short of 5*s.*; it also provided that a magistrate might mitigate or cancel the forfeiture of recognizances; and included most important provisions with regard to juvenile offenders, similar to those which had worked so well in England. Under the Act, magistrates also had greater power of discharging accused persons than formerly. There was not the slightest doubt that all these beneficent provisions were quite as much needed for Ireland as for England, and he therefore hoped the Government would allow the second reading, in order that the Bill might be considered by a Select Committee.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Litton.*)

Mr. BRODRICK said, he needed only to listen to the speech delivered by the hon. Member for Tyrone (Mr. Litton) to know that the question was a very large and important one, and one which could not be adequately discussed in the time now left to the House; therefore, he should move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned." —(*Mr. Brodrick.*)

Mr. HOPWOOD regretted the Motion for adjournment, because the Bill was founded on a distinct promise given by the late Government that the Summary Jurisdiction Act of 1879 should be extended to Ireland. The measure, moreover, was drawn on the lines of that Bill drawn by the late Government, and thus assimilated the law of Ireland to that of England. Under those circumstances, he thought it was only right they should receive from the Government an expression of the course they intended to take in reference to the matter.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson), in response to the appeal of the hon. and learned Member for Stockport (Mr. Hopwood), said, he found it absolutely necessary to support the Motion for adjournment. He demurred to the acceptance of the general principle that because an Act existed in England it should, therefore, be extended to Ireland. He thought it was desirable that the matter, which was a portion of a large subject, should be postponed for further consideration. The Bill imported nearly the whole of the English Act into Ireland, but there were portions of that

Act which were not applicable to Ireland, being utterly unworkable in that country; while other portions of it were already existing in Ireland, and, therefore, to enact those portions would be to do that which was absolutely unnecessary. His right hon. and learned Friend the Secretary of State for the Home Department, he believed, contemplated some alteration in the law relating to juvenile offenders, and it would, therefore, be wise to postpone any change in that branch of the law in Ireland until the publication of the plan.

Mr. GIBSON hoped the hon. Member for Tyrone (Mr. Litton) would accede to the Motion for adjournment. Practically, the Irish people already enjoyed most of the benefits conferred in England by the Summary Jurisdiction Act. A provision in reference to small debts recoverable at Petty Sessions was introduced in the Act of 1877, and he would like the House, before making a further change, to consider how far that Act had induced the humbler classes in Ireland to have larger recourse to the Petty Sessional Courts.

Mr. LITTON said, in the face of the feeling of the House, especially at the present hour, he had no objection to the adjournment.

Question put, and *agreed to*.

Debate *adjourned* till *Wednesday* 11th May.

CHURCH PATRONAGE BILL.—[Bill 30.]

(*Mr. E. Stanhope, Mr. Albert Grey, Mr. Stanley Leighton, Mr. Stuart-Wortley.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. E. STANHOPE, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, he proposed to adopt the course lately recommended by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer—namely, to go into Committee on the Bill *pro formâ*, and to cut it into two parts. He might add that he had communicated with the hon. Member for Huddersfield (Mr. Leatham), who was ready to renew the discussion on the measure upon the Motion for going into Committee. He proposed to withdraw the 17th clause altogether, and he also intended to bring up a new clause as a safeguard against any evasion of the provision in the Bill for the abolition of the sale of next presentations. He hoped the House would consent to the second reading of the measure. The Bill, if read a second time, would be re-printed, and considerable time would elapse before the House would be asked to discuss its principles in Committee.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. E. Stanhope.*)

Mr. ILLINGWORTH opposed the Motion. There had been no adequate discussion on the Bill, and at that hour (20 minutes to 6) it could not possibly be discussed. Besides, he did not see why the Bill should not be withdrawn and another one introduced in the ordinary manner. The Church was a branch of the Public Service of the country as well as the Army and Navy; and when abolition of purchase was resolved on in the Army it was undertaken by the Government, and the Clerical Service of the State was equally deserving the care and protection of the Government as the Army and Navy. Therefore, he, for one, should regard the Government as failing in its duty in the most manifest manner if it were to leave this question in the hands of a private Member. The great objection to the Bill was that it merely touched the fringe of the question.

And it being a quarter of an hour before Six of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till *To-morrow*.

QUESTIONS.

—⸎—

LAND LAW (IRELAND) BILL.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Before the House rises, I wish to ask a Question of the Government. It would be convenient if we could know whether, supposing the Land Law (Ireland) Bill is introduced to-morrow, we shall be likely to have the Bill in our hands on Friday morning? It is understood that the House is to rise for the Holidays on Friday, and that the Government proposes that we should take the second reading of the measure on the very first day after the Holidays. I do not know how far that arrangement may be modified; but, at all events, we clearly ought to have the Bill in our hands as soon as possible. I hope, therefore, it may be found possible to circulate it on Friday, so that hon. Members may have it in their possession before leaving London.

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, that, as no Notice had been given of the Question, he could not give a positive answer. All he could say was that his right hon. Friend at the head of the Government was most anxious that the Bill should be in the hands of Members on Friday morning. There might, however, be some delay in the printing of the measure.

Mr. MITCHELL HENRY asked, whether it would not be possible to have the Bill in the Bill Office, so that they could obtain it there? He did not understand why they should be always in the hands of the printers. They were the servants of the House, and the excuse that they were obstacles to hon. Members getting the Bills ought not to be put forward. He saw no reason why, as it was understood, there would be no discussion on Thursday, the Bill should not be distributed to Members directly after the Prime Minister's introductory speech.

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, he believed there were forms which rendered it impossible that Bills should be issued directly they were printed. Therefore, difficulties might arise, though he hardly anticipated any. The Government, however, would do the best they could in the matter.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: You might have it printed at *The Standard* Office.

Mr. GIBSON said, that what his right hon. Friend had asked for was only reasonable. No unnecessary time should be allowed to elapse before the circulation of that important Bill, which, he assumed, was now in the hands of the printer or some printer. He would remind the Government that the Coercion Act got printed and issued beforehand.

House adjourned at five minutes before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 7th April, 1881.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*First Reading*—Inclosure Provisional Orders (Scotton and Ferry Common) * (64); Metropolitan Commons Supplemental * (65).

Committee—Sea Fisheries (Clam and Bait Beds)* (53).

Committee — Report — Third Reading — Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual) (61), and *passed.*

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL—MURDER OF CAPTAIN ELLIOTT, DR. BARBER, AND OTHERS.

QUESTIONS. OBSERVATIONS.

Lord BRABOURNE said, he wished to ask the noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies a Question, of which he had given him private Notice. He was very anxious to know, before the House rose for the Holidays, Whether his noble Friend had received any further details with respect to what he must once more call the massacre of a detachment of the 94th Regiment, in South Africa, than had been presented to Parliament; and, also, what the powers of the Royal Commission were on this question? He could not understand how any Ministry could have made peace with the enemy without insisting upon, in the first place, inquiry being made into the full circumstances of the slaughter of that detachment, and the infliction of condign punishment upon those who had directed the massacre. He had seen statements made that the amnesty would include the Leaders of the Boers. Now, he wished to know, Whether the Commander of the Boers was to escape, supposing the inquiry proved that the assault upon the 94th partook of the character which he had attributed to it, and was directed by him? Would the Royal Commission have power to inquire into the circumstances of the conflict; and, if it was proved to have been beyond the usages of civilized warfare, would steps be taken to bring the authors of it to justice?

The Earl of KIMBERLEY, in reply, said, the Royal Commissioners had received instructions to make every effort to bring to justice the persons guilty of the murder of Captain Elliott and Dr.

Barber, and also any other persons who had been guilty of similar crimes. As to the affair of Brunker's Spruit, the alleged massacre of the detachment of the 94th Regiment, he had only to repeat the answer which he had already given several times in their Lordships' House—namely, that, as far as he was informed, it was covered by the amnesty.

ARMY DISCIPLINE AND REGULATION (ANNUAL) BILL.—(No. 61.)

(*The Earl of Morley.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order of the Day for the House to be put into Committee read.

THE EARL OF MORLEY, in moving that the House resolve itself into a Committee, after briefly explaining the provisions of the Bill, said, that the Government were doing everything they could to encourage a better class of citizens to enter the Army, and, besides giving additional inducements for that purpose, they were doing away with anything that deterred people from enlisting. He hoped their efforts would be successful, and that notwithstanding the abolition of corporal punishment, against which there was the strongest feeling in the country, the discipline of the Army would be maintained as heretofore.

Moved, "That the House do now resolve itself into Committee."—(*The Earl of Morley.*)

LORD ELLENBOROUGH said, he very much regretted the abolition of corporal punishment, as essential to the maintenance of discipline, the absence of which rendered an army an armed rabble, and could not help thinking that most puerile reasons had been given for taking this step. As to the frequency of its infliction, there was very great misapprehension existing. The fact was, it was seldom inflicted—so much so, that he might mention that during the eight years he had commanded a regiment there had been only three cases of corporal punishment; but its existence as a punishment was absolutely necessary for the protection of the good men in the Army. The new punishments, on the contrary, provided by the Bill as it was originally framed, were far more degrading than flogging. To increase the popularity of the Army, the allowances for both officers and men ought to be increased in favour of the innkeepers.

LORD CHELMSFORD expressed his dissent from the reasons given by the Government for the abolition of the deterrent punishment of flogging. Although he considered that the late Secretary of State for War had made a serious mistake in giving way with regard to corporal punishment, he could not admit that by limiting that punishment to offences punishable by death, he had, as the noble Earl the Under Secretary of State for War declared, virtually done away with it altogether. He would read out the list of offences punishable by death, and noble Lords would see that it contained almost every offence which on active service in the field required to be dealt with by some deterrent punishment. The list was as follows:—Leaving his commanding officer to go in search of plunder; without orders, leaving his guard or post; forcing or striking a sentry; impeding the provost marshal; doing violence to inhabitants of countries in which he is serving; breaking into a house in search of plunder; being a sentinel, sleeping or drunk on his post, or leaving his post before being relieved; striking or offering violence to a superior officer, being in the execution of his office; disobeying, in such manner as to show a wilful defiance of authority, any lawful command given personally by his superior officer in the execution of his office. In the face of such a list as he had just read out, it would be absurd to contend that by limiting corporal punishment to such offences its death-knell had been sounded. Another argument used for the abolition of corporal punishment was that it would induce a better class of men to enter the Army. He quite recognized the force of that argument, and he was willing to admit that the class of recruit had already much improved. But the abolition of corporal punishment would not prevent the bad characters from entering the Army, and it was for them that the punishment was usually required, in order to prevent them from setting a bad example to the well conducted. He failed to see in the Amendments on that Bill any indication that an equally deterrent punishment would be substituted for that which was about to be abolished, and he did not believe that any could be devised. The effect of the abolition of corporal punishment would, therefore, really be to substitute for the mild punishment of 25 lashes the awful penalty of death. The Preamble of the Bill showed clearly the value attached to the maintenance of discipline; and he was under the impression quite recently that every member of the Profession to which he belonged fully recognized that the secret of success in war depended almost entirely upon the discipline of the troops. That idea, however, had been deliberately challenged by one who, rightly or wrongly, was credited with considerable influence in the council chamber of the Secretary of State for War. In the article which had lately appeared in *The Nineteenth Century*, entitled "Long and Short Service," appeared the following passages:—

> "There is a great deal of talk of the good old times, of their glories, and of the imagined magnificence of our soldiers then; of their splendid physical appearance, and"—

He would ask their Lordships to notice the following words:—

> "of their high moral qualities of discipline, &c. . . . . . . In those days, as at present, splendid success was only secured when really able and scientific generals commanded in the field. . . . It should never be forgotten that our Army that won Waterloo was pronounced by its Commander to be the worst he had ever commanded; whilst I think it will be freely admitted by the student of military history that the physique and discipline of the little Armies, which are now only remembered by reason of the misfortunes and calamities that overtook them, were often of the very highest order."

If these views were carried out to their logical sequence, it followed that so long as a competent General was at the head of our Army, the troops might be inferior in physique, in drill, and in discipline—no matter, success to our arms must be the result. Did Wellington attach but little importance to discipline? Did he rely solely upon his own character and military attainments? Let their Lordships look back to his speeches, look back to his writings, and he (Lord Chelmsford) ventured to affirm that no great Commander had ever more fully recognized the absolute necessity of maintaining in our Army the strictest discipline that it was possible to enforce. Waterloo was won, not by the ability of the Commander, but by the discipline which was then ingrained in our military system, and which enabled our troops to bear, without flinching, "the long and hard pounding," to use the Duke's own words, which they were exposed to on that memorable day, and thus enabled the Duke, at the right moment, to make that counter attack which decided the fate of the day. He trusted that in any changes which were made in the Army Discipline Act, full consideration would be given to the effect which such changes would have upon the discipline of the Army.

THE EARL OF LONGFORD said, he did not wish to criticize the scheme of Army re-organization, except upon one or two points touching upon discipline. He was of opinion that the Army organization at the present time was most inefficient, as the men were so frequently moved from one battalion to another that all moral control and superintendence were lost sight of. Therefore, it was all the more necessary that the rules of discipline should not be too much relaxed. The Army Discipline Act, with its amending Act of this year, was already more confused than the former Mutiny Act and Articles of War. He was also of opinion that the territorial naming of regiments, as provided by the new regulations, would in some cases lead to rather ludicrous results. The sudden transformation of four rifle Militia regiments into Infantry with red clothing, of counties with which he was connected in Ireland, was most vexatious, and would entail considerable expense to the public.

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK said, he was of opinion that some of the points raised by noble Lords could be best dealt with when the House went into Committee on the Bill. Whatever defects there might be in the organization, he had the opinion of a very high authority that there was no defect in the soldier. He thought his noble and gallant Friend (Lord Chelmsford) entirely misapprehended the views put forward by Sir Garnet Wolseley in the article from his pen which had appeared in *The Nineteenth Century*. As to the abolition of flogging, he (the Earl of Northbrook) did not, on that account, entertain any apprehensions regarding the future of our Army. He hoped their Lordships would go into Committee on the Bill.

LORD STRATHNAIRN held, on the contrary, that those apprehensions were well-founded, and that to expect to maintain discipline in the Army without the punishment of flogging was a vain hope and a miserable delusion. He thought corporal punishment was a terror to bad soldiers and the hope of good soldiers; and he was sorry to register his opinion that its abolition was a measure neither conducive to the future success of Her Majesty's arms nor to the safety and honour of the inhabitants of the country.

THE DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE said, that as to punishment in the Army, however much it might be condemned, they could not do without it; but in regard to flogging, he had seen for some time that the feeling in the country was very strong against it, and there could be no doubt that it was one of those unpleasant questions which arose from time to time. But there was no doubt, also, that it must be faced and decided; and as the feeling against it was so strong that it was impossible to maintain it as a means of discipline in the Army, the practical question for consideration was this—what was to be substituted in lieu of it, now that its abolition was an established fact? Young soldiers required to be more closely looked after than older ones; and, therefore, they must be rather stringent in regard to discipline. Without wishing to defend corporal punishment, he might say that it had this advantage—that it enabled the commanding officer in the field to deal very summarily with crimes committed in the field by bad and dissolute characters, where the difficulty was to punish men in any other way. And as there would be always bad characters in the Army, he did not see how that punishment was to be replaced, seeing that the discipline with regard to them should be of a strict character. He did not believe that any man was deterred from entering the Army by the fear of corporal punishment; but, as he had said, it was useless to deny that there was a strong public feeling against the use of the lash; and, that being so, he was of opinion that the best thing their Lordships could do was to accept the situation, and address themselves to the question of providing as effectual a substitute as could be found. With regard to leaving the matter to be dealt with at the discretion of the general officer, it must be remembered that the general officer might thereby be placed in a false position, and exposed to something more than grievous censure in the event of his inflicting the punishment he might think necessary, but which might turn out to be illegal; and it was essential that something should be done to protect him against the consequences in such an event. He understood that the point was still under the consideration of the Secretary of State for War. In conclusion, he felt bound to maintain that there had been no falling off in the *morale* and good conduct of the British Army.

Motion *agreed to:* House in Committee accordingly.

Clauses 1 to 3, inclusive, *agreed to.*

Clause 4 (Summary punishment).

LORD DENMAN, having regard to the lightness of the punishment of the lash, only 25 strokes being now permitted, suggested that they should not omit the word "flogging." He, therefore, moved to omit the words "other than."

Moved, in page 3, line 26, to leave out ("other than"), and insert ("of"); and after ("flogging"), insert ("or such other punishment.")—(*The Lord Denman.*)

LORD CHELMSFORD said, that though he did not intend to oppose the passing of the clause in its present shape, he desired to point out the fact that the substitutes for flogging originally provided in the Bill having been withdrawn, showed the difficulty of providing a substitute for it; and the clause as it stood threw on generals in command the invidious task which the illustrious Duke said ought not to be imposed on them. They would virtually have no alternative but to order the punishment of death.

THE EARL OF MORLEY hoped that, under the conditions the Bill was presented to the House, the noble Lord (Lord Denman) would not press his Amendment, as the Government could not accept it. The rules that would be proposed would be amply sufficient to maintain the discipline of the Army without flogging.

VISCOUNT BURY said, it was proposed simply to abolish flogging without substituting anything whatever. They had not even an undertaking that at a future time any substitute would be provided. He would ask the noble Earl (the Earl of Morley) to tell the House what would be done in the interval until a substitute was provided, and how the attention of Parliament would be brought to the matter.

THE EARL OF MORLEY said, that it was provided in Clause 7 that the rules should be laid before Parliament. In the interval the summary punishment inflicted would be of the character of personal restraint or hard labour, but not such as to cause injury to life or limb. It was a mistake to suppose that the punishment of death was abolished in the Army for military offences which were considered worthy of that punishment.

LORD STRATHNAIRN said, that hitherto we had an essential guarantee for discipline; but now we were to have nothing in its place. He never heard of a more extraordinary policy. He had grave doubts as to the effect of the abolition of flogging in India, and especially as to the working of the system of restraint in the case of mutiny. In that case, what would be the position of the commanding officer? If he were to put the offenders into prison, or to hard labour, he would have half the Army guarding the other half. A commanding officer in the field, with men under him who had entered the Army because they preferred a life of adventure and of action to any other life, would, even for the protection of the unfortunate inhabitants of the country, find the power of inflicting summary punishment absolutely necessary. He denied that the *morale* of the Army had improved to the extent as was believed in certain quarters.

In answer to Lord ELLENBOROUGH,

THE EARL OF MORLEY said, that the Act would not come into operation out of the United Kingdom in Europe, the West Indies, and America, until the 31st of July, and elsewhere not until the 31st of December, and between that time and the present, he trusted rules would be adopted.

THE EARL OF GALLOWAY pointed out that there was no obligation on the Secretary of State for War to make any rules at all. The reason why the rules were not framed was that it was quite impossible to frame any as a substitute for the rule abolished.

Viscount Bury

LORD DENMAN said, he had asked a man, of whom he had the highest opinion, whether the existence of corporal punishment in the Army would deter him from enlisting, and he answered that it would not. He had asked another man, whom he respected, his opinion. He had been nine years in the Army, and a non-commissioned officer for all the time except three months; so his opinion against the lash did not carry much weight, as for eight years and nine months he had been in no danger of suffering from it. This was not an Army Discipline Bill, but an Army Relaxation of Discipline Bill. The safeguard of flogging, which, perhaps, might never have been called into action, ought to be retained, at least, until the new rules were approved. It was like the abolishing of turnpikes before any substitute was found, and abolishing Chiefships without arranging as to their patronage, which required an Act of Parliament on the subject.

Amendment *negatived.*

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 5 (Summary court martial).

LORD CHELMSFORD called attention to the changes that it was proposed to make in this species of court martial. The provision virtually gave to two subalterns and a field officer the power of life and death over the soldier. According to his reading of the Bill, any offence might be tried by this description of court martial, and, without appeal to a higher authority, a sentence of death could be carried out at once under the orders of an officer, who might be the convening officer, the president of the court martial, and the confirming officer. Perhaps the power of officers thus given in the field would not be excessive, especially now that corporal punishment was to be abolished; but the clause demanded further consideration than was permitted by the circumstances in which the Bill came before the House.

THE EARL OF MORLEY thought that the noble and gallant Lord (Lord Chelmsford) had somewhat overrated the importance of the clause. With the exception of one or two rules, the restrictions on the action of general field courts martial applied to the summary courts martial. A summary court martial would only have the jurisdiction of the provost marshal.

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 6 *agreed to.*

Clause 7 (Rules made in pursuance of this Act to be laid before Parliament).

VISCOUNT BURY hoped the noble Earl (the Earl of Morley) would give some assurance to the House that the rules to be prepared by the Secretary of State for War, prescribing the punishment in lieu of flogging, would be laid on the Table of the House. It was very important that some limit of time should be fixed. If the assurance was not given, he would move that the rules be laid on the Table within two months after the passing of the Act.

THE EARL OF MORLEY said, he could not give a definite assurance; but he knew that the Secretary of State for War was anxious to frame the rules as soon as possible.

THE EARL OF GALLOWAY thought it necessary to press the point, considering the early date at which the Act was to come into force.

THE DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE pointed out that a longer period than two months was necessary, as communications would have to be sent to officers abroad in order to ascertain their opinion as to the best substitutes for corporal punishment. It would be a great misfortune to press the Secretary of State for War to submit the rules before any particular date. The House might be sure that the rules would be laid on the Table as soon as possible, and he believed that the Secretary of State for War was anxious to produce them without unnecessary delay.

EARL STANHOPE asked, if they would not be laid on the Table in the course of the Session?

THE EARL OF MORLEY said, he could add nothing to what he had said.

THE EARL OF GALLOWAY said, with all respect to the illustrious Duke, he could not see that there was anything unreasonable in what was asked. The Act would last only for 12 months, and that there would then probably be another Amendment Act. The new rules ought, at any rate, to be framed before the Act came into operation. He begged, therefore, to move an Amendment providing that the new rules should be laid before Parliament on or before the 31st day of July next.

Moved, in page 5, line 12, to leave out all after ("as soon") to end of clause, and insert ("on or before the thirty-first day of July next").—(*The Earl of Galloway.*)

THE DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE hoped the noble Earl (the Earl of Galloway) would not press his Amendment. He could assure him that, so far as the authorities were concerned, there would be no unnecessary delay in the matter; but it was necessary to obtain information from different foreign countries which, in all probability, it would be impossible to procure before the end of July. If possible, the new rules would be laid on the Table within the time named.

VISCOUNT BURY said, if that was the case, their Lordships were asked to be content with an Act of Parliament in which an important hiatus could not be filled up. After the statement of the illustrious Duke, he could not but cordially agree to the Amendment being withdrawn, and would recommend his noble Friend who moved it to be content with the statement that there would be no undue delay in the matter after the necessary information had been obtained, and that the new rules would, if possible, be laid on the Table before the 1st of July.

Amendment (by leave of the Committee) *withdrawn.*

Clause *agreed to.*

Schedule *agreed to.*

Bill *reported* without amendment: Then Standing Order No. XXXV. *considered* (according to order), and *dispensed with:* Bill read 3ª, and *passed.*

LANDLORD AND TENANT (IRELAND)—LORD ORANMORE AND BROWNE.

OBSERVATIONS.

LORD ORANMORE AND BROWNE rose to call attention to the conduct of the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. W. E. Forster) in not communicating with him relative to a Question which had been asked in "another place" attacking his conduct as a landlord. The Question was, whether it was true that in a case of process-serving which had lately occurred on the property of Lord Oranmore and Browne, the process-server, on arriving at the house, found the man dead, and then placed the notice on the man's dead body? Now, even if a process-server had acted in that way, he was a public officer not under his (Lord Oranmore and Browne's) control, and he could not be held responsible for what he had done. But the real facts of the case were that the poor man referred to, who had been ill for a number of years, owed him two and a-half years' rent in November, and that he had not served him with a process at all, so that the whole thing was devoid of foundation. Having sent a letter to the Chief Secretary explaining the matter, he had thought it would have been only courteous in the right hon. Gentleman in answering the Question to have read that letter to the House; but that had not been done, and that was what he chiefly complained of, seeing the matter was one which seriously reflected on his character. He had since telegraphed to the right hon. Gentleman upon the subject, and he had received a curt reply from him which, in the circumstances, he thought was extremely uncivil. He thought this matter required some explanation from the noble Earl opposite.

Earl SPENCER disclaimed, on the part of his right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. W. E. Forster), any intention of being uncivil towards the noble Lord. The facts of the case were simply these. The Question which was put upon the Paper did not mention the name of the noble Lord; and his right hon. Friend, having made inquiries in Ireland, apparantly before receiving the noble Lord's letter, gave his answer upon the official information so obtained, which entirely disproved any charge against the noble Lord in regard to serving a process on a man who was lying dead. Under the circumstances, his right hon. Friend did not think it necessary to connect the noble Lord's name with the subject, and wrote to the noble Lord to that effect. There was, surely, in that proceeding, no breach of the usual courtesies of political life.

Lord ORANMORE and BROWNE said, he still thought the conduct of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland in the matter had been grossly unfair and unjust towards him.

TUNIS—THE ENFIDA CASE.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

Earl DE LA WARR, in rising to ask, Whether the attention of Her Majesty's Government has been drawn to the Protocol of the 18th of June 1867, establishing the jurisdiction of the local courts in the Regency of Tunis in cases relating to real property; and whether any information can be given relative to the alleged raids on the Tunisian Frontiers? said, so much uneasiness existed with regard to it, that he was quite sure noble Lords opposite would excuse him if he asked for such information upon it as it was convenient to give. From the previous answers of his noble Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Earl Granville), he was led to believe that the matter would be settled in a satisfactory manner by the usual Courts of Law. Both the French and English Governments, he understood, agreed that it was a matter in which political influence ought not to be used; and, further, the noble Earl stated on the 8th of February last—

> "At the end of last week the French Government informed me that they had sent orders to their Representative at Tunis not to intervene."—[3 *Hansard*, cclviii. 330.]

This assurance produced a very salutary effect, not only in this country, but also at Tunis, as he was informed. But, on a recent occasion, a further statement was made by his noble Friend to the effect that the question was under the consideration of the Law Officers of the Crown. Now, it was not easy to understand where the difficulty of the question lay. The Regency of Tunis was an integral part of the Ottoman Empire. The Bey received investiture from the Sultan. He had given contingents and money in time of war, and the general law of the Ottoman Empire prevailed throughout the country. As regarded this case, it seemed to have been specially provided for by the Convention of 1863 and the Protocol of 1867. In Article IV. of the Convention between the Governments of Great Britain and Tunis, in 1863, it was provided that all cases of litigation respecting immovable property and relating to the ownership or occupation of houses or lands between a British and a Tunisian subject, should be referred for adjudication to the competent legal tribunals. Then, if any doubt existed whether this was applicable to the case, when both parties were foreigners, the Protocol of the 18th June, 1867, Article II., cleared up the doubt, by saying such persons—that was, owners of real property—

> "Are directly amenable to the Ottoman Civil Courts in regard to all questions relative to landed property and to all real actions, both as plaintiffs and as defendants, even when both parties are foreign subjects, the whole on the same footing, under the same conditions, and in the same forms as Ottoman proprietors, and without the power of availing themselves in such matters of their personal nationality."

Now, he thought it would be difficult to have anything more decisive than that with reference to the Enfida case. Both parties were foreign subjects; but under this law they were made directly amenable to the Ottoman Civil Courts, and without the power of availing themselves of their personal nationality. All that was asked was that the case should be decided in the usual Ottoman Courts, and not, in any way, made a political question. There was a further matter upon which he trusted to receive information. Well authenticated statements had been made relative to the concentration of French troops on the frontiers of Tunis and Algeria. The avowed object was alleged to be to put a stop to the lawless acts of some Tribes in the forest and mountainous districts lying between Tunis and Algeria. The Government was probably aware that other motives had been assigned for this movement of French troops, and that it had created considerable alarm. References had been made in various ways and in various places to the action of the Government of this country with regard to Tunis, and he could not but think that it would be most desirable that information should be given relative to the future course of Her Majesty's Government. Not only in this country, but elsewhere, the same feeling existed. In Italy, not a little alarm had been caused by events which had been regarded as menaces of the independence of Tunis. Friendly relations had long been maintained between the Sovereign of Tunis and this country, and it was to be hoped that they might continue. Not less had kindly feelings been shown by the Bey, both by words and actions, towards the Government of France. But the question was not confined to this or that country; it was a great European question. The geographical position of Tunis and its possession of the harbour of Bizerta, which might be converted probably into one of the finest naval stations in the world, were, among others, considerations which rendered it highly important that the independence of the Bey of Tunis should be secured in all matters which did not concern the sovereign rights of the Sultan.

Lord STANLEY of ALDERLEY said, that since the question of Tunis was last before the House its aspect, in a certain sense, had rather improved, on account of the assurances said to have been given by the French Government. It now appeared to have been one of French subjects rather than of the French Government. Nevertheless, there was still danger from the action of the French in Tunis and Algeria. He had little doubt that the French Government was in ignorance with regard to the proceedings of M. Roustan, the French Consul General, and of his coadjutor, the Tunisian Consul, in Algeria, who was also a Frenchman. These persons had much exaggerated the importance of the disturbance caused on the Frontier of the Khoumis Tribe. It was, however, an important question, as there were 10,000 English subjects profitably engaged in trade in the country, and all the communications between the country and Europe came through the French. A year ago the Bey sent 3,000 men to keep order amongst them, and he succeeded, though at that time the French only sent 200 men to co-operate with the Tunisian troops. The Bey of Tunis only learnt from England about the recent disturbance of the Khoumis. It was now announced that the French intended to cross the Frontier on Sunday next, instead of leaving it to the Bey of Tunis to reduce the Khoumis to order. If the French troops should, unfortunately, cross the Frontier, what was now a small affair might become much larger, and precipitate matters beyond recall; for then the Arabs and inhabitants of the plains, seeing Tunis invaded, would not be able to refrain from flocking to the defence of their country. The French troops would then be unable to avoid operations much more extensive than those contemplated at Paris with regard to the Berber Tribe, the Khoumis, and if they went beyond the mountains occupied by the Khoumis, the demands of the French in Tunis and Algeria on their own Government would be such as it would be most difficult then to satisfy. The telegraphic communications were entirely in the hands of the French, so that between Fridays and Tuesdays, when the Italian steamers sailed, Tunis was cut off from communication with Europe. He trusted that Her Majesty's Government would remonstrate, while there was yet time, with the French Government, and prevent all the bloodshed and misery of an invasion of an orderly and well-governed country.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I am sorry to say my noble Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Earl Granville) is unable to be in his place this evening, and he has asked me to reply to the noble Earl's Question. I will confine myself to giving an answer to the Question of which he has given Notice. There is no Protocol of the 18th of June, 1867. There was a Turkish law of that date which had the object referred to, and which was confirmed by a Protocol of July, 1868. That, with the other Papers, is in the hands of the Law Officers, who have the whole case before them. With regard to the alleged raid on the Tunisian Frontiers, I have to inform the House that the Foreign Office has not obtained any official information on the subject.

EARL DE LA WARR said, he believed there was a document such as he had described signed at Constantinople.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY said, he could only repeat the information which had been given to him.

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL—PEACE NEGOTIATIONS—PROTECTION TO LOYAL SUBJECTS.

QUESTIONS. OBSERVATIONS.

VISCOUNT BURY asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether he will lay on the Table copies or extracts of the Instructions given to the Royal Commissioners in the Transvaal regarding the protection of the rights and property of loyal English and Boers in the Transvaal, especially in the case of those who, after the proclamation of annexation, and the subsequent declaration of Sir Garnet Wolseley that the annexation was irrevocable, purchased land in the Transvaal; whether the Standard Bank of South Africa has applied for protection to Her Majesty's Government, and, if so, what reply was returned; whether in the interval between the surrender of sovereignty on the part of Her Majesty and assumption of the rights of suzerainty only, the English Courts will continue in operation, and, if not, whether the Judges have been recalled, and what provisions have been made for the administration of justice? The noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies had already said that he did not consider Her Majesty's Government could be called upon to indemnify those persons who purchased property in the Transvaal on the faith of British annexation; but such a policy as that statement indicated might lead to civil war, if means were not found to protect those rights. He thought that the Commission might, with advantage, be desired to ascertain the real feeling in the Transvaal on the subject of the annexation. He believed that, if not an actual majority, a considerable minority of the White population would be found to be in favour of it. What he desired to know was, Whether the Royal Commissioners had been instructed to inquire what was the opinion of the White population of the Transvaal at that moment with regard to the continuance of British rule? His noble Friend opposite (the Earl of Kimberley) might believe that Messrs. Kruger and Joubert represented the real feeling of the Boers; but he (Viscount Bury) and many others thought otherwise. In fact, he believed that the action of the gentlemen he had named would ultimately be disavowed. Turning to another point, he again urged the Government to press upon the attention of the Commissioners the outrages perpetrated upon the 94th Regiment. The part of his Question relating to the administration of justice referred to an extremely important matter. At present, justice was administered in the Transvaal by two British Judges. The Commissioners could not make their final Report, and decide what ought to be the ultimate form of government in the Transvaal, before the lapse of several months. Would the English Courts sit in the interval, and would Her Majesty's writs continue to run in the country? If not, what steps would be taken for the administration of justice during the months that must pass before the publication of the Commissioners' final Report?

The Earl of KIMBERLEY, in reply, said, the answer to the first part of the Question, whether he could lay on the Table of the House Copies of the Instructions to the Royal Commissioners, must be that it would be very inconvenient and prejudicial to the Public Service to produce those Instructions at the present moment, seeing that they were at present on the way. With reference to the point on which his noble Friend was naturally desirous of obtaining information, he had to state that Instructions had been given to the Commissioners to make full provision for those who during the recent disturbances had remained loyal to the Queen, whether of British or Dutch origin. Then, as to the last part of the Question, he apprehended that the Courts of Justice would remain open during the interval between the present time and the final settlement, subject to the agreement made by Sir Evelyn Wood that no civil action should be taken in reference to the war. The other Questions, in reference to the administration of the Transvaal during the time that must elapse between now and the final settlement, had been referred to the Commissioners for their consideration and report.

In answer to Lord Brabourne,

The Earl of KIMBERLEY said, he had that day laid on the Table of the House Papers which would be distributed before the re-assembly of the House after the Easter Recess.

PRIVATE AND PROVISIONAL ORDER CONFIRMATION BILLS.

Ordered, That Standing Orders Nos. 92. and 93. be suspended; and that the time for depositing petitions praying to be heard against Private and Provisional Order Confirmation Bills, which would otherwise expire during the adjournment of the House at Easter, be extended to the first day on which the House shall sit after the recess.

House adjourned at a quarter before Eight o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter before Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 7th April, 1881.

MINUTES.]—Select Committee—Turnpike Acts Continuance Act, 1880-81, *nominated.*

Ways and Means—*considered in Committee—Resolutions* [April 4] *reported.*

Public Bills — *Leave* — Bankruptcy, *debate adjourned.*

Ordered — First Reading—Land Law (Ireland) [135]; Customs and Inland Revenue [136].

Second Reading — Church Patronage [30], *debate further adjourned.*

Second Reading—Referred to Select Committee—Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention [120].

Committee—Married Women's Property (Scotland) (*re-comm.*)* [128]—r.p.; Agricultural Tenants' Compensation [10], *debate adjourned.*

Committee—Report—Tramways (Ireland) Acts Amendment (*re-comm.*) [102].

Third Reading—Inclosure Provisional Orders (Wibsey Slack and Low Moor Commons)* [114], and *passed.*

NOTICE OF QUESTION.

THE SUEZ CANAL COMPANY—THE BRITISH SHARES.

Baron HENRY DE WORMS gave Notice that he would ask the Prime Minister on Friday, April 8, Whether he still adheres to the opinion expressed by him in his speech at Glasgow on December 6, 1879, that the purchase of the Suez Canal shares was a "delusion" and a "financial operation of a ridiculous description;" and, whether, seeing that the present value of the Suez Canal shares is officially stated to be £8,826,000, he proposes to take steps for realizing by their sale the accrued profit of £4,826,000?

QUESTIONS.

IRELAND—THE IRISH CONSTABULARY.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, How many resignations have been received from members of the Royal Irish Constabulary and Metropolitan Police Force, Dublin, during the six months ending March 31st; and, whether it is true that the men joining these bodies at present compare unfavourably in point of physique, height, &c. with the class of men by which the force was previously recruited?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: Sir, I have received a report by which it appears that the number of resignations in the Constabulary in the period named was 113. But it must be borne in mind that there was a larger number of recruits than usual, and the number of registered candidates is still greatly in excess of the demand. In the same period there were only seven resignations in the Metropolitan Police Force; and in the past year the applications for admission were most numerous. As to the physique and height of the men the hon. Member is misinformed; if anything, the men are of finer physique than formerly.

PORTUGAL—THE LORENZO MARQUES TREATY.

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to present any Papers relating to the Lorenzo Marquez Treaty?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, the Correspondence is very voluminous; but it is intended to lay on the Table a selection with as little delay as possible.

CROWN LANDS ACT, 1866—THE FORESHORE AT SHOEBURYNESS.

Lord EUSTACE CECIL asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is true that, in consequence of a dispute which has arisen as to the rights of the Crown to a portion of the foreshore at Shoeburyness, the new breech-loading 43-ton gun cannot be tested; and, if so, what steps he proposes to take to facilitate the conclusion of these trials, so as to hasten the adoption and manufacture of the new ordnance?

Mr. CHILDERS: Sir, in reply to my noble Friend, I have to state that a legal question has arisen as to a portion of the foreshore near Shoeburyness; but that I do not think that much delay will result. The case being with our Legal Advisers, I cannot say more at this moment.

CYPRUS—TAXATION.

Mr. RYLANDS asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, with reference to his statement that "the taxation of Cyprus was engaging the attention of the Government with a view to getting rid, as far as circumstances will permit, of many anomalies," Whether he is now in a position to give the House information upon this subject, and will lay upon the Table of the House Papers showing the changes contemplated by Her Majesty's Government in the taxation of Cyprus, and also any improvements which it is proposed to carry out in the administration of the Island to remove grounds of complaint and dissatisfaction now existing?

Mr. GRANT DUFF: No, Sir; it is not in my power to say more than that the fiscal and other questions connected with the administration of Cyprus are engaging the special and earnest attention of my noble Friend the Secretary of State for the Colonies, but that I fear some considerable time must elapse before it will be possible for me to make any statement as to what changes it is found feasible to make.

STATE OF IRELAND—RIOT AT DUNGARVAN.

Mr. O'DONNELL asked the Secretary of State for War, What course the Government intends to pursue with regard to the conduct of soldiers in garrison at Dungarvan; and in particular with regard to the assaults on peaceful people and other offences which have been complained of before the magistrates of Dungarvan?

Mr. CHILDERS: Sir, I have made inquiry into the circumstances of the disturbance at Dungarvan on the 18th of March, the morrow of St. Patrick's Day; and I will read to the House the Report of Colonel Panter, the officer in command of the regiment—

> "On the 18th inst., when a few of the soldiers of the detachment were returning to barracks at about a quarter to 10 p.m., they were, without any notice, attacked by about 100 roughs, known at Dungarvan as 'Corner Boys;' they were pelted with stones, and called by the most disgusting and insulting epithets. They behaved with the utmost forbearance, and it was only when two men found themselves surrounded by a mob of these semi-savages that they turned on their aggressors and fought their way into barracks. I have made strict and full inquiry into the matter, and have no hesitation in saying that the behaviour of my men, under circumstances of grievous provocation, was most creditable. 'An Army Pensioner' is said to have given evidence to the effect that the soldiers brought the attack on themselves. This so-called 'Army Pensioner,' I am informed, is a man who was dismissed from Her Majesty's Service. I would

take this opportunity of bringing to the notice of the Lieutenant General commanding, the constant provocation received by the detachment, 37th Regiment, at the hands of the lower orders of the population at Dungarvan; scarcely a night passes without some of the men being pelted with stones on their way to barracks, and the epithets 'B——y English soldier' and 'B——y English butcher' are hurled at them at every opportunity. Notwithstanding this, I have the testimony of the police that all this is borne with the utmost patience and forbearance."

The hon. Member has also sent me the copy of an information of one Patrick O'Farrell against a soldier for his conduct on the occasion. Of course, I could not prejudge the case; but I may say, with reference to one part of the complaint, that the use of obscene and abusive language by soldiers is an offence against good order, which, if proved, subjects them to punishment. Perhaps I may add, that at Carrick-on-Suir a disturbance took place on St. Patrick's Day, and some men of the same regiment were assaulted. Four of the offenders were convicted and sentenced. The soldiers were not in fault.

POST OFFICE—TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT, DUBLIN.

MR. HEALY asked the Postmaster General, Whether it is correct that the Telegraph Department in Dublin and other places have instructions to send the originals or copies of telegrams forwarded or received by certain Irish gentlemen to the Executive authorities; and, if so, whether he will state under what authority this is done, and give a list of the persons whose telegrams are so dealt with?

MR. FAWCETT, in reply, said, that no such instructions had been given.

ARMY—PUBLIC WORSHIP—POLITICAL SERMONS.

MR. O'DONNELL asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether a searching inquiry will be granted into the alleged disturbance of a Catholic congregation and interruption of the religious worship of a detachment of Catholic soldiers by an officer in garrison at Birr on Sunday?

MR. TOTTENHAM asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the officer commanding a party of troops attending Divine Service is not required by the existing regulations to withdraw his men from any place of worship where political topics are entered upon by the officiating minister?

MR. SEXTON asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the following statement, published by the London press on the 28th ultimo, is accurate:—

> "An exciting scene occurred during Mass yesterday in the Parsonstown Roman Catholic Chapel. The officiating priest was referring to the doings of the Land League and other local occurrences, when an officer in command of the troops from Birr garrison stood up, and in loud tones ordered his men to withdraw. Indescribable confusion followed, women fainted, and a general rush was made for the door. The soldiers obeyed their commander, and were marched off to the barracks, followed by an immense crowd, hooting and groaning;"

whether, if the report be accurate, the officer acted in obedience to instructions from his superiors; and, if he had no such instructions, whether the military authorities will take notice of this proceeding; whether the officer had been only five months in the service; and whether he ought to have been put in command of so large a body of men; whether, in coming down the stairs which lead from the gallery of the church, he met a woman coming up, and struck her in the bosom with such violence that she fell down and remained insensible for some time, and has since been confined to her room; and, whether the officiating clergyman made any reference to the Land League?

MR. CHILDERS: Sir, in reply to the hon. Members for Dungarvan and Sligo, and the hon. Member for Leitrim about the withdrawal of soldiers from Divine Service at Birr on the 27th ultimo, I have to state that I have made full inquiry into the circumstances, with the following result:—It appears that on Sunday, the 6th of March, Colonel Brodigan, commanding the 28th Regiment, was informed by the officer who marched the Roman Catholic soldiers to Mass that the preacher on the occasion referred in his sermon chiefly to political subjects. Colonel Brodigan, who is a Roman Catholic, instructed the officer that—

> "If duly constituted authority was held up to contempt on any occasion in the chapel his duty would be to withdraw the men from the influence of such doctrine."

On the 27th ultimo the Rev. P. Brennan' curate to Dr. Bugler, the Vicar General' who is chaplain to the troops, preached a sermon which, according to his own admission, contained much political matter. According to the report of the officer, himself a Roman Catholic, and several Roman Catholic sergeants, he not only used political language, but made a violent attack on the institutions of the country; and the officer, acting on the instructions he had received, marched his men out of chapel. Dr. Bugler states that no woman was struck, but that one was accidentally pushed down in the confusion which resulted, but she certainly was not insensible. Colonel Brodigan had, on the 29th of March, an interview with the Vicar General and his curate, and they agreed that in future no reference should be made in their sermons to political subjects when the troops were attending Mass. There is no printed regulation on this subject; but it is manifest that officers in command of soldiers at church or chapel must be allowed to exercise some discretion as to permitting them to remain there when language is used in sermons to which soldiers would not be allowed to listen if spoken at a public meeting. In this case no blame can be attached to Lieutenant Keatinge, who, though only for five months in the Service, had been for some years a Militia officer. He was only in command of 65 men on the occasion, and, as I have already said, was detailed for that duty as a Roman Catholic.

Mr. O'DONNELL asked whether the only institution attacked was not the existing land system?

Mr. CHILDERS said, it appeared from the Report that the institutions attacked went far beyond the land system. The Vicar General and his curate admitted that the sermon contained much political matter.

LANDLORD AND TENANT (IRELAND)—CHARGE AGAINST A PROCESS-SERVER.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR, who had the following Question on the Paper:—

"To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he will order the dismissal from his office of the process-server Godfrey, who, on 22nd March, while serving processes on an estate near Claremorris, entered the House of Pat Mullen, for whom he had a process, and, finding the man dead, laid the process on the dead body,"

said, he wished to postpone the Question.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I do not think, Sir, that the Question, which has been several days on the Paper, ought to be postponed any longer. The process-server had no process to serve on Pat Mullen, and did not enter the house. The process was against his son, who was served with it outside the house.

STATE OF IRELAND—MR. DILLON'S SPEECH AT THURLES.

Mr. WARTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has now ascertained that the language used by the honourable Member for Tipperary at Thurles has been correctly reported in the "Freeman's Journal" and in the "Nation" newspapers of the 2nd of April, and was correctly quoted in the question put to him last week; and, whether he will now state what action, if any, Her Majesty's Government intend to take thereon?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: Sir, after the answer I gave the hon. Baronet the Member for Horsham (Sir Henry Fletcher) on this subject, I did not think it would be necessary to ask a further Question in reference to it. I have no doubt that the portion of the speech quoted by the hon. Member was accurately taken from *The Freeman's Journal;* but its accuracy is not confirmed by the official report I have received.

MERCANTILE MARINE—RIGHTS OF TRAWLING SMACKS.

Mr. BIRKBECK asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether, in view of the strong opinions expressed by the owners of trawling smacks before the Select Committee of last Session, and their serious objections to the red and white lights as proposed by the Departmental Committee in a Return dated 11th February 1881, he will recommend the continuance of the use of the well known one white masthead light as carried for many years by trawling smacks when trawling?

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY, in reply, said, that the Departmental Committee had again met at the Board of Trade and re-considered the subject. With every desire to meet the view of the Committee of the House of Commons they were unanimously of opinion that there was an insuperable objection to the adoption of their recommendation. They had, however, made a small modification in the details, and the Department had sent out a Circular Letter to shipowners asking questions on the subject, and they would do the same in the case of the foreign Governments who had joined in the Convention.

CIRCUIT COURTS (SCOTLAND).

Mr. CAMERON asked the Lord Advocate, Whether, in filling up the recent vacancy in the office of Sheriff Substitute in the Long Island, he will, to meet the public convenience, make arrangements so as to provide for the holding of Quarterly Circuit Courts in other places besides Lochmaddy?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. M'Laren): Sir, the question of the establishment of quarterly Circuit Courts has been brought under the notice of my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary; and I can assure my hon. Friend that Circuit Courts will be established in Inverness-shire. I am at present in correspondence with the sheriff of the county on the subject.

SCOTLAND—VAGRANCY IN COUNTIES.

Mr. CAMERON asked the Lord Advocate, Whether he will introduce a Bill this Session to give additional powers to the rural police in Scotland to enable them to deal more effectually with the growing evil of vagrancy in counties?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. M'Laren): I cannot do more than assure my hon. Friend that the subject is having every attention; but I am unable to give him any more definite promise.

SCOTLAND—THE TREASURY MINUTE ON SCOTCH BANKS.

Mr. ANDERSON asked, If there was any objection to laying on the Table the Treasury Minute regarding the Scotch banks in its complete form?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH in reply, said, there would be no objection to produce the Minute.

ARMY—TROOPS IN IRELAND—THE 2nd AND 3rd DRAGOON GUARDS.

Major O'BEIRNE asked the Secretary of State for War, If any steps will be taken this summer to withdraw from the Irish garrison the 2nd and 3rd Dragoon Guards, these Regiments being in excess of the usual Cavalry force quartered in Ireland?

Mr. CHILDERS: Sir, I cannot say when it will be decided to reduce the force in Ireland; but the two regiments named by my hon. and gallant Friend will be among the first Cavalry regiments to be withdrawn.

WAYS AND MEANS—TERMINABLE ANNUITIES AND THE REDUCTION OF THE NATIONAL DEBT.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If he could inform the House how much of the reduction of the National Debt, amounting during the financial year 1880-81 to £5,325,000, is the natural effect of the operation of terminable annuities and the repayment of loans to the Treasury by local authorities under various Acts passed previous to the meeting of this Parliament, and how much due to Acts passed since he assumed the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer last April?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I stated the most important particulars, Sir, in answer to the Question of the noble Lord on Monday last, when I said that a considerable payment was due to the conversion, under the arrangements made at the previous periods of the year, of £6,000,000 of Exchequer Bonds into Terminable Annuities. A very large portion of the payment was due to the operation of an Act passed 15 years ago; but nothing of what had been done was due to any Act passed in the present Parliament. The present Parliament last Session passed an Act for the conversion of the Post Office Savings Bank deficiency into such Annuities; but that Act has only just practically come into operation.

CRIMINAL LAW—THE "FREIHEIT."

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether any liability to criminal proceedings accrues to persons who have contributed funds to the maintenance of the "Freiheit" newspaper, well knowing the character and objects of the paper; whether it is a fact that two Members of Her Majesty's Government did contribute under such circumstances to the support of the "Freiheit" newspaper, at a time when, in the absence of such support, the newspaper must have ceased to exist; whether the fact of their being Members of the Government now increases or exempts them from such liability; and, if the former, whether it is his intention to instruct the Public Prosecutor to include them in the criminal proceedings now being carried on against the "Freiheit" newspaper by the direction of the Secretary of State for the Home Department?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): Sir, the House will observe that the noble Lord asks me if two Members of Her Majesty's Government, well knowing the character and objet of *The Freiheit* newspaper, have contributed to its support. If I had had to reply only to the Question on the Paper I should have contented myself with acting upon probabilities, amounting, in my mind, to certainty, and, without inquiring from my Colleagues, should have given a denial to the charge suggested by the Question; but the noble Lord has with frankness informed me that he intends to make the charge it contains against my hon. Friends the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir Charles W. Dilke) and the Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. T. Brassey). When this communication was made to me I, of course, informed my hon. Friends of it; and now, Sir, on their authority, I desire to reply to the noble Lord's Question, and in language the most distinct and emphatic that Parliamentary usage permits me to employ, to say that the charge preferred is wholly and entirely without foundation. There is no ground of any kind upon which it can be made. I must presume that the noble Lord has been imposed upon, and that someone has placed before him a fabricated statement upon which he has thought right to act. I must leave it to the noble Lord to determine whether there are not many considerations, some of a public nature, which ought to have caused him, before putting the Question, to test the reliability of his information by inquiry from two Members of this House on whose word, from personal association, he knows he can rely. But in answer to the concluding portion of the Question, which asks whether it is intended to prosecute criminally my two hon. Friends, I have to ask the noble Lord, both on behalf of my hon. Friends and on account of more general considerations, that he shall forthwith place not only in the hands of the Law Officers of the Crown, but before this House and the public, the sources and the nature of the information which have caused him to prefer a charge so grave, so groundless, and, he must permit me to say, so recklessly made.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Sir, I should have preferred, owing to the important statement which is about to be made by the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, to defer my explanation until to-morrow night; but in reply to the direct appeal which has been made to me, I have now to inform the House and the public that the person who gave me the information is a Mr. Maltman Barry, who is prepared to state, if necessary, at the Bar of the House, that he received from the hon. Baronet the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs a subscription for the support of *The Freiheit.* I can also produce the gentleman who acted as treasurer for the funds of *The Freiheit*, who will be prepared to state also, if necessary, at the Bar of the House, that he received a sum of money from Mr. Maltman Barry, who told him that it was the contribution of the hon. Baronet, but was to be entered on the records in an assumed name. This, Sir, is the information on which I based my Question; and I am perfectly prepared, if necessary, to produce these two witnesses to its truth. I do not now wish to further detain the House; but I beg to give Notice that I will to-morrow, at the meeting of the House, ask the permission of the House to make a further personal explanation, and, if necessary, I will conclude with a Motion.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): Will the House forgive me for a moment while I say, in the absence of the Civil Lord of the Admiralty, whose statement I have in writing, that the charge is entirely without foundation; that the noble Lord has made no mention or given any reason why the charge should have been made against him.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I beg the hon. and learned Gentleman's pardon for the omission. The fund to which I am informed the Civil Lord of the Admiralty contributed was not the fund for the support of *The Freiheit;* it was a different fund—an election fund, which was being raised in this country to defray the costs of the election of Herr Most and his colleagues at the dissolution which took place after the attempted assassination of the Emperor of Germany.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, I think it only due to the House, to myself, and to the Government of which I am a Member, that I should say at once, and without waiting until to-morrow, that I never saw *The Freiheit* newspaper until I saw the number which contained the article now the subject of the prosecution; that I never read any article in that newspaper, except the one to which I refer; that I never heard of Herr Most or the *The Freiheit* newspaper until about three or four weeks ago; and, as it is scarcely necessary for me to add, that the statement which has been made is utterly untrue.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: All I have to say is that I am very glad to hear the statement of the hon. Baronet, whose thanks I shall expect to receive for having been the means of dispelling an injurious rumour.

JAMAICA—ITS GOVERNMENT AS A CROWN COLONY.

Mr. Serjeant SIMON asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether any information has reached the Colonial Office of the great dissatisfaction generally prevailing in Jamacia with its present system of Government as a Crown Colony; and, whether, seeing that until a few years ago representative Government had for two centuries existed there, Her Majesty's Government will take into consideration the expediency of restoring to the people some share in the management of their own affairs?

Mr. GRANT DUFF: Sir, in reply to my hon. and learned Friend's first Question, I have to say that no information has reached the Colonial Office as to any great or general dissatisfaction; but we are well aware, of course, that certain sections of the community dislike the present system of government. In reply to his second Question, I have to say that I fear it is quite impossible for me to hold out any hope of the existing Constitution being altered.

POST OFFICE—POSTAL DELIVERIES (IRELAND).

Major O'BEIRNE asked the Postmaster General, If he would consider the advisability of giving instructions to the letter carrier recently appointed to convey letters from Drumsna to Bonnybeg, county Leitrim, to proceed to Bonnybeg from Drumsna by the road that passes by Gortconlon and Headford, as some of the residents living in that district have a constant official correspondence, and the change of route will involve no additional expense to the postal department?

Mr. FAWCETT: Sir, some misapprehension exists as to the facts on which the Question of the hon. and gallant Gentleman is based; and I would, therefore, ask him to communicate with me privately on the subject.

INTERNATIONAL BI-METALLIC CONFERENCE.

Mr. J. G. HUBBARD asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether this Country has given any reply to the proposal that it should be represented at the International Bi-Metallic Conference to be held at Paris, under the auspices of France and the United States; if a reply has been sent, whether it is so expressed as to exclude any doubt of its being the determination of this Country to maintain its present standard of value; and, whether he will lay upon the Table any Correspondence which has passed upon the subject?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, Her Majesty's Government have informed the Governments of France and the United States that they could not consent to discuss the principles of a double standard, and that unless the invitations were so worded as to leave to each Power entire liberty of discussion Her Majesty's Government must decline to be represented at the Conference. The Government of India are willing to send a delegate, who would not, however, be authorized to vote on any question of the adoption of the bi-metallic system; but the Secretary of State for India will be prepared to consider carefully any measures calculated to promote the re-establishment of the value of silver. The question of the separate representation of certain Colonies is at present under consideration. Papers on the subject will shortly be laid on the Table.

THE CROWN AGENTS FOR THE COLONIES.

Mr. ANDERSON asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether Her Majesty's Government in designating certain officers as—

> "Crown Agents for the Colonies, and giving them an establishment in the Colonial Office, mean the public to understand that these officers are servants of the Crown,"

and that Her Majesty's Government is responsible for their actions; whether he is aware that these Crown agents, on the prestige of the position thus accorded to them, issue loans and make contracts for the Colonies, and have done so for the Cape Colony; whether he is also aware that they claim a right to enforce these contracts in our law courts, but in a claim against them they ignore our courts, and refer aggrieved parties to the Colonial courts; and, whether it is the fact that a Colonial Government is not a corporation that can be sued otherwise than by a "Petition of Right," and that as regards the Cape Government that remedy is excluded by the circumstance that the Cape Parliament never passed an Act authorizing such Petition of Right?

Mr. GRANT DUFF: Sir, my reply to my hon. Friend's first Question must be in the negative. The Crown agents have, no doubt, in the interests of public convenience, an establishment close to the Colonial Office; but they are the servants of the Colonial Governments, paid from Colonial, not Imperial, funds, nor is Her Majesty's Government in any way responsible for their actions. In reply to my hon. Friend's second Question, I have to say that I am quite aware that they issue, and have long issued, loans for Colonial Governments. In reply to his third Question, I have to say that, like the rest of Her Majesty's subjects, the Crown agents have no power to ignore the Courts of this country. Perhaps my hon. Friend will kindly postpone his fourth Question.

THE QUEEN v. EDWARDS—THE PARISH OF WOOLWICH — EXPENSES INCURRED IN BURYING THE VICTIMS OF THE "PRINCESS ALICE" CALAMITY.

Baron HENRY DE WORMS asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether it is not a fact that, under the decision of Justices Lindley and Matthew, in the case of the Queen *v.* Edwards, the parish of Woolwich was put to an expense of £1,200 in the interment of the bodies of those drowned in the lamentable accident caused by the running down of the "Princess Alice;" and, whether he will introduce a Bill to remove such a heavy liability by extending section 1 of 48 Geo. 3, c. 75, to bodies which should be found, thrown in, or cast on shore from the sea, or from any river?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James): I will consider the subject if the hon. Member will communicate with me in reference to it.

LANDLORD AND TENANT (IRELAND) ACT, 1870, COMMISSION (THE EARL OF BESSBOROUGH'S)—THE EVIDENCE.

Sir HERVEY BRUCE asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that evidence has been published by the Land Commission, presided over by the Earl of Bessborough, bringing charges against Irish landlords, while the names of the persons giving such evidence have been suppressed; and, whether he would publish the names of the witnesses, or in some way enable the public to form a fair judgment how far the testimony may be biassed or otherwise?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: Sir, I beg to inform the hon. Member that neither I nor any other Member of the Government have any control over the Commission, who conducted their proceedings in the way they thought best; and, therefore, we could not call upon them to publish the names of the witnesses who were called, neither could we publish them ourselves. It would have been better, in the circumstances, to have addressed this Question to one of the Commisioners, either in this House or in "another place." I believe the usual course was adopted.

Sir HERVEY BRUCE, in consequence of the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman, begged to put the Question to the senior Member for the County of Cork, who was a distinguished Member of the Commission, and who was now in his place.

Mr. SHAW, in reply, said, there were several tenant farmers who came before the Commission, and on the question that their evidence should be taken down and their names published, they expressed a dread; they were afraid by so doing they would expose themselves. The dread they expressed was not so much on the part of their landlords as on the part of the agents and under agents. This, he thought, was a very natural feeling under the circumstances. Their evidence was accordingly taken on the express understanding that although the evidence might be published their names would be omitted. Special inquiry was made into the particulars of the evidence given by these witnesses, and it was found to be *bonâ fide.* At the end of their sittings a deputation attended representing the landlords of Ireland, who gave the Commission very elaborate tables of expenditure. They were asked to give the names in addition to the particulars; but they declined to give them, adding that they only brought the information to the Commission on the condition that they would not publish the names.

Lord CLAUD HAMILTON asked the hon. Member whether by *bonâ fide* he meant that the evidence was truthful?

Mr. SHAW replied that the evidence was carefully sifted as to its truth, and sent to the persons implicated before it was published, so that they might have replied to the charges if they had chosen to do so.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS—GLANDERS.

Lord CLAUD HAMILTON asked the Vice President of the Council, If his attention has been called to the increasing prevalence of glanders amongst horses in the Metropolis; whether there is any regular inspection of stables by veterinary surgeons or other competent persons acting under the orders of the Privy Council; if it is not a fact that the public drinking troughs are a source of infection; if it is not the case that the horses in night cabs are especially infected; and, whether it would not be possible to compel all veterinary surgeons, under penalties, to report to the Privy Council the existence of every case of this disease that comes under their notice?

Mr. MUNDELLA: Sir, although the Returns show an increase from 601 cases of glanders in 1879 to 1,142 in 1880, the Veterinary Department is of opinion that the increased number of cases reported is solely due to the Act of 1878 being rigidly enforced by the local authority, the Metropolitan Board of Works, and not to increased disease. The duty of inspection devolves on the local authority, and we have every reason to believe that it is efficiently discharged. Drinking troughs are one means by which the disease can be spread; but they are a most humane provision, and, I am told, have conferred benefits far outweighing any risk attaching to them. No doubt, if glandered horses are worked at all, they are worked at night to escape detection; but this entails penalties which have, in many cases, been strictly enforced. It is believed that it would not be possible to carry out the suggestions contained in the last paragraph of the noble Lord's Question.

BOARD OF TRADE—RESIGNATION OF MR. R. GIFFEN.

Mr. H. S. NORTHCOTE asked the President of the Board of Trade, If it is the case that Mr. R. Giffen, head of the Statistical Department of the Board of Trade, has resigned his office; and, if so, if he can state to the House the grounds of the resignation of this efficient and distinguished public servant?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: I am sorry to say it is true that Mr. Giffen has resigned his office; and, in consequence, the State has lost a most efficient and distinguished public servant. Mr. Giffen informs me that he has left the Public Service in order to better his prospects.

CRIMINAL LAW—THE "IRISH WORLD."

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been directed to the "Irish World" newspaper, printed and published in New York; whether he is aware, or whether it is with the sanction of the Government, that that newspaper is circulated weekly all over Ireland, partly through the agency of and by the officials of Her Majesty's Post Office Department, and partly through other well-known channels; whether he is aware that incitements to murder Irish landlords, land agents, and land grabbers and others are set forth in every edition of that paper; why proceedings similar to those which have recently been directed against the "Freiheit" newspaper in London have not been directed against those parties who are concerned in the circulation, sale, and distribution of the "Irish World" in Ireland; and, what difference, if any, exists between incitements to murder Her Majesty's subjects and incitements to murder persons who are not Her Majesty's subjects, which should warrant a prosecution in the latter case and not in the former?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I need not say that *The Irish World* is not circulated with the sanction of Her Majesty's Government. I have reason to believe that its circulation is mainly, if not entirely, through other channels than the Post Office. As to another part of the Question, I should have thought the noble Lord would have been aware that, in the case of a newspaper which transgresses the law, it is very much easier to stop it if printed in the United Kingdom than if brought in from abroad; and that it is impossible to institute similar proceedings, in this instance, to those directed against *The Freiheit* newspaper. I may anticipate a question of which Notice has been given by the hon. Member for Leitrim by stating that if *The Irish World* containing the article from which he has read were published in the United Kingdom—certainly if it were published in Ireland—I should not lose an hour before taking the opinion of the Law Advisers of the Government on the subject. I am well aware that the circulation of *The Irish World* has been productive of evil consequences; but it has been found by all Governments to be one of the most difficult matters to prevent the introduction of mischievous newspapers from abroad.

ROYAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND—SCHEME OF THE SENATE.

Mr. BRYCE asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Government will undertake that an opportunity shall be afforded for discussing the scheme of the Senate of the Royal University in Ireland, laid upon the Table of the House on April 5th, before either themselves taking or authorizing the Senate to take any steps to carry out the proposals of this scheme, or before proceeding to fix a day for the dissolution of the Queen's University in Ireland, under section 11 of the University Education (Ireland) Act of 1879?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: Sir, before the scheme is finally adopted, the House will have an opportunity of discussing the whole question. The Queen's University cannot be dissolved until the new University is in a position to confer degrees.

FRANCE—THE NEW COMMERCIAL TREATY.

Mr. JACKSON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If he can state whether, in the event of a new Commercial Treaty between this Country and France being arranged, the provisions of such Treaty will be made known to the House before its final ratification?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, Her Majesty's Government have taken steps to ascertain the wishes of the Chambers of Commerce and other commercial bodies in this country with a view to meet, as far as possible, their requirements in any arrangements with France that may eventually be come to. I can say nothing further upon the point at the present time beyond this—that every possible step will be taken to inform the House of what is going on, and that everything will be done to avoid anything like secrecy.

PARLIAMENTARY OATH (MR. BRADLAUGH).

Mr. SCHREIBER asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether he is aware that by the Standing Order, No. 1, applicable to all Appeals presented to the House of Lords on or after the 1st day of November 1876, it was

> "Ordered, That, except where otherwise provided by statute, no Petition of Appeal be received by this House, unless the same be lodged in the Parliament Office for presentation to the House within one year from the date of the last decree, order, judgment, or interlocutor appealed from;"

and, whether he would inform the House by what statute, if any, the time for appealing in Mr. Bradlaugh's case can be extended from one year to five?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James): The hon. Member is quite right in saying that the limit of time for appealing to the House of Lords from the Court of Appeal is one year. An hon. Friend near me having suggested, as I was speaking, that the time was five years, I adopted his statement at the moment to avoid controversy.

POOR LAW (METROPOLIS)—WORKHOUSE AT CHAMPION HILL.

Mr. ROUNDELL asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether, before finally sanctioning the erection by the Guardians of St. Saviour's, Southwark, of a proposed Workhouse near Champion Hill, he will give the Governors of Dulwich College and adjoining landowners an opportunity of stating their objections to that site?

Mr. DODSON: Sir, the site for the proposed workhouse has been carefully inspected and approved by the proper officials, and it would be only misleading the hon. Member to hold out any hope that the decision will be changed.

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL—PROTECTION TO LOYAL INHABITANTS.

Colonel TAYLOR asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether, on the evacuation of the Transvaal, measures will be taken to secure the interests of those who, on the faith of the performance of British rule, bought properties and invested their savings therein?

Mr. GRANT DUFF: Sir, in reply to the right hon. and gallant Member, I have to say that the Royal Commission has been instructed to consider the measures to be taken for this purpose.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) BILL.

Mr. ELLIOT asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether his attention has been drawn to a leading article in the "Standard" of the 6th of this month, purporting to give all the particulars of the Irish Land Bill; and, if so, whether such particulars are correct; whether they have been communicated exclusively to that journal; and, whether it is in accordance with Parliamentary procedure that the substance of Bills should be communicated to the press before the Bills are in the hands of Members of the House of Commons?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, my attention has been drawn to the article in question. I am unable at present to give any particulars which will throw any light on the origin of the article. That being so, perhaps the hon. Member will repeat his question on some future day. The hon. Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell) has also a Question on the subject; but what I have said is the only answer I can give at this moment.

LOCAL TAXATION—LEGISLATION.

Sir BALDWYN LEIGHTON asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to deal with the whole question of Local Taxation next Session?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, Her Majesty's Government are very anxious to deal with this question, which they consider to be both important and urgent, in a comprehensive manner. At the same time, we should be very bold at this moment to say what subjects we intended to deal with in the course of the next Session of Parliament.

STATE OF IRELAND—COLLISION IN MAYO.

Mr. O'DONNELL asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he has received information that women and children have been fired upon, and one young woman killed, at Ballyhannis, county Mayo, by constabulary engaged in the service of notices of ejectment; and, whether the district of Ballyhannis was the scene of most severe distress and famine last year?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, he would answer the Question of the hon. Member. It appeared that a process-server was most violently attacked, and a small body of police who were with him were also violently attacked and injured. The result was that the process-server refused to go on, and the police retreated with him. A mob of 200 or 300 men, and also women and children, followed the police and again attacked them. A constable had to fire, and he (Mr. W. E. Forster) was very sorry to say that a girl was shot in the leg; but he was able to state from two police reports he had received that she was not dangerously wounded. With regard to the last Question, he had not had time to learn the exact facts with regard to Ballyhannis; but he had no doubt there was distress there last winter.

In reply to Mr. O'DONNELL,

MR. W. E. FORSTER said, that 10 policemen went with the process-server; and it was not usual, under those circumstances, for a magistrate to accompany the process-server.

AFGHANISTAN (POLITICAL AFFAIRS) —THE AMEER.

MR. O'DONNELL asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether it is true that a large supply of small-arms ammunition has been granted by the Indian Government to Abdar Rahman; and, whether such supply of munitions of war is intended exclusively for the external protection of Afghanistan, or is to be used by Abdar Rahman to repress discontent and opposition among the Afghan people?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: When Abdurrahman assumed the government of Cabul he represented to the Indian Government that, owing to the occupation of the capital by British troops, the arsenal was almost entirely empty. Upon that representation a considerable quantity of small-arm ammunition was given to him; but it is quite impossible for me to say to what use he may have put it. A further grant was made recently, in consequence of the representations of an Envoy of the Ameer at Calcutta.

STATE OF IRELAND—AFFRAY IN THE COUNTY SLIGO.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the following statements in the "Freeman's Journal" in reference to the affray in county Sligo:—That, as the armed party accompanying the process-server approached, a young woman ran forward to the police and said—

> "All we want are the processes and that you will leave the roofs of our cabins over us for another year,"

and that, then, the police suddenly drew across the road, fixed bayonets, and fired under instructions; that there was no stone-throwing, except by a few children, when the police then resorted to these extreme steps; whether the coroner adjourned the inquest, in spite of the protests of Mr. Mannion, the representative of the next-of-kin of the deceased, and without any application in open court; whether the coroner is correctly reported to have said on the question of adjournment:

> "The coroner—I have received directions from the Clerk of the Crown, from the county inspector, and from the sub-inspector, to adjourn the inquest until Tuesday, the 24th;"

and, if a coroner is thus justified in acting under the directions and by virtue of a private agreement with the constabulary authorities?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, he had read the report in *The Freeman's Journal.* He had only to state that he had received official information confirming the statement of the police—that was to say, he had received statements from the resident magistrate and the county inspector, from which it appeared that the policemen were obliged to fire. The hon. Member asked whether the coroner was justified in acting under the direction of the constabulary authorities. Of course he was not justified. The coroner acted on his own discretion.

PRISONS (ENGLAND) ACT—MAIDSTONE GAOL.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether a letter addressed to the clerk of the peace for the county of Kent on March 22nd, and signed "A. F. O. Liddell," in the following terms:

> "The Prison Commissioners having reported that it is desirable, with a view to the discontinuance of Maidstone Prison, that prisoners from Tunbridge Wells should be sent to Lewes Prison, I am directed by the Secretary of State to request you to move the Tunbridge Wells magistrates to commit prisoners in future to Lewes Prison,"

was authorised by him; and, if so, whether he still adheres to the statement made by him on this subject?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, it was not intended to close Maidstone Prison permanently; but it would be closed while alterations were being made in it.

PUBLIC HEALTH—SMALL-POX (METROPOLIS).

SIR SYDNEY WATERLOW asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether his attention has been called to the increasing number of cases of small pox within the Metropolis; and, whether any special arrangements have been made by the Government for the care of these patients, having regard to the great danger of admitting such cases into the general hospitals, and to the fact that the beds in the small pox hospitals are stated to be all occupied?

MR. DODSON: Sir, my attention has for some time past been anxiously directed to the prevalence of small-pox in the Metropolis. The Government itself has no power to take charge of persons suffering from this disease; but the Local Government Board has not failed to impress upon the several authorities who are either required or enabled to provide hospital accommodation for small-pox patients, whether of the pauper or non-pauper class, the necessity of making every arrangement in their power to meet the emergency. I am glad to say that arrangements are being made by some of the authorities to supplement the hospital accommodation at the disposal of the managers of the Metropolitan Asylum District.

EJECTMENTS (IRELAND).

MR. PARNELL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he can inform the House of the number of ejectments which have been executed in Ireland since the passing into Law of the Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act; and, whether he can inform the House of the number of ejectments executed in Ireland during the period of similar length immediately preceding the passing of this Act?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that in the month of March last there had been 196 decrees of ejectments in Ireland, and 91 had been re-admitted as care-takers. In the month of February there had been 83 ejectments, and 32 of the tenants were re-admitted. The inference which he supposed the hon. Member wished to be drawn from these figures — that this increase was owing to the Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act—was not correct, because the largest increase was in Ulster, where the Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act was not in force.

In reply to Mr. GIBSON,

MR. W. E. FORSTER said, he believed that the ejectments were almost entirely agricultural.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE asked the Prime Minister, If he could state exactly the course proposed in Business to-morrow?

MR. GLADSTONE said, he did not know whether there would be a debate after the opening Statement upon the Irish Land Bill to-night. Possibly hon. Gentlemen, on a measure of that nature, would think it more convenient to reserve their comments until they had the document in their hands. The Bill would be circulated not later than to-morrow forenoon. Notice had been given of opposition to the Bankruptcy Bill; and therefore he was afraid he could not state till a later hour of the evening what would be the course of Business for to-morrow.

SOUTHERN AFGHANISTAN—PISHIN AND SIBI.

In reply to Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL,

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, that no answer had been yet sent to the Despatch of the Government of India upon the subject of the abandonment of Quettah; but he did not consider that any action had been taken here or in India which precluded the occupation of Pishin and Sibi.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Ordered, That the Orders of the Day be postponed until after the Notices of Motions for leave to introduce the Land Law (Ireland) Bill and the Bankruptcy Bill.—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

MOTION.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) BILL.

LEAVE. FIRST READING.

MR. GLADSTONE: Mr. Speaker, in addressing myself, Sir, to the exposition of, I think, the most difficult and complex question with which in the course of my public life I have ever had to deal, I do feel at least some satisfaction in exchanging the dreary work of repression in which we have been engaged for nearly the whole of the past three months for legislation which, at all events, we hope will be of an improving and reforming character. At the same time, I cannot but contrast the circumstances in which we address ourselves to this task with the happier circumstances of the year 1870, when the Government last attempted to deal with this subject. We are obliged now to enter on the consideration of a question above all things requiring tranquillity, impartiality, and strict balance of mind in the midst of a state of things in Ireland, which I do not wish to characterize by any strong language, and which is now happily in course of mitigation, but which, at the same time, we cannot call less than a disturbed state of things—a state of things so disturbed as undoubtedly to have influenced the minds of men, not less seriously, perhaps, than the real and permanent merits of the question. It is important, Sir, at the outset to consider what are the grounds on which the Government are of opinion that we ought now to proceed to legislate on Irish land. I am bound to say that there are certain of those alleged or supposed grounds which I must at once emphatically disclaim. It is commonly said that the iniquity of the Irish Land Laws is a main reason for legislating on Irish land. Now, Sir, equity and iniquity may be in great part comparative; but I must say that, if we are to proceed on that principle of comparison, I think it is an exaggeration to describe the Land Laws of Ireland as iniquitous. The Land Laws of England are laws under which, at any rate, this country has lived, has remained contented, has made extraordinary progress; but the Land Laws of Ireland chiefly differ from the Land Laws of England in the very special provisions which they present to us on behalf of the tenant. Neither, Sir, can I say that I think that the more extreme plans which have lately been broached in Ireland, and which have been largely commended to the notice, to the judgment, and to the passions of those who had to consider them, constitute in themselves any very valid reason for our approaching practically the consideration of the case. Those schemes, Sir, I must frankly say, have constituted in the eye of the Government a main difficulty in approaching it. I do not wish to ascribe to any hon. Member of this House, or to any proposers of those schemes out-of-doors, a consciousness of their character and tendency such as I consider them to be. But, speaking of many of those plans quite apart from the motives and views of those who propose them, I am bound to say that it passes my ability to distinguish them from schemes of public plunder. I hold it to be an occasion of just praise to the people of Ireland in general that those who have been engaged in examining into the Land Question do not ascribe to that people a participation in views which can be so characterized. In the 3rd paragraph of the Report of the Bessborough Commission the Commissioners thus describe the moderate views of the tenant farmers of Ireland. They say—

> "The tenant farmers of Ireland declare that they do not desire the expropriation of the landlords or the confiscation for their own benefit of the property of others; but that they do desire to cultivate their farms in security, and to receive the full profits of their industry while rendering a fair rent for the land they occupy to those whose means have been invested in it."

And I rejoice to think that, such being their views, we have a fair and a broad basis on which we may hopefully proceed. Well, Sir, neither, I am bound to say, should we think it just to propose legislation on this great matter on the ground, whether expressed or implied, of general misconduct on the part of the landlords of Ireland. On the contrary, as a rule, they have stood their trial, and they have, as a rule, been acquitted. The Report of the Bessborough Commission, which certainly is not deficient in its popular sympathies, in its 10th paragraph declares that the greatest credit is due to the Irish landlords for not exacting all that they by law are entitled to exact; and it likewise points out with perfect justice that if they had exacted all that they would by law be entitled to exact they would have been guilty of injustice; they would have appropriated the results of their tenants' labours in the improvement of the soil. Again, I find in the 9th paragraph a remarkable statement, which runs as follows:—

> "It was unusual," that is to say, in Ireland, "to exact what in England would have been considered a full or fair commercial rent. Such a rent over many of the larger estates, the owners of which were resident and took an interest in the welfare of the tenants, it has never been the custom to demand. The example has been largely followed; and is to the present day rather the rule than the exception in Ireland."

But while it is satisfactory thus to indicate the good conduct of the great proportion of the landlords, there are other features of the case on which we do arrive at the conclusion that there is a great necessity for searching and comprehensive legislation. The first of these is that old and standing evil of Ireland —that land hunger, which must not be described as if it were merely an infirmity of the people for it, and really means land scarcity, still continues to import into the agricultural relations of Ireland difficulties with which as yet we have not been able completely to deal. It is this land hunger, aggravated, no doubt, by the bad seasons of the last few years, together with other circumstances, which constitutes the necessity for directing the attention of Parliament to the subject of Irish land legislation. I am bound, Sir, to add, as a principal author of the Land Act of 1870, that defects have been developed in that Act which have seriously marred the completeness of its operation. Some of those defects undoubtedly—I will not dwell on details, it would be invidious—are due to changes which the Bill underwent after it had left this House, and in which we were constrained reluctantly to acquiesce. But others of them, I am bound to say, were involved in the original construction of the measure; and even if it had passed into law in the same shape as it passed this House, it would not have been completely adequate for its purpose. I hope, Sir, it will not be thought harsh or unjust if, after the tribute I have striven to render to the Irish landlords at large, I mention, as a third and conclusive reason for this legislation, that a limited number of that class have been distinguished by conduct different from the predominating number. There have been, Sir, both arbitrary raisings of rent and harsh and cruel evictions. It may seem hard, where there are so many landlords with whom we have not a shred of title to interfere, were it possible to sever their case from other cases around them, that they must be liable to interference on account of the acts or omissions of the few; but so it is, and so it must be, under the iron necessity of public affairs. I remember an illustration I may, perhaps, be allowed to give which occurred long ago; it belongs to the period of my early life, though I think it bears a marked analogy to the case now before us. I refer to the time when, in 1833, Parliament, by a very wise and great act of legislation, determined on the emancipation of the negroes of the West Indies, and introduced a period of six years during which there was to prevail a system of what was called apprenticeship, substantially founded on freedom, but coupled with a qualified and limited degree of compulsory labour. Do not let it be supposed by hon. Gentlemen from Ireland that I am comparing the relation of the West Indian planters to the negroes, with that of the Irish proprietors to their tenantry—it is only for a limited purpose that I am quoting the illustration. The system worked admirably well throughout almost the whole of the West Indies. Those who had been owners of slaves, and were still owners of estates, entered into the spirit of the law, and the progress made under the system of apprenticeship was very gratifying. But unhappily in one or two islands, especially in Jamaica, there was a knot of men who could not forget or sever themselves from the vicious habits of their early life, and contrived to carry the traditions and practices of slavery into the new legal condition which the Legislature meant to be one of freedom. This was discovered by the vigorous philanthropy of Mr. Sturge, who emblazoned it before the people of this country. It entered deep into the hearts of the people; and in consequence of the acts of a few, notwithstanding the good conduct of the many, there was a sharp and sudden interference with the letter of the contract, ending in the unrequited remission of two years of apprenticeship in the West Indies. Well, Sir, I think that, in the same way, some few landlords of Ireland—generally the smaller landlords—have contrived to inflict on their brethren in their own class much dishonour and much inconvenience.

These are the reasons on which we ground the necessity that has led us to come forward and propose to Parliament a measure which we think of great importance. Let us consider, in the first place, what is the guidance to which we might naturally look for our direction in the framing of a Bill upon Irish land. We found in existence when we came into Office a Commission which had been appointed by the former Government—a Commission with extraordinary width and scope—to investigate the working of the Land Acts. The Report of this Commission was sure to be a considerable element in the consideration of the case. But, at the same time, it would hardly be expected that a Government formed from this side of the House would be content with the sole verdict of that Commission. Partly, therefore, because of the gravity of the case, and partly because we thought it necessary that a body should be appointed which might give its undivided attention to the thorough and searching investigation of the Irish Land Question, Her Majesty was advised to appoint a second Commission, and we have now before us the results of both Commissions. As I stated, the Land Act of 1870 achieved but a partial success. I am compelled to say the same of the Commissions of Inquiry. From the two Commissions we had naturally to expect two Reports; but instead of two Reports there have been a collection—I might say a litter—of Reports; not less than seven in all. One Report of the Duke of Richmond's Commission, signed by a considerable majority, is flanked or backed by another Report of a not inconsiderable minority, including some names of great authority in regard to Irish land. One member of the minority, Mr. Bonamy Price, is the only man—and to his credit be it spoken—who has had the resolution to apply, in all their unmitigated authority, the principles of abstract political economy to the people and circumstances of Ireland exactly as if he had been proposing to legislate for the inhabitants of Saturn or Jupiter. And when I turn to the labours of the Bessborough Commission the process of sub-division is not less remarkable. There were four Commissioners, of whom two signed a Report which, I must say, is one of the ablest and most interesting I have ever read, though we are far from adopting the whole scheme they recommend. But of these four Commissioners my hon. Friend the Member for Cork County (Mr. Shaw) has signed a collateral Report, which undoubtedly, in some important particulars, must be regarded as a counter Report. Another—the O'Conor Don—signed a Report of his own, with proposals of enormous scope, more especially for the general purchase of the estates of all willing vendors in Ireland by the Government—a condition which he appeared to make vital and fundamental to any proposal for which he would be responsible. Lastly, there is, completely separate, the Report of Mr. Kavanagh. I will not mention his name in his absence without saying that he is one of the ablest, if not the ablest, Gentleman coming from Ireland I have ever known among the Party opposite. Besides his ability, he is a man of independent mind; and I do not scruple to call him—making allowance for his starting-point—a man of liberal and enlightened feelings. This, then, is the result of the sub-division of the Reports. The more numerous Richmond Commission produced three Reports. The less numerous Bessborough Commission produced four Reports. The total number is seven. We are greatly indebted to the Members of the Commissions for the disinterested pains and great ability with which they have addressed themselves to their task; but our gratitude, I must say, must be mixed with some bewilderment. Although the Commissioners have not been able to lend us the immense assistance which would have been derived from their union in a body of identical recommendation, yet allow me to say that we have derived immense assistance from their Reports. The body of their fundamental recommendations are of the utmost value, because I look not only at the points in which they disagree, but still more at those in which they agree. And what do I find? I find that, setting aside the single Report of Mr. Bonamy Price, the whole body of the Richmond Commissioners and the whole body of the Bessborough Commissioners, without any exception, are agreed in making a recommendation of the most vital importance—I mean the constitution of a Court for the purpose of dealing with the differences between landlords and tenants in Ireland in regard to rent. It is not for me to fix authoritative interpretations on the language of public men; and therefore I think it only fair, after what I have said, to read the recommendation of the Richmond Commission on this subject. It is needless for me to refer to the recommendations of the minority of the Richmond Commission or the recommendation of the Bessborough Commission. They are perfectly clear and unequivocal; but I wish to read to the House what I conceive to be one of the most important portions of the document before us—a short passage from the preliminary Report of the Duke of Richmond's Commission. It runs as follows:—

> "Bearing in mind the system by which the improvement and equipment of a farm in Ireland are very generally the work of the tenant, and the fact that a yearly tenant is at any time liable to have his rent raised in consequence of the increased value given to his holding by the expenditure of his capital and labour, the desire for legislative interference to protect him from an arbitrary increase of rent does not seem unnatural. Legislation properly framed to accomplish this end would not be objected to."

Now in that passage there is no express mention of the name of a Court; but I think I cannot go wrong in interpreting the passage to mean that and nothing else. In fact, I should say that it must either mean that, or something more; it may be interference, for instance, to give perpetuity of present rents without any increase. Clearly this is not what is meant; but, in pointing to the regulation by a public authority of the rents in Ireland, I conceive that I am making a fair, an impartial, and, I would almost say, a necessary construction of the language of the Commission when I say that we have that Commission, appointed by the late Government, appointed certainly with no special want of regard for the just interests of the landlords, recommending that in the peculiar circumstances of Ireland there shall be legislative interference to protect the tenant from arbitrary increase of rent. I do not know to what extent the Noblemen and Gentlemen who signed that Report had considered the ulterior consequences of the proposition which they thus laid down; but I own it appears to me—and I am not now attempting to saddle them with what I am about to state—that legislative interference for the regulation of rent cannot by any possibility be severed from legislative interference for the regulation of tenure and from the regulation of the principle of tenant right. That, however, is by the way; for I do not attempt to avail myself of the advantage of the authority of this Commission, combined with all the other Commissions upon this great subject, further than I have stated. But it is plain that the independence and the difference of the judgments which have been arrived at by the several Commissions give additional force and weight to the points on which we find them agree.

Now let me state to the House that this subject must be considered to divide itself into three branches, with one of which I have little or nothing to do. The first is that which is commonly known to us as Land Law—the whole important group of questions connected with the registry, the transfer, the devolution, and the nature of estates in land. These are matters which, substantially, I shall hardly touch to-night. I mention them now in order that the omission may not be supposed to testify indifference. It is my firm belief that no more valuable gift could be conferred on Ireland than sound and thorough legislation on those subjects; but it is not our work to-night. Everyone will admit that it would not be possible to combine such legislation with the great and complicated subject with which we have now to deal. The two subjects are indeed so far connected that, proceeding on the same principles as we adopted in 1870, we are endeavouring to provide that whatever operations are contemplated by the measure, they shall be placed within the power of limited owners of the soil. Consequently we may set aside limitation of ownership, so far as may be necessary for our purpose. The two great questions which remain are these: in the first place, the relation of landlord and tenant in Ireland; and, in the second place, that important group of questions which I may here gather together under the name of subjects which require advances from the Public Exchequer. These are the two branches of the subject which it will be my duty to open, and I must open them with many apologies, and with a respectful appeal to the indulgence of the House. In dealing with these questions I can hardly hope to be even accurate in detail, still less can I hope to exhibit the numerous provisions of the measure in their due proportion and relative bearing upon the whole subject. I fear that I may be justly open to the reproach both of being prolix and defective in the statement I have to make. But, relying upon the patience of hon. Members, I will do my best to explain the whole spirit and the main provisions of the measure we are submitting to the House. I have never as a Minister felt overwhelmed with as great a sense of the enormous importance of the topics and the propositions involved in it; and there is nothing that can legitimately be done by the Government which we shall hesitate to do for the purpose of promoting such legislation as shall deal effectively with the Land Question in Ireland.

It appears to me that the proposal to create a Court, or to allow of the reference to a Court, of most important and numerous transactions of life between man and man—I mean in a material sense—has become, in the circumstances of Ireland, and with the authorities before us, quite inevitable; and that being so, it is evident that it must be a salient and cardinal proposal of any measure into which it enters. But a question of the greatest importance meets us on the threshold. Is this Court to be compulsory, and, being compulsory, is it to be universal, and therefore perpetual? or is it to be a Court as to which there is to be an option reserved? This question I shall have to argue before the House; but, before arguing it, I will speak of a matter as to which we have the deepest conviction, and with regard to which also I think a great deal of prejudice and misconception prevail—I refer to the subject of assignment, generally known in the language of the "three F's" as Free Sale. In using the word assignment I use the word which I believe is best known to law and to history. As far as I have been able to observe, more objection has been taken to the legislative recognition of assignment in those quarters where objection was likely to be taken than to the other proposals of the Commission—namely, fixity of tenure and fair rents, obtained by the arbitration of a public authority. It appears to me that while this particular proposal has been most objected to, and appears to be the most unpalatable in many quarters, it is distinctly and decidedly the least open to objection in the circumstances of Ireland, and almost absolutely ingrained in the necessities of the case and in the circumstances with which we have to deal. Now let us see whether that is or is not an unreasonable statement. I will speak of that which is assigned as the tenant right of Ireland; and, for the purpose of my argument, the assumption is that every tenant has some right or other in his holding. What are the elements of that right in Ireland? They are more easily traced there than elsewhere. In the first place, you have the unquestioned fact that improvements have been to a larger extent than probably in any other country the work of the tenant himself. Tenant right is the result of these improvements. Secondly, you have this great fact in Ireland—a land hunger coupled with land scarcity. With a supply of land in the market so much less than the demand, you have a state of things in which it is well worth the while of a man, who has not got land as a means of obtaining a regular subsistence and livelihood, to pay for obtaining it. That willingness of the incoming tenant to pay enters distinctly into the interest of the outgoing tenant, so long as he continues the tenant, as something he has to receive. There is also a principle of rarer, but not altogether insensible operation in the circumstances of Ireland—that which may be called the *pretium affectionis*—the disposition of many an Irishman, even after he has left his country, perhaps driven from it by hard necessity, to find his way back, and, if he can, to settle himself once more on the soil. I may, perhaps, be permitted to mention an instance of this kind—no doubt an extreme instance, but, at the same time, an instance which will help us to see how it is that the tenant in Ireland thinks he has something to transfer for which he has the right to obtain what he can get. A landlord in the West of Ireland had, among other holdings, a rather miserable holding consisting of a small tenement and an acre or two of land, for which he received a rent of five guineas. Repeatedly, as he rode by the spot, it occurred to him that he ought to reduce the rent; but before he had taken any steps in that direction a returned Irishman from America called upon him and said he was very desirous to obtain a plot of land on his estate; he had applied to the tenant of this small holding; the tenant was quite willing to sell, and he was quite willing to buy; and he came to ask the permission of the landlord. The landlord said—"Very well, I have no objection; what are you willing to give?" And the man said he was willing to give £100 for this five-guinea holding. The landlord said, by way of jest—"Then I think I must raise the rent;" but he did not, and the transaction proceeded. Now that was as much a case of *pretium affectioni* as paying £10,000 or £20,000 for a set of old Sévres or China ware. There are specialities in the case of Irish tenant right.

But what I wish to impress upon the House is this—that, apart from those specialities, the principle of assignment is a principle rooted in law. By artificial provisions, introduced into agreements, through commanding position of landlords, assignment has been generally prohibited; but the assignment of the tenant's interest, whatever it be, is a principle, not only of Irish, but of English Land Laws, and of the Land Laws of Europe generally. The Bessborough Commission says—

> "For many generations the great bulk of the land under cultivation in Ireland has been held on small farms under 30 acres, without leases upon parole tenancies from year to year. In these tenancies, by the Common Law, the tenant has always had a right of property which he might dispose of, and which was only determinable subject to conditions, the principal of which was the requirement of six months' notice to quit, recently extended by the Act of 1877 to 12 months."

I will quote a few words from a very able, though concise, work of Mr. Richey, a Professor of the University of Dublin, on the Irish Land Laws. He informs us in an early part of that work that yearly tenancies, when they first arose in the 16th century, were commonly called leases for the term of a year and onwards *de anno in annum,* according to the pleasure of both parties; and he says that the tenant was entitled, as any other owner of an interest in land, upon this yearly holding to sell or sub-let his farm to whom and on what terms he pleased. He then explains how it was that the landlord's consent came to be asked; and he says that, whether the landlord assented or not to the sale, all the interest of the previous tenant passed by the sale to the purchaser. I will quote lastly an extract with which my hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General has supplied me, from a work of Woodfall on *Landlord and Tenant*, in which it is distinctly laid down that tenants for even a less period than four years, but who are possessed of a certain quantity of interest, may alienate the whole or any part of it unless they are expressly restricted from so doing. A tenant from year to year may therefore assign his term or underlet; but he may not by under-letting grant an interest exceeding his own in point of duration. I am anxious to call attention to the fact that this interest is embodied in the ancient law, because I think that fact meets, in a great degree, the fundamental objection which Gentlemen are apt to take to this period of tenant right. They say it establishes joint proprietorship, which they consider is a bad thing. I do not admit that; but if it does establish a joint proprietorship, I hold that, in the absence of express restrictions, the old law of the country, corresponding, I believe, with the general law of Europe, recognizes the tenant right, and therefore recognizes, if so you choose to call it, joint proprietorship. Well, that being the state of the case, how does it stand under the Land Law of 1870? It stands thus—that before the Land Act of 1870 the tenancy was determinable upon a certain notice at the close of each year, at the sole will of the landlord, and without any other consequence whatever. What the tenant had to assign was so small that the assignment was little worth giving or receiving. But in the Land Act—not, I must own, with a view to fortify the principle of tenant right, but simply with a view to defend the tenant in possession of his holding and to render it difficult for the landlord capriciously to get rid of him—we proceeded to enact a scale of compensation for disturbance, without which the tenant could not be removed. That being so, a valuable consideration was, by the Act of 1870, evidently tacked on to every yearly tenancy in Ireland. And, under the Act of 1870, whether we intended it or not, tenant right has become something sensible and considerable. The actual sale of the tenant right, as, I believe, is observed in a marked manner in the minority Report of the Richmond Commission, has grown and spread in Ireland; and the old idea of the people, running back into times anterior to tenures now prevailing, has in modern circumstances received authority and acquired extension from the legislation of this House. That being so, it ought also to be remembered that the recognition of tenant right is certainly of very great practical convenience, provided it can be restrained from undue interference with the landlord's right—of which I will speak presently. In the first place, it affords a means of valuing improvements by far the simplest, cheapest, and most rapid that can be conceived. The improvements are worth that which it is worth the while of the incoming man to give, and so the matter is disposed of. Nor is it an inconsiderable advantage that the landlord is secured in all his just claims by the existence and recognition of the principle of tenant right. It is admitted to be the first charge on tenant right that the rent shall be paid, and that anything else which the landlord may have to claim against the tenant—as, for instance, in the case of waste—shall be defrayed out of the money received for the tenant right. How does this stand with regard to the Commissions? For I must say that the authority of these Commissions is a very important element, as all will feel, in our consideration of the case. Every one of the Bessborough Commissioners — Mr. Kavanagh with some reluctance, recognized the principle of tenant right. The minority of the Richmond Commission emphatically acknowledges it, and the majority have not said one word against it. So we stand as to authority. But before passing from these recommendations there is one on which I cannot refrain from dwelling for a moment, and that is the immense political advantage that has been found to attend the principle. I do not think we could have a more vivid illustration of this political advantage than the state of distress which prevailed just 12 months ago in the West of Ireland. At that time there was a whole group of counties in which there prevailed extreme distress. In most of these counties that extreme distress was attended with great public danger. I refer particularly, of course, to Mayo and Galway. But there was another county where the distress was hardly by a single shade different from the others, yet where there was at that time no public danger, no public agitation, no disquietude other than the disquietude of humane and Christian-minded men at the sufferings of their fellow-creatures; and that was the county of Donegal. And the only circumstance —for it is one of the wildest counties you have in Ireland—that made it differ, as far as human judgment can be formed, from the counties near it, in Connaught, was the circumstance that in Donegal you had tenant right, while in Mayo and Galway you had not. Well, Sir, objections may be taken to tenant right, and I am not about to propose an unregulated tenant right. It appears to me that it would be very unfair to give legislative force to a tenant without leaving in the hands of the landlord, or of some public authority, the means of securing his own just interest. If a Court is to be called on at the will of the tenant to limit the annual receipt of the landlord, and to fix what, in this Bill, we call a Judicial Rent, then I do not see on what principle you shall say that the tenant right of the tenant is to be subject to no similar and analogous limitation. There are certainly some strong arguments other than the interests of the landlord in favour of that course; for it may be very fairly said that in vain do you cut down the landlord's judicial rent—and I am only assuming that this effect may be to cut down, for in some instances the effect may be to raise it—and take care that the landlords' receipts shall be limited if, with the land hunger and scarcity which prevail in Ireland, you still leave it open to anyone to pay an extravagant sum for tenant right, and thereby to take holdings on the same virtually rack-rented condition. I therefore hold, and we have framed the Bill on that principle, that to recognize duly the power of the landlord or of the Court to raise the rent is the due and just means of preventing the tenant right, which we think to be the just right of the tenant, from passing into extravagance, and from trespassing upon what is the just right of others. We believe that by bringing together, on fair conditions and in fair competition, the right of the tenant to assign, and the right of the landlord to get, what his land is reasonably worth, we shall be able to obtain a result agreeable to justice and agreeable to the interests of both. I have detained the House at some length on this subject, because I am extremely anxious to do what I can for the purpose of showing, in the first place, that there is nothing strange or of an innovating character in the recognition of this principle; secondly, that it is rooted in the history of Ireland, and in the ideas of the Irish people; thirdly, that it is recommended by a multitude of practical advantages; and, lastly, that it need not entail injustice upon anyone.

Now, Sir, I come to the great question which I think must constitute the salient point and the cardinal principle of the Bill, the institution of a Court which is to take cognizance of rent, and which, in taking cognizance of rent, will also, according to the provisions of the Bill, not be debarred from taking cognizance of tenure and assignment. The question first to be considered is as I have stated: Shall this Court be an optional Court, or shall it be universal, compulsory, and perpetual? If it is to be an optional Court, there is one vital matter—namely, that we shall be assured in our minds that the option shall be free. If it could be shown that in exercising an option with regard to going into Court an Irish tenant was liable to the same kind of pressure in any degree, either great or small, under which he now lies in the land market when he bids for land, I should say that such an objection would be fatal. But on considering the matter, as well as we can, we do not see that there can be anything to interfere with the perfect freedom of the tenant in this respect. I mean, that if we say that by law an Irish tenant may go into Court, it is impossible for the landlord to bring any intimidation, direct or indirect, to prevent him from doing so. The case is something like this. An infirm man on a public road may be intimidated by a stalwart ruffian. But the presence of the stalwart ruffian will not interfere with the freedom of the infirm man if he sees some policeman on the road; and he would call in the policeman just as freely as if he had been under no fear of the stalwart ruffian. It appears to us that the aid of the Court may be invoked just as freely by the Irish tenant, if there be good reason for giving it an optional character. There is no reason why the policeman should be glued to your side for your whole life. Therefore we say that if the access to the Court be perfectly free, and if the action of the Court and the control of the Court be complete and sufficient, it ought to rest with the tenant to consider, from time to time, whether he should continue in the Court or not. There are other strong reasons for making the Court an optional instead of a compulsory Court.

In the Bessborough Report there is a short passage which says—

> "It seems desirable that, in the future, the same Land Laws should prevail throughout Ireland, and that a yearly tenant, in every part of the Kingdom, should possess the same rights, and be subject to the same obligations."

We have not accepted that proposition. It appears to us that there are many weighty pleas to be urged against it. One plea is this. There may be tenants in Ireland who do not desire the interference of the Court. After all that we have heard with regard to the management of many estates in Ireland, I must confess that I believe it to be possible—and even likely—that there may be a considerable number of tenants who would rather be allowed, if they have adequate protection from the law, to conduct their own affairs with their landlords than be compelled to go into Court. Here, again, I call in aid the authority of the Bessborough Commission, for in the 79th paragraph, notwithstanding their recommendation of a system universal and compulsory, they say this—

> "There will probably be estates among those which have been kindly managed, where the large allowances made to improving tenants, the materials given or sold under cost price, and the many other benefits conferred by a good landlord, would be preferred, by some tenants at all events, to fixity of tenure and free sale."

They say there that everything like fixity of tenure and free sale might in some cases be sacrificed by the tenant in preference to abandoning the benefits of the relations which exist. I do not exactly adopt those words as they stand; but I think they give important reasons in support of the belief that it is not possible for us at this moment to form a judgment as to what proportion of the tenants of Ireland there may be who would rather keep in their own hands the management of their own affairs than invoke the compulsory aid of a public authority.

But, Sir, I own that it appears to me that there are many circumstances in the case of Ireland which discourage us from an attempt to procure what I may call a dead or mechanical uniformity in the legal condition under which its agriculture is carried on. There is no agricultural country in the world the face of which is so seamed with variety as Ireland. You have, to begin with, all the usual varieties, and you have many varieties that are Irish, and exclusive Irish too. You have the grazing and the tillage farms; you have the large holding and the small; you have the large proprietor and the small; you have the landlord absentee and the landlord resident; you have the improvements made sometimes by the tenant and the improvements made sometimes by the landlord. For, happily, there are and have been landlords in Ireland who, in the strictest sense, are called improving landlords. You have the leaseholds and you have the annual tenancy; the care-takers of land; lands in conacre, and lands in rundale; you have the lands over-rented through the operation of the great land hunger; you have the lands under-rented through the tradition of many estates, and in certain cases through the desire, and perhaps with the express purpose, of excluding tenant right and assignment. You have the old-fashioned Irish landlord and you have the new-fashioned Irish landlord; and although the old-fashioned Irish landlord was not an impeccable being, yet many of his sins, at least towards his tenants, were sins of omission rather than of commission, and in some respects will bear no unfavourable comparison with what I call the new-fashioned landlord. You have land under middlemen and land without middlemen; you have lessees in perpetuity; and then, above all, you have in Ireland the prevalence of local customs which have taken deep root in the country, and which, in my opinion, we should be incurring a very heavy responsibility by gratuitously endeavouring to wipe away from the face of the land.

All these are very strong reasons, Sir, for making it optional to the tenant to consider whether he shall go into the Court, or whether he shall not. I am bound also to give some other reasons. I have very great doubts indeed whether —if we were, by a compulsory law, to refer the ultimate regulation of every bargain relating to land to a Judicial Commission sitting in Court—any judicial authority you could create would not break down under the weight so imposed upon it. I believe that it would probably prove to be beyond its strength. Then I cannot help saying, though I hope it will not show that I am disloyal to the cause of reform in the Land Laws of Ireland, that there is no country in the world which, when her social relations come to permit of it, will derive more benefit than Ireland from perfect freedom of contract in land. Unhappily she is not in a state to permit of it; but I will not abandon the hope that the period may arrive. After all, what the Irishman wants—and I do not mean to say it is his fault that he has not got it — is the habit of self-government. [*Cheers from the Home Rulers.*] He wants that which the Scotchman has got—[*Cheers and laughter.*]—and I hope that by interpolating that objection, I have sufficiently guarded myself against unwarranted deductions. But I say seriously that the Court, after all, though it may be, and I believe is, a right and a needful measure; yet you must not conceal from yourselves the fact that it is one in the form of centralization, referring to public authority what ought to be transacted by a private individual. That may be an infinitely smaller evil than some other evil you may have to contend with, and may be therefore a thing that you ought to embrace with all your heart under the circumstances; but I confess to great doubts whether it is a thing which you ought to stereotype and stamp as far as you can with the seal of perpetuity. But, in any case, it ought not to be a one-sided Court. If a Court is to interfere, it must interfere for the purpose of doing justice. Therefore, speaking generally, we cannot lay down the proposition that it is to interfere for the protection and advantage of the tenant alone. We cannot make those who sit on the seat of justice forsake justice, even with objects in view so high and so important as the objects of Land Reform in Ireland. Well, Sir, if that be so, the proper conclusion is that we should not force anyone into the Court. We should leave the access to it perfectly free; so regulated by public authority that the smallest tenant in Ireland may go into it as fearlessly as if he were the greatest. Another conclusion is that we should not by compulsion insure the perpetuity of what is, after all, an abnormal system—its perpetuity under all circumstances, however much they may have changed from those which now prevail, and however closely they may approximate to the circumstances of other countries where the relation of landlord and tenant require no such means to be employed in order to their just and satisfactory regulation. We therefore propose that the entrance into the Court should be an optional entrance.

And now I will proceed to give you the words, which I hope will be perfectly clear, relating to those propositions which we justly consider the most vital and central portion of the Bill. Every tenant now existing in Ireland may call in the Court. The first purpose will be to find a "judicial rent;" that rent will be upon the basis of a fair rent; and we have thought it our duty to endeavour to grapple with the very difficult task—where none of the Commission show any particular readiness to deal with it—of giving to the Court some guidance in its efforts to arrive at a fair rent. The words themselves will be found in the Bill; but I may describe the principle of them. Possibly they may be open to amendment; but I may describe the principle of them as containing a reference to a solvent tenant on the one side, and on the other side a due regard to the value of the tenant right. When the Court has fixed the judicial rent, that judicial rent will carry with it a statutory term of 15 years, during which there can be no change. During that period there can be no eviction of the tenant without leave of the tenant or the Court, except it be for breach of certain specified covenants, or for the non-payment of rent. During that period, there will be no power of resumption by the landlord, even with the leave of the Court, no matter what may have taken place as between the landlord and the tenant, or however grave the plea for resumption may be. In regard to the more purely legal aspects of the Bill—the event of breach of covenants, or for non-payment of rent—the process which will be adopted will be more fully explained, as the Bill progresses, by my right hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General and the Solicitor General for Ireland. The general idea is that there can only be a compulsory sale of the tenant right in the case of a breach of the conditions of the tenant right within the period to which I have referred; and at the end of that period the tenant will, of course, give up his holding. The tenant right may be sold, according to the provisions of the Bill, at any time within the period at the end of which, under the present law, the tenant would be finally turned out of his holding. The effect of our proposal will be that the tenant will have allowed to him for the sale of his holding all the time which, in the event of non-payment of rent, is allowed for the contingent resumption of his holding upon the discharge of all payments to be made him. At the close of the statutory term of 15 years application may be made for the renewal of this time, and that application may be made *toties quoties* until a certain contingency, which I will presently describe, arises in the tenancy. When it is renewed, the conditions as to eviction will remain the same; but after the expiration of the next term of 15 years the landlord may, with the approval of the Court, and for certain strictly defined and sufficient reasons, resume possession. This right of resumption by the landlord will, when the holdings are in Court, be subject entirely to the judgment of the Court, because we fully recognize the importance of clear definition in an Act of this kind; but the cases which we recognize as fulfilling the definition of reasonable and sufficient are these. They must be cases either referring to the good of the holding, the good of the estate, or the benefit of the labourers in respect of their cottages, gardens, or allotments. The renewal of the judicial rent may take place, *toties quoties*, at the end of each of these terms, as long as the tenancy continues to be what in the Bill we define as "a present tenancy." I wish to draw the particular attention of the House to these terms, because, as we intend, a present tenancy does not cease to be a present tenancy simply on the change of the tenant, and the only mode in which it can pass from a present to a future tenancy are these. If there be a breach of covenant, and upon that an eviction, the land passing back to the landlord, then a new tenancy arises; if there be reasonable cause for resumption by the landlord, a new tenancy arises. We have also, under the Bill, reserved to the landlord what is called a right of pre-emption in case the tenant wishes to sell his tenant right. Not that the landlord can compel the tenant to do so; but if the tenant wishes to sell his tenant right the landlord may, under the authority of the Court, apply for it and purchase it. If the landlord does not, the tenant becomes again the possessor of the holding. But we provide that his becoming the possessor of the holding shall not constitute any future tenancy within the 15 years after the passing of the Act. Therefore there will be no future tenancy created this way within the first 15 years after the passing of the Act. In cases where what is called the "English system" prevails, or, as we define it, where the holding has been maintained and improved by the landlord, we have thought that justice demands that the landlord should not be brought into a new and exceptional state of things which really has no application to the relation which subsists between him and the tenant. We have left a large power of equity between the landlords and their tenants; but I must make an explanation to the House on this point with reference to the action of the Court, because it is one of great practical importance. A very lively and just susceptibility has been shown by Representatives from Ireland as to the effect of the Act in cases where proceedings with a view to eviction have been commenced; and it has been said that if you take the cases of excessive rent which the tenant has been unable to pay, it would be extremely hard that such a tenant should be deprived of the benefit which this Act proposes to confer on tenants as a class. What we propose, therefore, is substantially that where the process has been completed, and the redemption period has expired, there should be no interference; but where the proceeding is pending, where it has been commenced, we provide that the application of any tenant in Ireland, who is under this process, to the Court on the first day of its sitting shall have the same right as if it were made on the first day of the passing of the Act. The effect of that will be virtually to stay the proceedings to this extent—that it will allow a tenant to go before the Court and obtain the fixing of the judicial rent, and he will thus obtain a tenant right, whether fixed or not, of which he will not lose the benefit on account of any proceedings taken before the passing of the Act.

I think, Sir, that is a tolerably fair account of the main provisions relating to the action of the Court, with the exception of what I shall call the "judicial lease," which I shall explain by-and-bye. It is more important that I should next submit to the House the case of what, in the Bill, we call "ordinary tenancies;" because, as I have said, we do not think it desirable to make a complete holocaust of free contract in Ireland, but to allow those who are satisfied with the present system to remain under it. We do not, therefore, deal with ordinary tenancies held by those who have no wish to avail themselves of the altered circumstances.

I will now describe the changes made in their case quite irrespective of any application to the Court. The ordinary tenant will, like the tenant under the Court, be invested from the passing of the Act with the right of assignment. He will be able to sell his tenant right. Of course, the landlord will have the right to refuse the purchaser to whom the tenant wishes to assign his right; but only upon reasonable grounds; and in defining and determining these reasonable grounds, we have endeavoured to follow, as well as we could, the practice that now prevails in Ulster, and which is hardened into a sort of inflexible and recognized rule. The landlord, when the tenant desires to quit, will have the right of pre-emption of the tenant right at a rate fixed, but not by himself. He may buy in the open market, or he may apply to the Court to have the price fixed by the Court. When the price of the tenant right is fixed by the Court, in all cases where the holding has been improved by outlay on the part of the landlord the amount of such improvements may be treated as a set-off against the tenant right, provided the landlord has never been remunerated by the rent paid or otherwise. I need not say that the landlord's claim will, according to the universal practice in Ireland, be satisfied out of the purchase money. Ordinary annual tenancies may be bequeathed; but they must be bequeathed to one person only. Of course the House will, I imagine, readily understand the object of that provision.

I now come to an important point of the Bill which refers to cases in which landlords propose frequent increases of rent. In cases of that kind the landlord may propose to the tenant an increase of rent; and if the tenant accepts the increase the statutory term ensues, and the rent cannot again be increased for 15 years. That is to amend one of the flaws of the Land Act under which unduly increased rents have been placed on the shoulders of tenants. But if the tenant refuse an increase of rent he may choose between three alternatives: he may sell his tenant right, in which case increased rent demanded will serve to diminish the price he will receive for it.

But in cases where it is shown to the satisfaction of the Court that the rent was below a fair rent, the landlord shall be entitled to plead that fact as a set-off against any claims of the tenant in respect of the increase; and the Court may dispose of any part, or even the whole, of that increase. We have introduced a provision of this nature into the Bill, the effect of which may be stated as follows. If the landlord desires to raise the rent, he will be able to do so, presuming that the tenant will agree to pay rather than leave the holding. If, on the other hand, the landlord does not desire to keep the tradition of his property, but wishes to keep the rents below a value corresponding to the idea of a fair rent, he shall not be liable to have that eaten up by its going to increase the tenant right; but when the tenant right is claimed, he may establish the fact that the rent is below a fair rent, and have the difference set off against the claims for tenant right. So much for the tenant's first option; he may sell his tenant right and ask the landlord ten times the increase. His second option is that he may fall back upon compensation for disturbance and compensation for improvements. The third option he may exercise is that he may, upon demand for an increased rent, exercise his right to go into Court and demand the fixing of a judicial rent. If he accepts the increase in the rent, he obtains, *ipso facto*, what we call a statutory term of 15 years. If he exercises his option in favour of taking compensation for disturbance, then comes the change we propose to make. We propose to keep the scale of compensation for disturbance, but to raise the rate with regard to large holdings. I had better perhaps read to the House the scale as it will now stand. First of all, we strike out all valuation in regard to compensation for disturbance, and we propose that compensation for disturbance shall be regulated entirely by the amount of rent. If the rent is under £30, the compensation that may be given for disturbance shall never exceed seven years' rent; if under £50, five years' rent; if under £100, four years' rent; and if over £100, three years' rent. The scale at present is, that if the rent is over £100, only one years' rent is to be given, and if under £10, seven years' rent. That is the condition in which we propose to leave such of the tenants of Ireland as do not desire to invoke the protection of the Court.

There are other provisions of the Bill to which I will now very briefly call the attention of the House.

I have said nothing as yet about the Ulster Custom; and on that subject a lively interest is felt by many hon. Members from Ireland. The general principle of our Bill as regards the Ulster Custom is this. The Ulster tenant may, if he pleases, remain under the custom as he is now; but if he remains in that position, as regards the sale of the tenant right and other particulars, he shall have the protection of the general provisions of the Bill for controlling augmentations of rent. We are convinced by the evidence that there is, whether extensively or occasionally, a very manifest conviction that the Ulster Custom, if it is to endure, must have some protection; and it is desirable that if the Ulster tenant wishes to go into the Court he should be allowed to do so. If he accepts the increased rent, he obtains the term of 15 years, during which he will hear nothing more of increased rent. So much if he remains under the custom; but if he chooses to pass from under the custom and fall back upon the general provisions of the Bill, and go into Court like anyone else, he is at liberty to do so. Speaking generally, we have thought it no part of our duty to interfere with current leases in Ireland. But as to leases in Ulster, we believe their case to be peculiar; and we provide that the Ulster tenant, now under lease, may claim compensation, as it has been provided under the clauses of the Land Act, with the modification now introduced when the lease expires. I think that is all I need say about the particular case of the Ulster tenant.

We have endeavoured to amend the law with regard to compensation for improvements. At present the law is defective, because it is dealt with under the phrase "improvements effected by the tenant or his predecessor in title;" and a technical difficulty, with regard to a breaking tenancy, has had the effect, in many judgments delivered in Ireland, of depriving tenants of the title of their predecessors as to compensation for improvements. We have therefore endeavoured to make an effectual amendment of the law on that point, so as to give the tenant compensation for the improvements effected by his predecessor in title, and for which he has had to pay.

Now comes the question of the leases in Ireland. We have provided in the Land Act of 1870 that a lease for 37 years should exempt the landlord from the provisions of the Act. But it has been stated that the feeble position of the tenant has been taken advantage of in some cases—though probably not in many—so far as almost to compel his acceptance of a lease, at a high rent, and on harsh terms, and with no remaining status at the end of the lease. Now what we propose is this: that any lease which is to exempt from the provisions of the Act must be a judicial lease, prepared or approved of by the Court; and we have made it the special business of the Court, in preparing and approving the provisions of a lease, to consider the interests of the tenant and the valuation of his tenancy. So that I hope we have made a sufficient provision as to the terms of the lease. With regard to the provision as to the expiry of the lease, the tenant will be in the position of a "future tenant"—that is to say, he will not have the power of going into the Court and of getting a judicial rent fixed; and the landlord may, if he please, raise his rent at the end of the lease. But in all other respects the tenant will be an annual tenant, and will have power to sell his tenant right.

There is a plan which it is said some of the landlords in Ireland are disposed to adopt and some of the tenants are disposed to favour, under which there is to be what is called a fixed tenancy—that is to say, a tenancy where the holding continues, subject either to a perpetual fee-farm rent, without any variation, or a perpetual fee-farm rent with a re-valuation by the Court at fixed periods, and where all power of resumption by the landlord from any cause, however great, and under whatever authority, is taken away. We think that to make a compulsory law of that nature would be to destroy the character of proprietor in the landlord in its essence and in its centre; and I do not require now to enter into the many grave arguments, perfectly distinct from the landlord's interest and right and including that interest and right, against such a proposition. Our proposal is that, in the case of these fixed tenancies, the Court should undertake the burden, wherever the landlord and tenant are agreed, of applying these provisions. We have provided, generally speaking, that there can be no power to contract out of the terms of the Act; and yet it does appear strange to impose a limitation of that kind upon what may fairly be called large holdings. We cannot here adopt the rule of rent, because the power to contract or not to contract out of the Act might vary with the variation of rent in a manner almost ridiculous. The valuation is more paramount; and we therefore propose that there should be a power to contract out of the Act in cases were the valuation amounts to £150 and upwards—that is to say, speaking generally, that this power of contracting out of the Act shall only apply in the case of holdings of a value of over £200 a-year. We have also a clause substituting arbitration for a decree of the Court; and I think that the only other point I need make clear to the House is the nature of the present tenancy. We are desirous to obviate any such supposition as that the present tenancy means anything but a tenancy in the hands of the present owner. We say that, if there is no breach in the conditions, it is capable of bearing a continuing interest—in fact, it is capable of passing on from generation to generation, unless the landlord exercises the power of resumption under the sanction and control of the public authorities.

After this long enumeration, I must still detain you for a very short time while I say a word or two with regard to the second and far less complex part of this Bill, in which at the present time the liveliest interest is felt; I mean the portion which I have described under the general phrase of the group of provisions requiring public advances. I would just take this opportunity, as making these public advances will constitute a very large part of the duties of the Court, of stating what we propose as to the constitution of the Court. That which will be, in one point of view, a Court, will be, in another point of view, a Land Commission. As a Court it will be charged with the final authority over the decisions of all land cases, and it will be the business of the Court so considered to lay down rules for the guidance of the Civil Bills Courts, which will really be the Courts of First Instance in all land cases. We did not think, upon the whole, that it would be wise to dispense altogether with the advantage to be derived from the great experience which the Judges of the Civil Bills Courts have acquired. It would have been very difficult to provide a new agency such as would absolutely justify us in removing the present powers altogether from the field. But we have endeavoured, in the first place, to make provision for calling in the aid of valuers where needed, and rendering that aid effective; and, in the second place, for their being subject to the rules of the Land Commission, so as to secure efficiency and uniformity in the administration of a very important law. The Land Commission will thus be the Court of Appeal, and will be the master, in what relates to land, of the tribunals below. It will consist of three persons, one of whom must always be a Judge or an ex-Judge of the Supreme Court. Its proper seat will be in Dublin. But, inasmuch as its operations may extend, especially in cases of public advances in connection with land, beyond the power of one set of Commissioners to deal with, we have invested it with the power not only of appointing Assistant Commissioners and other officers, but, if necessary, of appointing Sub-Commissioners to sit in the several Provinces of Ireland, and to conduct their functions under the control of the Central Commission.

So much for the constitution of the Court, which will be charged with this double group of functions, each of which I think exceedingly important.

Now I come to describe, and I need only describe briefly and rapidly, the important subjects which connect themselves with public advances. Do not let it be supposed that public advances are things unknown to Ireland. On the contrary, we find that as regards agricultural improvements, so far as the definition of the purposes goes for which advances may be made, it is, I believe, absolutely beyond the wit of man to enlarge them; and the change which we propose to make in the law is not in regard to the purposes of agricultural improvements, but in regard to the agency through which they will be carried on. The first and most important point is that which relates to the acquisition of land by the tenant. I will not discuss that interesting question at present. I will only say that, economically, I quite admit it is open to a great diversity of view. It has in some cases been eminently successful. In Ireland you have many owners of land who have shown a faculty, which we cannot but admire, for it is nowhere excelled, of extracting the means of subsistence and the means of prosperity from very small holdings or spaces of ground. On the other hand, it must be admitted that, from whatever cause, small virtual proprietorships, under the name of perpetuity leases, have not been happily distinguished in the past history of Ireland. But I decline to enter into the economical part of the subject. What we desire, and what my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, the original author of the suggestion, desires, is the political and social advantage of the people. We feel the great necessity there is of a serious effort on the part of Parliament to enlarge the circle of proprietors of land in Ireland, and to insist upon a more considerable portion of the community being in that body which possesses the traditions associated and connected with the ownership of land.

Now our provisions in regard to the acquisition of land by tenants are of two kinds. In the first place they are these: to assist tenants with money for the purchase of their holdings, without any further intervention by the Commission, where the tenant is able to buy and the landlord is willing to sell. I must say, on this point, that there are questions with regard to some public Bodies in Ireland—possibly some of the Companies in the North of Ireland—which may be opened up in the discussion on this Bill, but upon which I at present sedulously refrain from giving my opinion. I do not wish to complicate this discussion with that matter. But where a tenant can be assisted and fortified in the independent purchase of his holding, and where it would be fair to enable him to do it, we are disposed to give him every aid we can; and this, whether he purchases absolutely, or whether he purchases with the payment of a fine and the retention of the fee-farm rent on the land. But then what is more important is this—that the Commission is not only to assist the tenant in the purchase of his holding, but it is itself to become, on reasonable terms, the purchaser from willing landlords of their estates in order to re-sell those estates. Perhaps I ought, on this point, to say, without further delay, that a most important and difficult question here arises. We shall authorize the Commission, if the Bill be approved, to purchase where the proportion of the tenants, amounting to three-fourths in number and value, is ready to re-purchase, and to advance to these purchasing tenants three-fourths of the whole price. And here arises a very important question: are these tenants to be allowed to borrow the remaining fourth? Well, we came to the conclusion that, upon the whole, they ought to be allowed to do so; and one reason which I think is conclusive in favour of that liberal arrangement is this—that already under the Bill, apart from any purchase of the soil, they will have the tenant right. Having the tenant right, they will have something upon which they can borrow. When they purchase, the tenant right will merge in the fee; and it will be extremely hard upon them, when they have become not only possessed of the tenant right but are absolutely part owners of the soil, that when they have become the actual owners of a piece of land they should lose the power of borrowing which they possessed before. We propose that those purchases shall be entirely relieved from the difficulty as to the legal expenses of the purchase. We shall charge them a lump sum, and that lump sum will cover the law conveyance and every other charge. It will be so calculated as to do no more than fairly remunerate the State for the cost and labour involved in conducting the private business of individuals.

There is yet a further and not less important boon which we propose to confer. Of course we are obliged to provide that while the holding continues subject to a charge it should not be sub-let or subdivided. When it ceases to become subject to a charge the owner will become absolute master and landlord. But the boon to which I refer is this: we mean to guarantee the title of these purchasers. Now that is a provision of great importance; for, if you recollect, the Commissioners will not have a Parliamentary title themselves, but they will have a power of investigation, and they will be able, in the enormous majority of cases—almost in every case—to attain to a moral certainty. That which they will surrender, that which they will endanger, by giving this perfectness of title will be something very small; that which they will confer on the tenant purchaser will be something very great and essential.

This is a brief account, a rude outline, of what we propose with regard to provisions for the acquisition of land by tenants. So far as the rules of action are concerned, with regard to agricultural improvements, I have already stated that nothing can be more liberal or comprehensive than the definition of the purposes for which the State is authorized to advance, and desires to make advances both to owners and tenants — including leases — wherever they have an interest sufficient to constitute in any degree a basis of public security; and to show that I am not misleading the House in making this statement, I may observe that since the Famine the sum advanced in Ireland for the whole group of purposes of this kind appears to be not less than £17,500,000. The change we make is this: we propose to authorize the advances, not only to owners and to tenants, but likewise to solvent Companies. Companies may be formed for the purpose of the reclamation of land, for planting, or for other agricultural improvements; and the condition which we propose to require is this—that our advances shall not be greater than one-half the sums which the Companies themselves have procured and laid out, except in the case where they obtain the cover of a baronial guarantee; and then the sums we can advance, instead of being limited to one-half, may amount to as much as two-thirds.

There is another subject which cannot be omitted; but it is one of delicacy as well as of importance. I mean the subject of emigration. It is impossible for the Government to pass it by; but, at the same time, they are of opinion that it is a matter in which there must be great caution. There must be great caution in dealing with anything like what I may call sporadic emigration; but there may be well-regulated emigration — emigration of communities, carrying with them their local organization and traditions and domestic ties, which may possibly be carried on to the great advantage of all parties and to the individuals themselves. Keeping that in view, we include emigration amongst the purposes for which public advances may be made. This matter will not be, like advances for public works and so forth, under the control of the ordinary machinery of the Government; subject to the consent of the Treasury, it will be under the Land Commission, which may make advances for this purpose either, in the first place, to Colonial Governments—and in the case of Canada we include not only the Dominion but also the Provincial Legislatures—and, in the second place, to Companies.

So much for the purposes of the advances that we propose Parliament shall undertake in general terms to make it. It may perhaps be asked: what is the amount up to which these advances may be made? Well, Sir, we have much considered the matter, and we have thought it our duty not to place any other limit than prudential rule on the amount which Parliament may think it right from year to year to give. Let us take care not to charge the State with duties which it cannot perform. Let us take care that when we make advances they are covered by reasonable security. Let us take care that we do not tempt others into foolish measures. But, adopting all the rules of prudence, we should not like to say that either £5,000,000 or £10,000,000, or any other number of millions, was the absolute limit which could in no case be passed. And there is another reason for this course, which is complimentary to my right hon. Friend opposite, the late Chancellor of the Exchequer. I think it was in his time that full recognition was given to the principle that these advances of public money, though they are against assets, and are upon security, ought to be kept under the control of Parliament precisely like public expenditure. I think it was my right hon. Predecessor who first gave full effect to that principle, and established that good and excellent system under which the annual prospective wants of the State for all these purposes are now confided in the Treasury, and a Bill is brought down to Parliament asking it for whatever sum is shown to be necessary. I should have been sorry to infringe on any good law or measures which I found was due to the forethought and care of my Predecessor; and in this case I think the principles of Parliamentary control are in happy coincidence with our general purposes. I do not hesitate to say, on the part of the Government, that in our opinion the system of advances for the several purposes I have described ought to be tested by its working. We ought to be very slow indeed to fix a merely pecuniary limit so long as the bounds of prudence are respected, the essential conditions are fulfilled, and while we find the people of Ireland able and willing to avail themselves of the provisions of this Bill.

I think I have now gone through the most important provisions of this measure. I feel that I have led the House through a wilderness of detail, through which I do not know whether I can supply them with a clue; but I will, in a very few words, try to sum up the effect of what I have said. I ought perhaps to have stated before, that as to the descriptions of tenancies in Ireland to which this Act applies, they are substantially the same as those contemplated by the Land Act of 1870. Therefore, when I speak of tenancies in Ireland, I mean such tenancies as come under the Act of 1870. We propose to set up, on the one hand, a system of limited and regulated freedom of contract between landlord and tenant. But in consideration of the circumstances of Ireland, we propose that the tenant shall, notwithstanding, be fortified by certain provisions of the law as to his right of sale and as to guarantees against arbitrary increase of rent. On the other hand, we offer free entrance into Court for the settlement of all questions which may arise between the parties, so that no matter relating either to tenure, or to assignment of land, or to rent, can escape the supervision of the public authority—the Court—if the present tenant desires it. The Court must act on general principles of justice; and if the improved general law keep a tenant out of Court, it will do so because he thinks it his interest to remain out of Court. I fully admit that in the case of any country in which the agricultural relations were established on a tolerably good and happy footing, it would be an extremely sorry offer to make, either to a landlord or a tenant, to tell him that he might have the privilege of going into a Court of Justice for the purpose of making his bargain. Still, in the peculiar state of affairs in Ireland, it is what we deliberately and advisedly propose to do. We have accordingly made the entrance into Court an essential part of the Bill; indeed, it is the very core and centre of the measure we now submit.

On the morning that this Bill passes every landlord and tenant will be subject to certain new provisions of the law of great importance. In the first place, an increase of rent will be restrained by certain rules. In the second place, the compensation for disturbance will be regulated according to different rates. And in the third place—more important probably than any—the right to sell the tenant's interest will be universally established. These are some of the means outside the Court which we propose; but there will also remain to the tenant the full power of going to the Court to fix a judicial rent, which may be followed by judicial tenant right. The judicial rent will entail a statutory term of 15 years, the renewal of it *toties quoties* to be provided so long as the present tenancy exists, and the present tenancy not to be determined by the mere change of tenants. Evictions will hereafter, we trust, be only for default; and resumption by the landlord, apart from the default of the tenant, will disappear from Ireland, except it be from causes both reasonable and grave, and such as may be brought into question before the Court.

We are sometimes told that it is a hopeless business to legislate for Ireland. I am not of that opinion. Let us consider what has happened in Parliament in our time. For half a century, and half a century alone, Parliament has been intermittently — but still, on the whole, not without resolution, and not without good intention—engaged in the attempt of applying to Ireland better, larger, and more liberal systems of policy and legislation. And what has happened in Ireland in that time? No country has reaped larger benefits from the great transition between Protection and Free Trade — benefits absolutely unmixed, for the price of everything that Ireland produced was raised. In England the tenant farmer had to face a decrease in the price of his principal commodity, on which he had always mainly and unduly relied for the payment of his rent—namely, his wheat. But Ireland is a country which imported more wheat than was grown. The benefit to her accordingly, in that respect, has been unmixed, and from other causes it has been abundant. Look at the improved condition of the people. What old man is there in Ireland now who can compare unfavourably the condition of the people at present in every part of Ireland with what it was half a century ago? or who can overlook the great transformation that has taken place in the country without thanking God for what has occurred? Look at the increase in wages; to say that they have doubled in many cases would be saying what is very far within the mark. Look at the diminution of crime. The homicides of Ireland have shrunk to a mere fraction of what, within my recollection, they habitually were. The small holdings—the very knot of the difficulty, not yet overcome—have, after all, kept on a steady progress of diminution. In 1851 they were 280,000; in 1861 they were 269,000. [*Ironical cheers.*] I am now speaking of holdings under 15 acres, and I believe they are a source of great difficulty in Ireland. I have no aversion to small holdings. In England I delight to see them. I may say I abhor the system which has prevailed in Ireland — the system of what is called the wholesale consolidation of farms. Still I have no doubt that the diminution of small holdings in Ireland is a sign of the progress of the country. In 1851, as I have said, there were 280,000; in 1861 they were 269,000; in 1871 they were 246,000; and in 1879 they were 227,000. That cannot be said to be a violent diminution; nor can I wish to see a diminution in any respect resembling that which succeeded the Famine. That which has taken place seems to me to be a diminution under the influence of gentler and more natural causes; and if by those causes the diminution can be carried further, especially in a few districts of the country, I have no doubt—in fact, it is proved in evidence — that it will be greatly for the advantage of the people of Ireland. On the other hand, holdings above 15 acres have increased considerably in number. In 1851 they were 149,000; in 1879 they were 171,000.

And here, Sir, there is another statement which I wish to notice, although it comes from a source not particularly sympathetic or gentle towards me. Indeed the pamphlet from which I quote rather violently denounces the Land Act of 1870, for which I am greatly responsible. It is a pamphlet which is called *Facts and Figures*, published by the Land Committee of Ireland, and I assume nothing on its behalf except its good faith and the competency of the people who wrote it.

Now here are some very interesting facts on which I cannot but think reliance may be placed; and if they be facts, they will tend to correct a mischievous misapprehension that has gone abroad, to the effect that changes and raisings of rent have become more frequent during late years in Ireland, at least, as far as the larger estates are concerned. For these facts and figures, and the operations of the Land Committee, do not profess to have a great deal to do with, or to speak for, the smaller estates. What they state is this. They give an account of 4,703,000 acres of land in Ireland, which makes an area so large that we cannot suppose it not to be representative of a large proportion of the entire country. From page 19 of the pamphlet from which I quote you will find the following figures:—In the 10 years between 1850 and 1860 the rents were changed, that is to say raised, for that is evidently the meaning of it, on 1,515,000 acres. In the 10 years between 1860 and 1870 the rents were raised on 868,000. And in the 10 years between 1870 and 1880, that is, during the period since the Land Act was passed, the rents were only raised on 326,000 acres, or less than one-fourth of the acreage on which the rents had been raised in the decade of 20 years before.

Take next the case of evictions, which is the last test I will apply, to show that we have some reason to think that the labour of Parliament has not been altogether wasted in Ireland. I take the 15 years from 1854 to 1868, and I compare them with the eight years since the Land Act of 1870, and before the unhappy seasons of 1878 and 1879. In these 15 years, ending in 1868, the maximum number of evictions was 1,825; the minimum was 459, and the average 932. In the eight years between the Land Act and 1878 the maximum number of evictions had fallen from 1,825 to 592, the minimum number from 459 to 368, and the average number from 932 to 467, or exactly one-half.

Those figures are a great encouragement to us. There may be other facts, Sir, which are disheartening enough; but those which I have quoted are such as ought to teach us neither to despair nor even to despond. And there is a higher and a nobler encouragement still than this, and one to be enjoyed by all men who have faith in certain principles of action. It is said that our legislation has failed in Ireland. I do not admit failure. I admit the success to be incomplete. I am now asked how it is to be made complete. I say by patient perseverance in well-doing; by steady adherence to the work of justice. We shall then not depend upon the results of the moment. It will not be what to-day may say, or what to-morrow may say. It will be rather what fruits we shall reap in the long future of a nation's existence. In dealing with that we proceed upon a reckoning which cannot fail. Justice, Sir, is to be our guide. And, as it has been said that love is stronger than death, even so justice is stronger than popular excitement, stronger than the passions of the moment, stronger even than the grudges, the resentments, and the sad traditions of the past. Walking in that path we cannot err. Guided by that light—that Divine light—we are safe. Every step that we take upon our road is a step that brings us nearer to the goal, and every obstacle, even although for the moment it may seem insurmountable, can only for a little while retard, and never can defeat, the final triumph.

The right hon. Gentleman concluded by moving for leave to bring in the Bill.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I only rise, Sir, for the purpose of expressing my own strong sense, and I hope it will be the opinion also of the House, that it is due both to the importance of the subject and also to the great importance of the speech to which we have listened with so much attention, and I may say with so much admiration, that we should for the present postpone any discussion of the principles which are involved in this proposal of the Government. The matter is one of the very highest national importance; the considerations involved are of the most delicate character; and we may easily—

even after so full a description as has been given us—misunderstand in the first moment the application and bearing of some of the proposals which have been made. I hope, therefore, it may be the feeling of the House to abstain now from anything in the nature of discussion; although, of course, it may be right that questions should be put on any point that seems to require elucidation. For my own part, I limit myself to expressing the hope that we may very soon be favoured with the Bill itself, in order that we may have full time to consider it. I understand that the Government propose to commence the discussion on the second reading, which can hardly be short, on the first Monday after the Easter Recess. I give no opinion upon that; but we shall certainly require a good deal of time fully to master all the details of the measure. I am sure that the House will address itself to this great question in a spirit of calm deliberation, with a desire to do justice to its merits, and also to the economic and the social considerations to which our attention has been directed, bearing in mind that what is not economically true may be plausible but not really satisfactory. But I trust the House will consider that these are matters that are carefully to be weighed and discussed without passion or prejudice, and, at the same time, without any premature readiness to yield too quickly to anything in the nature of mere emotion and sentiment. I must personally thank my right hon. Friend for observations which he made in the course of his speech. I am sure that in the matter to which he referred there can be but one desire on the part of all who are interested in the discussion of financial questions, that we should do the best we can to insure regularity of proceeding and responsibility in Parliament. Certainly the application of the principles which he has indicated, if accepted by the House, will amply test the powers of financial administration. I abstain, however, myself, and I hope it will be the disposition of the House to abstain, from anything like lengthened discussion on this occasion.

Mr. SHAW said, it was not his intention to attempt anything like a discussion of the provisions of the Bill. He concurred entirely with the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition in deprecating a hasty decision on the questions involved in a measure of that great importance. At the same time, speaking generally, the second part of the Bill had been explained so simply and fully that he must say he believed it would be looked upon by the people of Ireland as being of a satisfactory nature. He thought it might go a little further; but, looking at the whole case, and considering the difficulties which the Government had to contend with, it was a generous measure. The first part of the Bill was of such intricacy, and dealt with interests of so varied a character, that he would like to see the Bill before committing himself to an opinion upon it. He had always a certain suspicion of the sub-clauses in a Bill, having found that they often did away with the generosity of its general principle. He did not understand exactly where the right hon. Gentleman had got the term of 15 years as a term for the re-adjustment of relations between landlords and tenants. He was sure that such a term had not been brought before either of the Commissions. He might appeal to Irish Members sitting in all parts of the House. That question was a question of business, and he thought that the landlords of Ireland would see the inexpediency of having too frequent repetitions of those adjustments, and would give a long term, which would be better for the interests of all parties concerned. The general weight of opinion was in favour of a longer term for adjusting rents than that proposed in the Bill. He hoped that the Prime Minister would consider that point before they came to the second reading. Again, he believed that the right hon. Gentleman did not propose to deal with existing leases. Now, he thought that some of the leases made within the last 10 years were leases which ought to be interfered with in the interest of justice, and that there would be no real objection on the part of the community generally in Ireland to that. Cases had come before the Commission where such leases had been forced upon the tenants, who had no option; and he did not see why the Commission should not be empowered to deal with cases where manifest injustice had been done. No one who knew the western parts of Connaught could read the accounts of the ejectments against the poor people without deep sorrow. He knew that country well, and believed that many of the people were not able to pay any rent at all; they were in a state of dire poverty. He therefore trusted that the right hon. Gentleman would insert in the Bill some date prior to its introduction, say the 1st of January, or even an earlier day, so as to bring those ejectments within the operation of the measure. The Courts of Quarter Sessions were capable of deciding legal points; but they were not fit to deal with questions of valuation even with the assistance of any valuators who might be brought in. Surely there would be no difficulty in handing over to the Commission or the Land Court questions of the appointment of valuers and the supervision of valuation and of rents. In conclusion, he most sincerely hoped that that effort, which he recognized to be an honest and a great effort, by a great Minister, to settle one of the greatest questions, not political only, but social, which ever came before a Government, would be judged calmly and fairly on both sides of the House, and that it would prove effectual in bringing about a permanent settlement of the land tenure of Ireland.

Mr. CHAPLIN said, he rose that it might not be supposed that he admitted the accuracy of the construction put by the right hon. Gentleman on a paragraph of the Report of the Royal Agricultural Commission. It was quite true that the Commissioners did say that it was the desire of the tenants throughout Ireland that there should be interference on the part of a Court with the arbitrary raising of rents; but that meant the arbitrary raising of rents on the tenant's own improvements. That was a very different thing from approval of the establishment of a Court to regulate rents on all occasions, upon which at present he expressed no opinion. The second part of the right hon. Gentleman's statement, where he endeavoured to deal with and mitigate what was, no doubt, the chief evil of Ireland, he had heard with undisguised satisfaction. But he wished the right hon. Gentleman would point out in what manner the landlord was to receive compensation. He remembered that when the Act of 1870 was before the House, the right hon. Gentleman stated over and over again that any measure of the kind could not be carried out with justice unless compensation was made to the landlord.

Mr. LITTON said, that the people of the North of Ireland, when the Bill was placed in their hands, would approach its consideration with no unfriendly feelings. There was one point upon which he would reserve his opinion—namely, as to the 15 years' statutory term and the revising of rent. He would wish to see a longer period of rest before revision. He thought the principle which allowed the interference of the Court to be invoked at the instance of the tenant, and the provision as to free sale, worthy of the highest commendation. But he regretted that the right hon. Gentleman had not seen his way to meet the legitimate aspirations of the people of Ireland as to something more decided and clear in the nature of fixity of tenure. The desire of all the tenants he had ever met was to be free from the insecurity which crushed every effort at improvement. No one ever proposed fixity of tenure without admitting that it should be subject to the payment of a fair rent and to prohibition against subdivision. He would only add that he and his hon. Friends would reserve to themselves the right, in a loyal spirit, to endeavour to improve the Bill in several important particulars in the interest, not only of the tenant farmers of Ulster, but of all Ireland.

Lord ELCHO said, he had no intention to say a word on the Bill; but he wished to ask two Questions. 1st, Whether his right hon. Friend would state what were the demands made by hon. Gentlemen behind him, which he characterized as "public plunder?" 2nd, Whether any calculation had been made, or, if not, whether he would cause it to be made before the second reading of the Bill, as to the money value of the tenant right which was about to be conferred upon Irish tenants by the Land Bill, and for which they had paid nothing?

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL said, that he believed the measure just announced was a very good one. It seemed practically to be the "three F's." The great question was, as regards the principles, to guide the Land Court in determining what was fair rent. The right hon. Gentleman had passed somewhat lightly over that subject. A fair rent might be the commercial rent, less the tenant's improvements; and another view would be that the rents should have some relation to what was paid before, and that the increase of that rent should take place only in proportion to the increase of value, and equitable reasons for increasing or diminishing that rent. He did not quite apprehend from the statement of the right hon. Gentleman in what degree the position of the small tenant would be made one of complete fixity. As far as he understood, the eviction of the small tenant was to be obstructed and prevented; that would be fixity of tenure not directly, but indirectly conferred. He gathered from the general drift of the right hon. Gentleman's speech that the large tenant would gain most by the Bill, because, owing to the smallness of his compensation for disturbance and liability to be contracted out of the Act of 1870, the large tenant was practically almost excluded from that Act; whereas by the present Bill he would be put on almost exactly the same footing as the small tenant. It appeared to him (Sir George Campbell) that there were two kinds of tenure—one a status tenure, and the other a purely contract tenure. As to contract tenure, it would, in his opinion, be a mistake to interfere with it, except to give the right to get the value of the capital which the tenant put into the soil. As to the latter parts of the Bill, though the right hon. Gentleman said much about the mode in which money was to be advanced, he said nothing about the mode in which it was to be got back. He did not understand how the advances from the British Treasury were to be recovered, especially from Colonial Governments; and whatever was done in this direction should be done with great circumspection, and with a clear prospect of getting the money back again. The House would remember that the importance of saving, or, at any rate, of not losing, money had been sufficiently pointed out in the Budget Speech.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH asked whether it was intended that the provisions of the Bill as between landlord and tenant should come into effect during the existence of present agreements? In other words, would a tenant be able to apply to a Court for a reduction of the rent he had agreed to pay during the currency of the term for which he had agreed to pay it?

Mr. CHARLES RUSSELL hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would have no difficulty in answering that question. If the provisions of the Bill applied only where there was no existing agreement, the operation of the measure would be very limited indeed. In his opinion, any man would incur a grievous responsibility who would say anything, either in the House or out of it, which would have a tendency to prejudge the Bill, or which would tend to prevent the public of Ireland, whom it so greatly concerned, from giving just and impartial consideration to the merits of the provisions which the Prime Minister had explained. Without, therefore, attempting to discuss the Bill, he would only say that he thought it an honest and manly effort to deal with a complicated and difficult question. He, however, should like to know whether, when a tenant came to the end of an existing lease, he would have a right to go to the Land Court and ask for a re-adjustment of his rent?

Mr. GLADSTONE replied, that he would not, in that case.

Mr. CHARLES RUSSELL thought such a tenant as worthy an object of the protection of the Bill as a tenant from year to year. He looked to the second part of the Bill with great hope as a means for working out the redemption of the Irish people. At the same time, he should have been very glad if it had been proposed to make the Bill to some extent retrospective, and believed it would not be either unjust or inconvenient to antedate its operation to the day on which the Compensation for Disturbance Bill of last year was intended to have come into force. By that means it would be made to cover the cases in which, under the pressure of the exceptional distress of the last three years, the tenants had been deprived of their holdings.

Mr. LEWIS praised the very clear manner in which the Prime Minister had stated his proposals. The speech of the right hon. Gentleman had disposed of more than one fallacy which had hitherto prevented fair dealing with this great question, and it was now to be hoped that neither the iniquity of the Irish Land Law nor the harsh and oppressive character of the Irish landowners would be taken for granted as undoubted facts. As regarded the second part of the Bill, he was inclined to think that the Government might have been more liberal in their advances. The difference between three-fourths and four-fifths was not very considerable; but it represented a sum that was more important to the Irish tenant than to the country at large. He, however, asked the House to look with suspicion on any proposition to lend money to public companies to carry out emigration. He quite recognized the distinction between the attempt to create a peasant proprietary and the desire to encourage the real and *boná fide* farmers to become the owners of their holdings. The latter class of men alone were useful; but to settle a number of miserable and poverty-stricken people on small plots of land was an unmixed evil. On the other hand, nothing could be better than to enable the actual cultivators of the soil, substantial men, with an adequate quantity of land, to become the possessors of their farms.

MR. GIVAN assured the hon. Member for the Kirkcaldy Burghs (Sir George Campbell) that the advances from State funds to Irish tenants, judging from the past, would certainly be repaid. He, however, regretted that greater pecuniary advantages should not have been offered to the tenants, who, in a great many cases, would not have sufficient capital in their hands to make the necessary improvements in their land. If the Government intended this measure to be successful, they ought to empower the whole of the purchase-money to be advanced by the State; and they might with advantage also authorize advances by the Board of Works for drainage and other improvements. Then, the term of 15 years appointed for fixity of rent appeared to him too low; he hoped the Government would see their way to extend it to 30 years. He also thought that a more satisfactory tribunal for the settlement of land questions might have been created. On the whole, however, he believed the Bill, subject to Amendments which might be made in Committee, would confer incalculable benefits upon the people of Ireland.

MR. PARNELL quite agreed that it would not be fair either to the Government or the Bill to express any opinion on it until they saw the measure in print. He wished, however, to ask a question in reference to a point of practical experience in view of the present state of the West of Ireland. The view he entertained as to the retrospective action of the measure, or rather, as to the effect the measure would have on tenants ejected already, or who might be ejected before the Bill passed into law, was that such tenants, provided the Bill passed before the six months' terms allowed for redemption, would have a right to come into the Court, ask to have their rent fixed, and sell their tenant right at the fixed rent; and he desired to know whether he was correct in holding that view? Without venturing to discuss the main provisions of the Bill, he regretted the Government had adopted the principle of emigration instead of migration. If they had given power to the Commission they proposed to form to purchase land in Ireland, the Commission would be able to find plenty of improvable land in every county where a congestion of the population existed for this purpose of planting or migrating the tenants from other districts. In Mayo, for instance, where the people existed in the most miserable condition on small mountains with bog farms, there was plenty of land which such a Commission could purchase, and stock with tenants after they had sold their interest in their own wretched holdings, under the provisions of the proposed Bill. That, at any rate, might have been given as an alternative to the emigration scheme. His own opinion was that every man in Ireland at present was required there for the purpose of developing the industrial resources of the country; and while he was unwilling to say that emigration should not take place from Ireland, he considered it ought to be a natural movement of the people, such as prevailed in Continental countries. There was another matter cognate to this subject to which he wished to allude — namely, the Irish labourers. Their condition was admitted to be most wretched, and they had no future before them. He should have thought the Government would have given the Commission power to buy land to settle labourers upon it in certain districts where they might find employment, and so render them less dependent on employers. He hoped the Government would give their earnest attention to these two matters before the Committee stage. With regard to the main features of the Bill, he would not at that moment give any opinion as to whether the proposed arrangements for the Courts were workable or not. His opinion in times past was that it was extremely difficult, if not impossible, to reconcile the respective interests of landlord and tenant in the soil, and that any friction, however slight, would destroy the practical utility of such a scheme as that proposed. This was the opinion of the Land League, which believed the true solution of the Land Question was to enable the occupiers to become owners. Whether the right hon. Gentleman had solved the difficulties of this great question was a matter on which he did not wish to express an opinion.

MR. W. E. FORSTER said, that, after the very clear statement of the objects of the Bill made by his right hon. Friend the Prime Minister, it was unnecessary that he should trouble the House with many remarks with respect to it. He was glad to know in the discussion that had taken place that there was an evident determination on the part of the House to secure a fair hearing and consideration for the proposals of the Government. He wished to answer one or two questions which had been put, as well as to remove one or two misconceptions which seemed to exist as to the provisions of the measure. He could assure the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down that he was in error in supposing that the Government intended to promote emigration in opposition to migration. The hon. Gentleman said he would not object to emigration if the people left the country of their own accord, and the Government would certainly be greatly opposed to any plan of emigration which meant the contrary. The sole object of the Bill was to place before the people the plans by which Government thought their position might be improved. They hoped to greatly improve the tenure of the Irish tenant. In the next place, they hoped to facilitate the purchase of the freehold land by the Irish tenant; but that was not to be done suddenly; but they hoped to put a very large scheme into operation. There was one feature of the Bill to which the Prime Minister had forgotten to allude, and that was that the Government would be prepared to make an advance to the Irish tenant to buy a perpetual quit rent. Then they hoped to be able to encourage reasonable and well-matured plans for the reclamation of waste land, and they hoped, although it was a very difficult matter, to put before the tenants in the more crowded districts the advantages of emigration, so that they should be able to choose between the plan of the improvement of their tenure, if they stopped, and the settlement upon waste land, and also a system of well-considered emigration. As to the question which the hon. Gentleman put with regard to a tenant against whom proceedings might be taken, he would say that if proceedings were being taken at the time of the passing of the Act the tenant would have the power to apply to the Court to fix a judicial rent, and if, as very often might be the case, that was a lower rent than he now paid, he would get the advantage of tenant right which might accrue from that lower rent, while, as to the six months for redemption, the Bill might turn out to be quite as retrospective as his hon. Friend the Member for the County of Cork (Mr. Shaw) had suggested. The Bill did not propose to interfere with existing leases. That was a matter which must be fairly debated; but, of course, the Bill would be a mockery if a mere agreement was to exclude the tenant from its operations. His hon. Friend the Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) made a mistake when he stated that in his opinion the small tenants would get very little advantage from the Bill. The fact was that they would get all the advantages from it which the larger tenants would. He would have fixity of tenure for the first 15 years, and fixity of tenure for the next 15 years, supposing he thought fit to apply to the Court. His right hon. Friend (Mr. Gladstone), with his usual clearness, had referred to the benefit which would accrue from the fact that application to the Court was made optional rather than compulsory. He hoped, however, that that statement would not be understood to mean that the option was with the landlord, for that was not the case, for it would be optional with the tenant to apply, while it would not be in the power of the landlord to prevent his doing so. His belief was, he might add, that when the tenant knew his rent might be raised, he would not very often use the option of going into Court, though, if he wished, he might do so at any time. With regard to the labourers, that was a question that had received the very anxious consideration of the Government; but they had not seen how they could introduce provision with regard to labour, in the alteration of land tenure, excepting so far as labourers could be put into a better position by well-considered plans for emigration or otherwise. As the principles of the Bill had not been attacked, he would not detain the House with any further remarks. His right hon. Friend had said that it was one of the most important measures with which he had ever had to deal. It had been considered as carefully as any scheme had ever been considered by a Government, and the details would be discussed with every desire on their part to make it acceptable to the House and to the country.

MR. BIDDELL asked, whether the loans which were to be made to Irish tenant farmers would be in the nature of mortgages or not, and what rate of interest would have to be paid? His impression was that if the terms were at all liberal, many English tenant farmers would be glad to avail themselves of the opportunity of becoming proprietors of their holdings in a similar way.

MR. CALLAN thought it would be unwise for any Irish Member to express a strong opinion upon the Bill about to be introduced, especially after the experience which had been gained from the University Bill of 1873, which had at first been received with acclaim by the Irish Members. But he could not help expressing his regret, which he believed would be concurred in by the Irish people, that the subject of the fixity of tenure—the real want of the Irish agriculturist—was conspicuously absent from the Bill. But even though fixity of tenure was absent, he would not have expressed an opinion were it not for the unfortunate statement made by the Chief Secretary for Ireland, with which, so far as the present Bill was concerned, he extinguished all hope of the question of the Irish labourers being dealt with. In 1870 the Government absolutely pledged themselves to legislate for that class of the community, and they were bound, as soon as they could, to fulfil that pledge. He should, therefore, like the Government to say that, if not this year, a measure would be taken to give facilities for the erection of agricultural labourers' cottages, and the allocation of sites for gardens.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

MR. MELDON thought that, as far as he could understand the Bill, it contained many points which must commend themselves to universal approval. He particularly approved that part of the measure which proposed to leave landlords and tenants free to contract, this in his view being the chief point that should be considered in all legislation regarding the land. The Bill gave substantially to the tenants of Ireland that which they had long been agitating for, and he thought the measure, as shadowed forth in the speech of the Prime Minister, deserved their warmest support. Every person who wished to see the relations of tenant and landlord placed on a satisfactory basis would acknowledge that the matter had been admirably dealt with. He thought, however, that the proportion of the purchase money to be asked on behalf of the tenant was rather too small, when they considered that the Select Committee recommended a much larger proportion should be advanced. This, however, was a point of detail which could be dealt with in Committee; but he hoped a further concession on this point would be made by the Government.

MR. VILLIERS-STUART alluded in terms of praise to the able speech of the Prime Minister; and, while he considered it was too premature to express an opinion on the Bill, regretted that the Prime Minister had made no reference to the condition of the agricultural labouring class in Ireland. The condition of the Irish farm labourer, he said, was a disgrace to any civilized community. He hoped, therefore, that notwithstanding the difficulty of the subject, the Government would see its way before the second reading of the Bill to accept some clauses in Committee dealing with the question of the farm labourers. He had already handed in a Notice of a Resolution in their favour, which he proposed to move on the second reading of the Bill.

MR. ERRINGTON could not help expressing the great pleasure the speech of the Prime Minister had afforded him.

The Bill, so far as he had been able to examine it, appeared to be very good. When it was thoroughly understood in Ireland, he felt sure it would create general satisfaction.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER repeated the question of his hon. Friend the Member for Suffolk (Mr. Biddell).

Sir PATRICK O'BRIEN thanked the Government for the introduction of the Bill, and said, that though it did not go to the extent that some had demanded in regard to fixity of tenure, it went a great way, and would give satisfaction in Ireland. The proposals relating to fair rents and free sale were complete, and carried out to the full in this Bill. He thought that those Members who had advocated this principle of land legislation, instead of resorting to revolutionary measures, could now address their constituents, as he would do his, and justify the position they had taken up by showing that its success was in the Bill brought in by the Prime Minister that evening. He was personally indebted to the Prime Minister for this measure, and he was sure the feeling of the country would endorse its proposals.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson) said, he would not attempt to do more than reply to the Questions that had been asked. He hoped, however, that the opposition that had been threatened in Committee, because the Bill did not do all that was desired in reference to labourers' dwellings, would not be persisted in. The Government had very much at heart the sufferings of this large portion of the population, borne with unexampled patience for many years; but it would be inexpedient to overload this measure with a matter which could be dealt with separately, and he was sure the Government would apply their energies to the redress of those sufferings. With reference to the question raised by the hon. Member for Longford (Mr. Errington), a leading provision of the Bill was that a tenant should not pauperize himself, and that a holding should remain in the hands of one person; and in the event of intestacy, if the next of kin were more than one, or if there were a charge for the benefit of widow or children, a sale would bring the property into the hands of one person, so that sub-division would be avoided. The reply to the hon. Member for Suffolk (Mr. Biddell) was that the rate of interest would be about 3½ per cent; paying off principal and interest in 35 years, by an annuity of 5 per cent of the sum advanced.

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill to further amend the Law relating to the occupation and ownership of Land in Ireland; and for other purposes, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Gladstone, Mr. William Edward Forster, Mr. Bright, Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, and Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 135.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

RIVERS CONSERVANCY AND FLOODS PREVENTION BILL [*Lords.*]—[bill 120.]

(*Mr. Dodson.*)

SECOND READING. ADJOURNED DEBATE.

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [31st March], "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Dodson.*)

Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

Mr. PELL, in moving, as an Amendment, that the Bill be read a second time that day six months, said, that the title of the Bill was misleading. The assumption that any of the provisions of the Bill would prevent floods was ludicrous. The Act of 1861 had not been found to work well on account of the difficulty in getting a number of authorities into united action, and the same objection would apply to this Bill. It was said that this Bill could not be considered a Party one. Now, when he first entered the House he was told to beware of measures which were supported by the Front Benches on each side, and what had been done in regard to this Bill proved the soundness of that advice. The Bill contained novel and indefensible proposals. It was proposed that a Conservancy Board should take charge of the whole basin of a river; but how large an area was embraced in the whole basin of a river? The proposal of the Bill was shortly stated to tax large areas for works which were to be carried out in very small portions of those areas. It was the case of Union rating over again. In moral effect, in mischievous wastefulness, and in bad results, nothing could be worse than the operation of the system of Union rating. They were now asked to repeat those mischiefs on a much larger scale. They had further experience in the same direction in the working of the sanitary laws. At first, all concerned worked earnestly to carry those laws into effect; but it soon became apparent that a particular class of property—namely, houses—were being improved at the expense of rural districts, and a great reaction took place. The present Bill proceeded exactly on those lines, and the results which had flowed from the working of Union rating and the sanitary laws would be again experienced. What were the steps to be taken? A certain number of persons, or any rural or sanitary authority, might take the initial step in the formation of a Conservancy Board in any basin of a river. The river might be 160 miles long; but, after an inquiry without depositions, and which might be held by the Inspector in a town-hall or in a public-house, a Conservancy Board could be formed in any part of the basin of the river, under an Order of the Local Government Board. He should have thought that the Local Government Board would have fought shy of adding that duty to their many other responsibilities. Their dominion now, however, would extend from sea to sea. For years past efforts had been made to get some county authority constituted, which would be able to handle such a question as the present. The towns and boroughs acted together; but it was not so with the counties, or the present attempt to tax the uplands for the benefit of the lowlands would not be made. A proposal to tax the whole of the Metropolis in respect of floods which caused damage to particular parts of the Metropolis was rejected in the Select Committee of 1879 by eight votes against three, and yet a similar proposal had been introduced by the Local Government Board into this monstrous measure. He denied that the uplands had done anything in the way of sending down water in their ditches and under-drains to justify their being taxed under this Bill. If this Bill was passed, they would pull down half the bridges in the country. They would interfere with the railways and the roads. Millowners and other proprietors would have to be heavily compensated, and even then they would not be successful in preventing floods when there was an excessive amount of rainfall. On his experience as a farmer, he ventured to say that the floods of the last few years had done more harm to the best uplands than it had in the lowlands; and on the whole, while he admitted the evil, he thought the Government would have done well if they had dealt with the matter in a more modest measure. In conclusion, the hon. Member moved to defer the second reading to this day six months.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. Pell.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Mr. ARTHUR PEEL said, he could not admit the statement of the hon. Member that the Bill was novel in principle, inasmuch as it was on the lines of the Bill of 1877, which only failed to pass on account of want of time. The present Bill, which had already passed the House of Lords, was a mere enabling measure which might be submitted to the ordeal of a Select Committee after its principle had been affirmed. There was a great feeling of antagonism between those who lived in the uplands and the dwellers in the lowlands, and his hon. Friend who had moved the rejection of the Bill spoke strongly as an uplander. But there was also to be considered the health of the working classes living in the towns, which was seriously injured by the floods which frequently invaded their dwellings. It was true, as the hon. Gentleman had said, that in the opinion of an authority as eminent as Mr. Rawlinson, the floods were not caused by the draining of agricultural lands; but his opinion was not held by many other professional witnesses who were called before the Committee. The rivers of late years had been less under control than they were in former times, and were becoming year by year less able to perform their proper function of discharging the accumulation of water. The millers would require to be watched, inasmuch as they were in many cases gradually raising the head of water to which they were entitled, and were so working an immense amount of mischief. When the Bill had passed into law, the different localities would give such shape to the Provisional Order, provided for under the Act, as was best suited to their peculiar circumstances and conditions. He hoped that the objection of an increase of the rates would not prevent a very valuable improvement from being carried into effect. He had at first been in favour of throwing those rates entirely upon the owners; but he had since become convinced that it was more in the interests of the occupiers that they should share the burdens entailed by carrying out the proposed improvements, and should have a share in their management. He hoped that they would not be deterred by monetary considerations from sending this Bill to a Select Committee.

Mr. LEAKE said, he could not resist contributing some few remarks to the discussion, as he came from a district which was sorely troubled with a tortuous and overflowing river. The hon. Member who had just sat down opposed the title of the Bill as being misleading, but he failed to see in what respect it was misleading. There was no question that the country suffered from the overflowing of rivers and devastation by floods, and there was no doubt to grapple with this evil they must bring into existence bodies of intelligent and capable men, who would consult upon the matter and see if any appropriate remedy could be found. These would be the Conservancy Boards, which, according to the title of the Bill, would be created if it became law. Therefore, he saw nothing misleading in the title of the Bill, or in its objects. The hon. Member for South Leicestershire (Mr. Pell) appeared to object to the Bill because it proposed to deal with a river throughout its basin, and he professed not to be able to describe the basin of a river. The House and the country would never be able to deal with these rivers till they dealt with them from the source to the sea. It was only jealousy between rival interests that had prevented remedial measures having been adopted long ago. The hon. Member said that it had been a mistake to build on the banks of rivers; but that was an assumption. When they built on the banks of rivers the sources and conditions were different from what they were now. The greater portion of its upper stream was scarcely flowing, but filtering through mosses and marshes; but now the farmers had brought into cultivation the uplands, and had multiplied the channels of the stream a hundredfold, and it poured on the lower lands the rains and the drainage of the lands. The hon. Member said that the towns desired to tax a large area for their special benefit; but that was an unfair way of putting it. The science of living in community demanded taxation over an extensive area, and the benefit derived from that taxation could never be appraised so that every man should equitably have his precise share. It was only the other day that hon. Members from the other side of the House were asking them to contribute to highways all over the country, although he would never travel over one thousandth part of those highways. His constituents were also asked to contribute to the Parks in London, and yet very few would ever visit them. If they taxed a large area by the present Bill, that large area would have a voice in the adjustment of the taxes, as the Conservancy Boards would be representative. The consequence would be that the taxation would be equitably borne. It was objected that the uplands would be taxed for the benefit of the lowlands, and the term uplands conveyed to the mind an idea of moors and pastures only. But it was not so; there were uplands and uplands. What were they doing in his own district? Manchester had been standing in the way of Salford, relieving itself of surplus water simply because it was on an upland. Manchester, by building on the banks of the Irwell, had narrowed it from 116 feet to 87 feet, and no responsibility lay on the uplands for the damage done to the lowlands. All these unconscious infringements upon the rights of neighbours were past remedy and punishment; but, if they united in common with each other, something might be done to bring great streams to a better condition. The hon. Member for South Leicestershire asked whether the proposed Conservancy Boards could be expected to deal with occasional floods of great magnitude. Certainly they proposed to do so. The River Irwell at certain periods of the year sent down 24,000 cubic feet of water per second, whereas only 11,000 could pass through the city and borough without damage. This river presented a problem of high magnitude; but if they could get rid of petty jealousies and bring communities to a sense of their responsibilities, a duplicate channel might be made along a portion of the river where the course was tortuous, and the surplus water carried below the population of the town. This would be a simple work for scientific men and determined communities. The prevention of the devastation caused in one year by such floods would amply repay the cost of remedial works such as he had indicated. He concluded by cordially supporting the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. HENEAGE said, that this Bill was a re-hash of a very bad measure which had been brought forward by a former Government, but which pressure of Business had prevented from being passed. He hoped that pressure of Business would also prevent the carrying of the present Bill. It was, no doubt, an enabling Bill, for it enabled the Local Government Board to exercise a centralized bureaucratic Imperialism over the whole of England, which had operated injuriously in regard to the Highways Act, and which it was undesirable to have extended to the matter of the conservancy of rivers. He objected to this measure, also, because it proposed to levy rates on the basis of the Poor Law Valuation, which was assessed on a different principle in every Union; and therefore any rates levied by a Conservancy Board over a district including many different Unions, until an Act was passed to enforce a uniform system of assessment, would be most unfair, and would inflict great injustice. It would be impossible to assess the rate fairly without a proper survey. He could not see the justice of rating the uplands and the midlands for what he called flood lands. He held that there were only two kinds of lands to be considered in dealing with that subject—flood lands and high lands. He believed that but for the exceptionally heavy rains which had lately prevailed, they would have heard very little of this measure. Before the late heavy rains the flood lands, instead of being injured, had been benefited, for they got some of their best soil from the uplands. Close to the towns on the borders of those rivers the land was very much deteriorated; but if the floods were taken away the value of that land would be greatly increased at the expense of the uplands, which would gain nothing by the Bill.

Mr. E. STANHOPE said, that the Bill was excellent in principle; but, when they came to examine it in detail, they found that it failed to carry out what it professed. No doubt, this Bill had been framed upon the Report of a Select Committee of the House of Lords; but he should have more respect for the Report of that Committee if they had heard evidence from the localities especially affected. The Bill had been presented by the President of the Local Government Board without any sufficient introductory statement, and was now being forced on at a time when the greater number of the county Members were absent. If there was any Bill in which county Members were interested it was a Bill of this description. He warned the right hon. Gentleman that, if he forced on this Bill now against the wish of those interested in it, he might lose a good deal of time afterwards. Looking at the Bill from the point of view of those who lived in the Fens district, he would venture to say that they were utterly unprotected. They had spent on the faith of Parliament hundreds of thousands of pounds, which had benefited the country. But by this Bill authority was given to other lands to flood their lands which had been drained, and they had to pay for it. He admitted that the Bill was in some respect copied from the Bill formerly before the House; but his right hon. Friend (Mr. Sclater-Booth) intended thoroughly to protect the owners of the Fens lands. There was no adequate provision for their protection in the Bill before the House. He did not think it would be judicious at present, considering the state of the House, to go to a division against the Bill. He thought they should content themselves with expressing an opinion upon the way it had been brought on, and if the Bill were referred to a Select Committee, they should consider whether they would not hear evidence upon it.

Mr. T. PAGET said, he should support the second reading of the Bill as an instalment, and hoped it would be made the foundation of something better in the future. Leicestershire was one of the counties that would be particularly affected by the Bill. In that part of the country the rivers had been very much obstructed, both by the discontinuance of the canals that formerly helped to clear the streams, and also by the neglect of the riparian owners. The whole question might well have been dealt with by the suggested county financial boards, the institution and proper functions of which might be profitably discussed in connection with the present measure.

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH said, that, when the late Government made a proposal with respect to the establishment of county financial boards, one of their main objects was that there should be in every county a rivers conservancy authority; but the objection urged was that the matter was too important to be delegated to county boards, and that special machinery was wanted for the purpose in view. The Conservancy Bill had been subsequently introduced by the late Government because they had been very much pressed by agriculturists and others to initiate legislation on the subject, and it was based on the Report of a Select Committee of the House of Lords. The greatest difficulty was to decide what area of taxation should be taken. In any case, as sufficient funds had to be provided, it was necessary that the area should be a large one, and it ought, if possible, not to be open to the objections taken to the area for sanitary purposes. It was quite true that many of the rural districts were unwilling to enter into sanitary schemes from a wise fear of being deluged by the projects of *doctrinaires;* but, in the present case, a wider area and funds on a larger scale were needed. There were, of course, uplands and uplands; some of them being practically table land, would not be taxed for the purposes of the Bill, while others, as being the sources of springs and streams, would be called upon to contribute. Another important feature of the Bill was that it superseded many of the old conservancy authorities, some of which were alike unable to do their work, or even to provide for their own extinction. There were various interests which he thought ought to obtain further protection; but, on the whole, he saw no objection to the Bill being read a second time, provided it was referred to a Select Committee. He regretted that it should have been brought on at the fag end of the Sitting, seeing that it was well worthy of a whole Evening's Sitting.

MR. MAGNIAC said, he certainly shared the surprise expressed by his right hon. Friend opposite (Mr. Sclater-Booth) that his hon. Friend the Member for South Leicestershire (Mr. Pell) should have taken the attitude against this Bill he had done. He could not help thinking that his hon. Friend, judging from his speech, was at a loss to find a valid excuse for deferring the proposal of Her Majesty's Government to deal with the question of river floods. Certainly nothing that had fallen from his hon. Friend, or, indeed, from any hon. Member, except the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Hants, could lead anyone to suppose that any damage had been done to the land in the country by floods. His hon. Friend seemed to suppose that the towns only would derive benefit from a measure of this kind; and he based his arguments upon the representations which were made a short time ago by a deputation which waited upon the President of the Local Government Board. Reference had been made to the damage done by floods to land worth £3 an acre. He (Mr. Magniac) was acquainted with some 3,000 acres that were let at £3 an acre, but the rent had not been paid this year because the land had been flooded. It was not desirable, however, that they should measure the loss by a money standard in that way. It was easy to say that £3 per acre for 1,000 acres would give a loss of £3,000; but in reality it did not represent the entire loss to the occupier. There were other losses which were involved in the flooding of the land of the country. He would not weary the House by going into details of these losses; but he had a long list of towns and places in which the entire districts had been placed under water; and from which persons living in the locality were described to him as looking over lake and river scenery rather than across green fields. A short time ago, a traveller by the Great Northern Railway would have been unable from one part of the line to see dry land at all. The whole country was under water. Towns had been flooded; industry had been stopped; and the Report of the Committee of the House of Lords, which hon. Members seemed to have ignored entirely, stated that one flood alone had caused damage to the amount of £800,000. There were other instances in which damage to the extent of £500,000 had been caused; and he was sure that if the losses occasioned by floods in the course of a single year could be all put together, they would be more than sufficient to pay for the preventive measures that would be necessary to check similar damage in future.

In point of fact, those who were acquainted with the rivers knew that it would be requisite to undertake very small works in order to effect a vast amount of good. When once the water was set going it helped itself, and made its own channel. It was because the regular channels became obstructed in every direction that the water no longer was able to flow. The hon. Member for Grimsby (Mr. Heneage) said that floods were advantageous. No doubt, they were advantageous under certain conditions; but, under other circumstances, they were most disadvantageous; and if the hon. Member would refer to the Report of the Lords' Committee, he would see that although there were some advantages, yet, in the long run, the balance of advantage was largely against the land. Allusion had been made to the flooding of the streets of many towns. That was not a subject to be ignored, or passed over with a laugh, seeing that the damage occasioned amounted to hundreds of thousands of pounds sterling, and involved a large loss in wages to the artizans in the towns. The loss in this respect would come to a very large amount if it could be properly estimated. The hon. Member for South Leicestershire took the case of the upland drainage; but the hon. Member put the case much stronger the other night than he had done now. The House cheered the opinion of Mr. Rawlinson that upland drainage did not cause floods. Now, he (Mr. Magniac) had taken the trouble to ascertain what Mr. Rawlinson meant, because he felt perfectly certain that an engineer so competent, so experienced, and so skilled, would not be blind to facts that were passing under his own eyes. He had, therefore, taken the opportunity of asking Mr. Rawlinson himself what he meant by the evidence he had given before the Lords' Committee; and Mr. Rawlinson told him that that evidence had been entirely misunderstood. Mr. Rawlinson said—

> "The answers I gave to the Committee were direct answers to direct and precise and particular questions, and I repeat that in the case of extreme floods they are caused by heavy rains, extending over a series of weeks, and even months, and the drainage of the agricultural lands is not, in such cases, the cause of floods."

That was an intelligible question which they all understood. As his hon. Friend the Member for Warwick (Mr. Arthur Peel) said, they did not expect the Bill to guard the country from the prevalence of exceptional and disastrous floods. He knew that there had been greater floods in the past than there had been recently; but exceptional floods might occur any year, which might not occur again for a hundred years. What he and those who were in favour of this Bill were desirous of doing was to relieve the country from these frequent and intermittent floods—intermittent floods that were occurring now almost periodically. It was these floods that they desired by this Bill to guard the country against. It had been urged that under the Bill numbers of persons would be required to pay rates for the purpose of effecting the improvements in the courses of the rivers, who would derive no direct benefit from those improvements. Here, again, the hon. Member for South Leicestershire had not put the case so strongly as he did a few days ago. It had, however, been put so forcibly, that he (Mr. Magniac) thought he was entitled to say a few words on the subject. In the first place, he did not think the Act of Henry VIII., which had been referred to, at all bore out the paragraph in the Report of the Lords' Committee. If hon. Members would take the trouble to refer to that Act, they would be of opinion that it was extremely doubtful whether it applied to the case at all. It did not say that persons who derived no direct benefits should not be required to contribute towards the rates necessary for effecting improvements; but it said that everyone should be rated according to the benefit which he derived. The question, however, was entirely one with regard to the construction or wording of an old Act of Parliament, and he should not like to pronounce an opinion upon it. The hon. Member said it was an entirely new principle to tax people who derived no direct benefit. Now, it was entirely a new principle to lay down such a proposition as that. Taxation might be the fulfilment of an obligation, as well as the fulfilment for a benefit; and the hon. Member knew perfectly well that, in the main, no local taxation conferred any direct benefit upon the individual who was taxed. It was the same with Imperial taxation. How could it be contended that indirect taxes levied on tea, or coffee, or the Income Tax, conferred direct benefit upon the individual taxed? What power was there to connect any direct payment of Income Tax with any direct benefit derived from it? It was still more impossible to connect payments for the maintenance of highways, for relief under the Poor Law, and for the other numerous objects of local taxation with the direct benefit of the individual who paid the taxes. The hon. Member spoke of the Union Chargeability Act. That that Act had not succeeded in every respect was undoubtedly true. It might possibly be true that it was an expensive Act; but it was not in the least degree true that the principle of the Act was an unjust one, and the fact that the working of the Act might be improperly carried into effect was no reason why they should condemn the principle of it. It was alleged that the Artizans' and Workmens' Dwellings Act had failed to a considerable extent, and that those who were taxed for it got no benefit from it. But the artizans and working classes derived benefit from it, although other classes might not. Yet no one would grudge the payments made under the Act who knew the benefits that it had conferred upon the labouring classes. It was upon the same principle that the rates for highways were paid; and what was a river but a highway? They all knew that the principal and primary cause of floods were the bridges thrown across the rivers. But for whose benefit was it that these bridges had been constructed across the rivers? They were not made for the benefit of the lowlands alone, for how could the produce of those who lived on the uplands be carried to market if there were no bridges? The mode of conveyance before the time of railways was by navigating the rivers and canals; and what would have been the value of the land in England if the farm produce could not have been conveyed by that means to market, and farming materials and manure taken by the same means to the farms? There was another matter which he was surprised to see had not been properly applied, although it had been mentioned in the course of the debate. The hon. Member who moved the rejection of the Bill mentioned his own county town—the town of Leicester, and the county town of Leicestershire. At the present moment that town was built upon an island in an artificially constructed lake—a lake constructed by railway embankments. He should like to know what the value of the uplands would be at this moment if it were not for the railways. The value of the uplands was intimately connected with the condition of the lowlands, and it was utterly impossible to sever the two. If they were to go back to the principle of taxation for direct benefits, they must go back to the purest principle of taxation, upon which their—he was almost going to say barbarous—ancestors acted. At any rate, those who preceded us, who had not had our experience, and who had, probably, not had the advantage of co-operation, were the only persons who ever resorted to the principle which his hon. Friend recommended for adoption now. In a neighbouring country we saw the principle suggested by the present Bill put in operation every day. In France, the Government did not hesitate to provide the means for the construction of magnificent roads and bridges by general taxation. Only a few days ago, hon. Members were arguing that the roads and bridges should not be made at the expense of the localities, but that the cost should be borne by the whole country. He trusted that the House would take a wider view of its obligations and responsibilities in reference to the proposal now made, than that which had been shaped out by his hon. Friend. They had before them the example set by the House of Lords, who had sent down the present Bill. A Select Committee of their Lordships' House had already inquired into the matter and reported upon it; and hon. Members had, therefore, an assurance that the measure had been thoroughly considered by the House of Lords. There were Members of their Lordships' Committee who represented important districts of country, and the House of Commons might, with advantage, follow the example set by the House of Lords, and allow the Bill to be referred to a Select Committee, where they knew it would be thoroughly sifted and well considered. Only that night they had been listening to a strong argument, the whole of which was directed towards the merging of individual rights and interests for the general good of the country. They were told by the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister that the position of public affairs rendered it necessary that the owners of land in the Sister Kingdom should give up a large portion of their rights for the public good. Was it possible that the owners of land in this country took so narrow a view of their obligations and duties that they would prevent the passing of a measure which they must feel convinced would do an immense amount of good, and the want of which was a complete scandal to the country? No one could have seen the state of the country during the last 18 months without feeling very much ashamed that it should have been allowed to get into such a position. Perhaps, before he concluded his remarks, he might be permitted to say a word or two in regard to his own Bill. He understood that it was intended, in the event of the present Bill being read a second time, to refer it to a Select Committee. He hoped that his right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board would, in the event of that course being taken, see his way to referring the second Bill also, so that the two measures might be considered by the same Committee. He thought there were in the Bill which he (Mr. Magniac) had had the honour of introducing, a certain number of clauses which might with advantage be added to the Bill of the Government. He should like to say, with regard to the Bill of his right hon. Friend, that he looked upon the rating clauses contained in it as impracticable. He did not think that it would be possible to carry them out in practice. If any hon. Member would take the trouble to look at the clauses of the Bill, and examine them carefully, he would find, in regard to the question of rating, that the division of rates between the owners and occupiers and the uplands and the lowlands would necessitate a multiplicity of accounts being kept, which, he believed, would render it difficult, if not impossible, to work the measure. There was another principle in the present Bill which he also looked upon as a very dangerous one indeed. The principle of the valuation of lands had hitherto been carried out by assessment committees, by gentlemen of the strictest impartiality and integrity, and who possessed a sufficient knowledge of the subject to enable them to put a proper value upon the lands submitted to them. Under the provisions of the present Bill that duty would be taken away from the assessment committees and handed over to the overseers, who would have authority, without appeal, to make a valuation of lands. He certainly believed that the rating clauses of the Bill would require to be very carefully considered, and he could not conceive a place better suited for their consideration than a Select Committee of that House. It would be quite possible for the hon. Members who would be appointed upon such a Committee to put the clauses of the Bill in order. He trusted that his right hon. Friend would accede to the general desire that there should be one Conservancy Board for each river, and that he would not allow the responsibilities of the Conservancy to be frittered away among a number of small and insignificant authorities, who would very likely be in conflict with each other as to the manner in which the work should be carried out. He hoped the House would consent to read the Bill a second time, in order that it might at once be referred to a Select Committee, so that it might come back again to the House in sufficient time to be passed in the course of the present Session.

Sir BALDWYN LEIGHTON said, he did not agree in the views which had been expressed by the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Magniac), although he had no doubt that the hon. Member had devoted great attention to the subject. He thought the concluding remarks of the hon. Gentleman answered his earlier ones. He certainly hoped, if the Bill before the House was to be referred to a Select Committee, that the Bill of the hon. Member would be referred to the same Committee. If the Bill were to be taken as it stood, and were to be read a second time on the understanding that the second reading would amount to a confirmation of the principle of the Bill, he should prefer to vote for the Amendment of his hon. Friend the Member for South Leicestershire (Mr. Pell) in favour of the rejection of the Bill. It was only yesterday that a deputation waited upon the right hon. Gentleman opposite the President of the Local Government Board, and towards the close of the interview the right hon. Gentleman was asked whether he considered that the rating clauses constituted an essential part of the principle of the Bill. The right hon. Gentleman stated, in reply, that there was no principle in the Bill at all; that it was a most immoral Bill. He quite agreed with the right hon. Gentleman. He thought it was a most immoral Bill. It was not only unjust; but he believed it would prove to be perfectly uneconomical, and, what was much more important, that it would be quite unworkable. But if the Select Committee to which it was suggested the Bill should be referred had power to overhaul the clauses which insisted upon the taxation of the uplands for the lowlands, then that, he considered, would altogether alter the question. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would tell the House as much as he told the deputation yesterday, because the statement made by the right hon. Gentleman certainly altered the complexion of the case. The hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Magniac) had mentioned two or three facts which tended rather to strengthen the case against himself. The hon. Member said he knew a case where 3,000 acres of land had been rendered valueless in consequence of river floods, and he added that by the present Bill, or some similar measure, that land would be very much improved. He (Sir Baldwyn Leighton) presumed that it would be altogether reclaimed, and surely the 3,000 acres in question ought themselves to bear the expense of reclamation; £3 an acre would afford a very large margin for an expenditure of that nature. A charge of £1 an acre put upon the land would cover the expense of the necessary outlay; and if, as the hon. Member said, the outlay would only be small, why was it not undertaken at once by the owner without waiting to throw the expense upon the district generally? The hon. Member had referred to cases where damage to the extent of £500,000 and £800,000 had been done by the flooding of land. Surely the land that was liable to become flooded could afford to pay a charge of 1*s*., or 5*s*., or even of £1 an acre, and save itself from the consequences of these floods without taxing the uplands. The facts adduced by the hon. Member were the strongest arguments against himself. He (Sir Baldwyn Leighton) had placed upon the Paper an Amendment following the Amendment of his hon. Friend the Member for South Leicestershire; and although he had placed it upon the Paper, and believed strongly in the opinion which it expressed, he was still far from thinking that there was no necessity for a Bill of some kind. He thought there was great necessity indeed for legislation; but, at the same time, he was of opinion that if they passed such a Bill as this, even those who most wished for legislation, and certainly he himself was one of those, would find it unworkable. It was, therefore, his desire, if they were to have legislation, that they should have it in another form. He was himself the owner of riparian land, which was not protected from floods as much as he should like, and which would certainly be much improved if it were not liable to be flooded. But he had never thought of asking for a rate or tax from the uplands in order to save his land from floods and render it worth so much more per acre. He would as soon ask for assistance to carry out building, drainage, or other improvements. Perhaps there were hon. Members in the House who had had to work some of the Acts of Parliament similar to the Public Health Act. If so, they would know how utterly impossible it would be to work a measure of this kind when the basis of taxation was unjust and unequitable. The Public Health Act had broken down owing to its provisions being spread over too wide an area, and the House had, in a very prominent instance, reversed that policy. An attempt had been made to compel one parish to pay the expense of the water supply for another parish. But the Act was subsequently amended by striking out the clause under which this was sought to be done; the cost was charged to those who were benefited by the water supply; and the consequence was that the Act, which was before unworkable, was now able to be worked. Again, in the case of the Metropolis, a Select Committee which sat in 1877 reported that the cost of preventing floods ought to be thrown on the whole of the Metropolis; but another Committee found that the river-side owners ought to prevent overflow, and an Act was passed which embodied the latter principle. The House was now asked, contrary to the principle of that Act, to spread the rates, for the purposes of the present Bill, over an unduly extended area. Therefore, he thought, in view of the fact that the Acts relied upon as precedents had broken down, it would be better to reverse the policy of extending the rates, and place them upon the property which would be benefited. If the right hon. Gentleman would say that he would give up that point, he should be glad to see the Bill go to a Select Committee, together with the Bill of the hon. Member for Bedford (Mr. Magniac); but if, by agreeing to the Bill being read a second time, they were to accept the proposed principle of rating, he should certainly vote for the Amendment before the House. The only true principle in matters of this kind was that the water itself should mark the extent of the area to be rated. As the Bill of the hon. Member for Bedford contained some special exemptions in the case of land not benefited by the provisions of the Bill, he thought it would be of great advantage to refer it, at the same time with the present Bill, to a Select Committee.

MR. DUCKHAM said, he was an occupier of land through which a river ran that was subject to floods, and he could, therefore, speak with some knowledge as to the desirability of an alteration in the present system. Nevertheless, he could not agree with the principle of rating the uplands for the benefit of the other lands. By admitting this principle, they would be stultifying the proceedings of Parliament. For the hon. Member for Shropshire (Sir Baldwyn Leighton) had pointed out that when the Metropolitan Board of Works took means for preventing the floods in the boroughs of Lambeth and Southwark, the principle of rating the whole Metropolis had been rejected. He contended, that if there was reason in saying that the drainage of the uplands swelled the floods in the lowlands, there was much greater reason in saying that the slated roofs and paved yards and streets on that side of the River Thames tended greatly to increase the floods in the river bed. Yet it was held by that House, and by citizens of London generally, that it was not equitable and not right to rate the larger area of the Metropolis in order to secure the boroughs of Lambeth and Southwark. If that principle held good in the Metropolis, surely it ought to apply throughout the country at large. Therefore, he appealed to the House, on behalf of a large number of his supporters, that the uplands should not be rated to improve the lowlands of the counties; but that measures should be taken for properly cleansing the watercourses and removing obstructions, at the cost of those benefited by the change. This Bill had been truly called an enabling Bill, for it enabled 20 owners, or owners and occupiers, holding or occupying property to the annual value of £2,000, to apply at any time to the Local Government Board for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of this Act. The first step after this was that an Inspector would be sent down into the district to report. He would, no doubt, be easily convinced of the necessity of applying the Act, and a Provisional Order would be made, to be followed by an Act of Parliament, all of which would, no doubt, be opposed by the upland ratepayers. Thus a continued harvest of legal expenses would be reaped from the ratepayers of the upland districts. The House had had the picture of the enormous floods which had taken place held out to them as a sort of scare, in order to get the Bill read a second time that night; but he contended that if the rivers in their present form were scoured to the very bed, it would not very materially diminish such floods as the country had been subject to during the last few years. Again, if our rivers were to be widened and deepened, almost every bridge in the Kingdom would have to be taken down and re-built, and that not only on the highways, but on the railways of the country. For these reasons, he felt bound to vote for the Motion of the hon. Member for South Leicestershire.

MR. PUGH said, he was glad that on a previous occasion, when the Bill was before the House, he had voted for the adjournment of the debate. The debate of that evening had been very useful, although he did not consider it adequate to the importance of the questions involved in the Bill. The rating of the upland proprietors for what he believed to be the chief portion of the necessary works was, in his opinion, a monstrous proposition; and it was difficult to understand how anyone could come forward in that House and advocate such a measure. He was anxious that the Local Government Board should have the confidence of the country; but he felt it would be discredited in the eyes of the people if the principle of the Bill were adopted. The people were now groaning beneath the burden of taxation; and he was certain that there was not a Member for a county in England or Wales who would dare to go down to his constituency and say to a body of tenant farmers what he (Mr. Pugh) had heard to-night — "Your landlord's property will be benefited, although you will not be; still, we are anxious to see you represented on the Board. It will be an honourable position, and, I am sure, you will not object to paying the rates." He was certain that no county Member would stand up during the Recess and proclaim that doctrine, for, if he did, his fate would be sealed at the next Election. The right hon. Member for North Hampshire (Mr. Sclater-Booth) had referred to the Sanitary Acts as a precedent; but in the large areas created by them, there was supposed to be a certain community of interest in regard to sanitary matters. Something was done all through the area; but the House, if they wished to draw a fair analogy between the sanitary law and the present Bill, must take the former as proposing to do some sanitary work in an urban district, and declaring that the rural districts, in which no such work was to be effected, should contribute to the cost. Why did the hon. Member for Bedford (Mr. Magniac) ask them to pass the Bill? "Oh!" said the hon. Member, "because of the 'Artizans' Dwellings Act;'" but hon. Members must have a better argument than that with which to go down to their constituents. They could not go down into the country with such a story as this—"See the Artizans' Dwellings Act in London—look at the effect of it; you will be benefited in like manner by this Floods Bill." But, to go to the root of the matter, what was the ground on which it was said that these uplands ought to be taxed? He had read the evidence taken before the Committee of 1877—he would not trouble the House by referring to it further than to make a passing allusion to some of its points—and he had examined into the composition of the Committee, and, no doubt, there were upon it many noble Lords of great ability. But no one who read the evidence candidly could help coming to the conclusion that the noble Lords who took a leading part in the examination of the witnesses entertained the opinion that the uplands should be taxed for the benefit of the lowlands. That would be found throughout. They were bound to get some reason for this; and it came to an absurdity when witnesses answered, as Mr. Bailey Denton did—"Oh! I will tell you why the uplands should be taxed;" and then went on to give long answers occupying considerable paragraphs, utterly barren of the slightest reason why the uplands should be asked to contribute towards the expense of improving the lowlands. As a matter of fact, he had no reason to give. It was generally believed that the evidence given before the Committee was in favour of the principle adopted by the Government; but, he ventured to say, it was nothing of the kind. There were many witnesses whose evidence weighed on the other side. ["Divide!"] If hon. Members would listen to him for a few minutes he would be as brief as he possibly could; but the matter was one which ought certainly to be fully debated. The hon. Member for Warwick (Mr. Arthur Peel) was examined; then, there were four engineers, one of whom gave a reason why, to the mind of a civil engineer, this principle should be adopted—and it was very much the reason of the hon. Member for Hampshire—namely, that otherwise they would not be able to raise sufficient money. No doubt, it was to the interest of engineers to see great works carried out; and they were always anxious to see large and expensive operations undertaken. It was natural, and he did not blame them for it; but, at the same time, he did not think civil engineers were the people to consult as to the incidence of taxation. As to engineering works, consult them by all means; but as to the incidence of taxation, there were a great many witnesses who could give more trustworthy evidence. Then there was a town clerk examined, and a member of a local board; and here he exhausted the list of those who had said a word in favour of the principle he was discussing. He mentioned Mr. Rawlinson, than whom, perhaps, there was no one more competent to speak upon this matter. There was another witness who was examined who was very competent to form a judgment on the matter, and he should have thought this gentleman would have had the confidence of the Local Government Board. It was Mr. Ridley, one of the Enclosure Commissioners; and he and Mr. Grantham, a civil engineer, were of opinion that the model upon which legislation should be based in this matter was the Thames

Valley Act. Then, there was one remarkable thing which the House must bear in mind—namely, the large number of people perfectly competent to give an opinion on this question who were never asked by the Committee to state their views. There was, for example, Mr. Lloyd, who was connected with the River Severn, and had had large experience of the navigation of that river; and one would have thought that if any witness had been called from the banks of the Severn, this gentleman certainly would have been examined on this point. The area of the watershed of the Severn was 4,437 square miles, and extended from Plynlimmon to Bristol. He generally found, however, that the persons asked to give an opinion were those living on the banks of such rivers as the Ouse. As to what had fallen from the hon. Member for Bedford (Mr. Magniac), let them consider what the upland proprietors could have done with regard to the river the hon. Member was connected with. If he understood the hon. Member aright—and he thought he had comprehended him—he had pointed out that there were on that river several mills—that there were obstructions above and obstructions below. [Mr. MAGNIAC: The hon. Member has mis-stated what I said.] He (Mr. Pugh) was sorry if he had misrepresented the hon. Member; but he did not think the misrepresentation was to a very serious extent. He might have made a mistake in using the word "mills," and it might be "weirs" that the hon. Member had mentioned; but, at any rate, he was correct in saying that the hon. Member had pointed out that there were obstructions above and obstructions below. On what ground, again he asked, could the uplands be taxed? What did the owners of the uplands do that they had no right to do? If an upland proprietor sent water down upon the lowlands unnecessarily, he ought to be stopped by the legislation, or taxed for the purpose of removing or remedying the evil; but if the owner of the upland used his land in a reasonable and proper manner, he was neither legally, equitably, nor morally liable for the injury caused by the rain-water falling from his property to the lowlands. Did the owner of the uplands divert streams in order to send water into another river? Certainly not; and this was an entirely novel principle of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board. The right hon. Gentleman would have to show the House some conclusive reason why they should go beyond the principle they adopted in 1871. In conclusion, he wished to say one word as to his own position in this matter. He was by no means interested in exempting upland proprietors from taxation, for though he was an upland proprietor himself, he was also a lowland proprietor, and had suffered very much from the evil complained of. He had no objection to a Bill being brought in to remedy these evils; but he did not wish to see the owners of the uplands taxed. He had for many years spent a great deal in banking up the river near which he resided, not only for his own benefit, but for that of his tenants; still, it had never occurred to him to charge any of his tenants, nor to ask his neighbours up above him to contribute towards the cost of the embankments. The rivers were embanked for the benefit of the proprietors, and when the lowlands were improved by these embankments, the rent would be raised; consequently, it was unfair to ask the owners of the uplands to bear part of the expense of that which was to benefit someone else. He hoped the House would not assent to the principle he had condemned.

Mr. DODSON and Mr. STORER rose together, and Mr. SPEAKER called upon the former to continue the debate.

MR. STORER: I wish to move—["Order!"]—I wish to move the adjournment of the debate.

MR. DODSON: I am in possession of the House, and I hope, before I sit down, the hon. Member will be persuaded not to make the Motion he now appears anxious to bring forward. I have stated already the course which the Government propose to adopt, and as this is the second night on which we have discussed the measure, I trust that the House will now be allowed to come to a decision as to whether or not it shall be read a second time. The straight issue has been put before the House that the Bill shall be read a second time this day six months, and the Government is willing to take that issue. After the lengthened debate we have had, I do not propose to detain the House very long. The object of the measure is, as has been stated, to establish, as far as possible, with the consent of the inhabitants of the river basins, one Conservancy Board, which shall have the general control of a river throughout. I say that that is the object of the Bill so far as circumstances will admit, because we cannot disguise from ourselves the fact that on many of our rivers there are different authorities already in existence, and that we cannot replace or dispose of them; but where there are these bodies, there our object would be, at all events, by means of a Conservancy Board, to harmonize their action and supply any defects in the continuous management of the river. Then, as I have said before, this is an enabling Bill; it does not impose anything on the localities. The measure is one giving power to the inhabitants and the local authorities to help themselves and to establish a Conservancy Board for the management of their river, if they wish it; and the Bill is purposely framed to be of so elastic a character as to give to them in each river basin power of framing a scheme suited to their own wants and wishes. That is the general object of the Bill; and I must say this—which I think will be generally admitted—that after the evidence which has been taken by the House of Lords, upon which the Report of the Committee was founded, and after the experience we have all had of what has taken place in the country, few people will be found hardy enough to deny that some kind of power is wanted for the better management of many of the rivers of the country. The Bill has been very much criticized in its details. It is essentially a Bill of detail, and it is for that reason that I suggest that it should be referred to a Select Committee, so that each of its clauses may be submitted to examination. The hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Baldwyn Leighton), and some other hon. Members, have asked me this—"Will you give us an assurance if it goes to a Select Committee, this thing and the other thing will be open to consideration?" I have no power to say what shall be open to consideration when the measure is before a Select Committee, and when it is before the Committee of the Whole House. Of course, every clause and every line and every word of it will be open to discussion. The hon. Gentleman, who moved the rejection of the Bill, said—"You are embarrassing," or, "You may embarrass under the powers of this Bill the various Unions which are parts of different counties;" and he said—"You have not one valuation basis; therefore, you will make the rating unequal." I admit the force of my hon. Friend's argument, and I am glad to hear it from him. The valuation is unequal in the country. I should be glad to see it reformed, and I hope those who make the objection I refer to will support the proposal that may be made for bringing about such reform. But it is as well to consider this point—that under the Bill nothing can be done until application has been made for a Provisional Order, and that Order has been obtained. That will take another year to obtain, and in the meantime, if fortune favours us, we may pass a Valuation Bill. The hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Stanhope) raised another point. He said the Fens in which he was interested were not protected. If my hon. Friend will look at Clause 4, and Clause 6, and red-letter Clause 3, which follows Clause 19, he will find that careful precautions have been taken. Expensive works have been executed in the Fens, and it is quite possible that further burdens ought not to be cast upon them. These clauses were inserted very much with a view to this particular case. Then he does not oppose the second reading, but wishes the Bill to be referred to a Committee in order that evidence may be taken. I cannot assent to that proposition. The evidence upon which this Bill is founded is that which has been taken already by the House of Lords; but it must be remembered that before a Provisional Order can be passed, applying the powers given under this Bill to any river basin, evidence must be taken in the locality by means of a local inquiry; then the schemes afterwards founded on that local inquiry must be embodied in the Provisional Order, and if the Order then becomes opposed, it must be referred to a Committee, before which evidence is taken like a Private Bill. That is far better than any general evidence that can be taken on a Bill of this kind, because the evidence before the local inquiry and before the Committee will have regard to the circumstances and necessities of the particular river. I do not know that I need take up every point of objection to the Bill — some have been already answered by other speakers; but the hon. Baronet said there were no exemptions under the Bill. I pointed out that there are powers of exemption, in referring to the speech of the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire. These powers apply to highlands or lowlands; and the clause provides that any lands which it appears ought not to be subject to rates, or not to the same extent as other lands, may be exempted. Then, again, the argument assumes that everything to be done under the Bill was simply the improvement of the lands of certain proprietors; and it is stated that the Bill is only for private improvements. Upon that I must ask the attention of the House to Clause 6 and to Clause 20. Under these clauses there is power provided through the Provisional Order, or through the Conservancy Board, by which, where works are specially improvement works for the benefit of private owners, the cost shall be charged to those private owners, and not to the district. The fact is, that the management of a great river extends far beyond private interests and the property of one or two riparian proprietors. It is a matter of common interest to all the inhabitants of the river basin. At all events, it is so with certain limited exceptions, and as such I must say that I do not see that there is any injustice in providing, with proper safeguards, for the management and control of a river by means of a rate levied over the whole or an extended portion of the basin. No doubt, there are different interests—some more direct than others; but if the circumstances seem to require it, powers are given for the exemption of lands wholly or partially. Some allusion has been made to county boards. I am as anxious as anyone can be to see a good system of county government established; but I must point out that county boards do not meet the case of the rivers, because, if it is desirable as far as possible to secure uniform and continuous management of a river, you cannot confine the board of management to the representatives of one county, for many rivers flow through different counties, and, in many instances, form the boundaries of counties; and it would be impossible to work that satisfactorily by means of county boards. Now, Sir, the Bill has been compared with the Bill introduced by the late Government. It is founded on the same lines—the same Report as the other Bill—but it mainly differs from the Bill of the Duke of Richmond and Gordon in this way. It aims at making the boards directly elective boards; whereas the former Bill constituted boards partly of life members, partly of members indirectly elected. Then, whereas the last Bill divided the entire cost between owners and occupiers, the present Bill aims at charging the bulk of the rate on the owners and those who have permanent interests. Accordingly, the scheme suggested is that the cost of construction of new works, and the cost of improvements, shall be charged entirely upon owners, while the cost of the current expenses of maintenance of existing works shall be divided between owners and occupiers. The reason why we call particular attention to that is this—I do not know what may be the view of other hon. Members, but I think in our system of rating in England we have not sufficiently attended to the advantages or disadvantages of placing some of our rates upon owners, and dividing others between owners and occupiers. That is the practice both in Scotland and in Ireland; and it is a practice which might, perhaps, be adopted with advantage in this country. It is difficult in the case of old rates to make a change of that kind; but when we are providing that people may rate themselves for a new purpose, it is worthy of consideration whether you should not give them power to proceed in that manner. At this time of the evening I will not detain the House; and after the discussions which have taken place in this House, and in the House of Lords, and considering that this is not the first time a Bill of this kind has been discussed in Parliament, and, further, that the Report of the Committee has been in the hands of Members for several years, I do not see that it is necessary to continue this debate any longer. I hope that we shall agree to the second reading; at all events, we might take an issue on the challenge of the hon. Member, and if we succeed, as I hope we shall, in passing the second reading, allow it to be referred to a Select Committee to go through the clauses, and in Committee of the Whole

House, or on the Motion for going into Committee, further discuss it in the shape in which it comes from the Select Committee.

Mr. STORER thought the very importance of the subject was the very reason why the Government should not push the Bill through at that late hour. Hon. Members on that side of the House had had no opportunity of speaking, and if they spoke then their speeches would not reach their constituencies. Many county Members on both sides of the House were ignorant that the Bill was to be taken then, and, in consequence, they were absent. He, therefore, moved the adjournment of the debate.

Mr. BRODRICK seconded the Motion, observing that there had only been two and a-half hours or two hours and three-quarters of discussion on the Bill; and, therefore, he hoped the House would consent to the adjournment.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Storer.*)

Mr. GORST felt sure the Government would not object to the adjournment, for the debate had not lasted long, considering the importance of the subject. The last three speeches had been made by Members on the Government side of the House, and Members on the other side had not had an opportunity of speaking, and it was quite clear that the House was not then in the frame of mind to continue the discussion. There could not be a more conclusive proof of that than the speech of the hon. Member for Cardiganshire (Mr. Pugh). It was an interesting and effective speech, and yet many hon. Members on his own side of the House, who were his own political and personal Friends, were so anxious to go to bed that they could not listen to his speech with patience. If they treated their own Friends in that way, would they listen to any Member on the other side of the House? There were several Members who had a right to an opportunity of speaking, and he hoped the Government would not object to the adjournment.

Mr. NEWDEGATE reminded the House that the principle of this Bill was identical with the principle of the Bill of the late Government for which they all voted. He was strongly in favour of that Bill, and every objection he had heard to this Bill was an objection to details. He had not heard a single attempt to oppose the principle of the Bill; and the Government had pointed out that there would be another opportunity for discussion when the Bill was referred to a Select Committee. He rejoiced that it was to be referred to a Select Committee, for in the district he represented, though it was on the Hog's Back of England, the floods of the river Tame were very dangerous, charged as the water was with the filth of Birmingham. The floods were due to the railways and to the action of the canals which confined the water, and also to the mills, and the towns were literally in danger. Their sanitary condition was imperilled through the want of such a Bill as this; and he concurred with hon. Members on that side of the House in appealing to the House to confirm the principle which had the sanction of the Front Benches on both sides of the House.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT hoped the hon. Member (Mr. Pell) would not prevent the House coming to a decision upon the second reading of the Bill. It was understood the Bill would be further discussed at a later stage, and if hon. Members would only consider, they must know they were now coming to the end of the first volume of the Parliamentary Session, and that there was a very great deal of work to be done. Surely, after a portion of two nights had been given up to the debate upon a Bill of this kind, it would not be reasonable to further postpone the second reading.

Mr. PELL did not wish to take any part in obstruction; but he knew that in the case of this particular Bill there were several hon. Gentlemen desirous of speaking upon the principle involved. Twenty minutes past 1 o'clock in the morning was certainly not a proper time to take the second reading of a Bill of this importance.

Mr. SCLATER-BOOTH hoped the Government would allow the debate to be adjourned. It was improper to bring up for second reading at this time of the morning a measure to which a whole night ought to be devoted. As there were a number of Gentlemen on both sides of the House desirous of speaking on the second reading, and as this was one of the few Departmental Bills of the Session, it was only reasonable they should have the measure properly and fully debated.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 51; Noes 118: Majority 67.—(Div. List, No. 181.)

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR had no intention of opposing the Bill; he should vote for it, because he regarded it as a very excellent measure. But he noticed, with respect to it, what he had observed in connection with a great many good measures. This was a Bill which had been prepared with great care and skill; but it would seem that those who had drawn it up had an idea that river basins and water sheds were only to be found, and drainage was only necessary, in that portion of the United Kingdom called England. There were river basins and water sheds in Ireland, and there was a necessity for drainage in Ireland at least as great as that in England. Not only on account of the water power which the rivers represented, but also on account of the interests of navigation and agriculture which were involved in the question of drainage in Ireland, it was only fair the Government should give them some assurance that the provisions of the Bill should be extended to Ireland. If the Government would do that, he believed he could answer for the support of all his Colleagues from Ireland. It appeared to them exceedingly hard that they should have to support measures which they recognized as good, but from the advantages of which they were excluded. Nothing could be more easy than to extend the provisions of the Bill to Ireland, and there was no country which would be benefited as Ireland would be by such a scheme as that now proposed for England. To show how easy it would be to confer an immense benefit upon Ireland by some such scheme as this, he would mention that the summit altitude of the Shannon at Mullingar was only 320 feet above the level of the sea; that the summit altitude of the Grand Canal was only 270 feet above the level of the sea, and where it joined the Shannon in the West and joined the River Suir, which carried off its water into the sea, near Dublin, in the East, it was only some 167 feet above the level of the sea. These figures represented a fall of 4 feet per mile. The running off of the waters was, therefore, exceedingly slow, and to this was to be attributed the flooding of large tracts of level land. He was astonished to see the hon. Member for Bedfordshire, who last year proclaimed his interest in Queen's County, so oblivious of the condition of things in Ireland—not only in Queen's County, but in King's County and Kildare. In these counties thousands of acres were under water for weeks and months every year, hundred of thousands of crops were destroyed, and enormous misery and disease was, as a consequence, suffered by the people. If the basins of the Shannon and Suir were largely extended, and if some such conservancy authority was established for the river basins in Ireland as in England, an enormous boon would be conferred on that country. He therefore trusted they would be able to obtain from the Government an assurance that they would consent to the extension of the provisions of the Bill to Ireland.

LORD FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, there was only one objection to give such an assurance, and that was that the Bill was founded upon the very lines of an Irish Act — the Arterial Drainage (Ireland) Act.

MR. HEALY asked, if it was not a fact that the works under the Arterial Drainage Act had been suspended by a Treasury Minute, and that the loans had been stopped?

LORD FREDERICK CAVENDISH: Certainly not.

Question put, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

The House *divided*: — Ayes 118; Noes 42: Majority 76. — (Div. List, No. 182.)

Main Question put, and *agreed to*.

Bill read a second time.

MR. DODSON: I have to propose now that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee, and I hope that the House will agree to refer the Bill of my hon. Friend the Member for Bedford (Mr. Magniac) to the same Committee.

MR. A. H. BROWN said, he had a Motion on the Paper, after the Bill was referred to a Select Committee, to move an Instruction to the Committee in reference to the duties and powers at present exercised by Boards of Conservators under the Salmon Fishery Acts; but he presumed that he would be able to make that Motion on the nomination of the Committee.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he should also desire to move an Instruction to the Select Committee that they should consider the advisability of extending the provisions of the Bill to Ireland.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member does not propose to move that Amendment now?

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: No, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: It will be open for the hon. Member to move an Instruction to the Committee on the nomination of the Committee.

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill *committed* to a Select Committee.

WAYS AND MEANS.—REPORT.

Resolutions [4th April] *reported.*

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS wished to put a Question to Her Majesty's Government, which, probably, the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for the Home Department, or one of the Lords of the Treasury, would be able to answer. He believed that his right hon. Friend (Sir Stafford Northcote), alluding to the question of the second reading of the Irish Land Bill, had expressed the strong feeling entertained on that side of the House, and, he believed, on the other side too, that the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government should undertake not to proceed with the second reading on Monday the 25th, directly after the Holidays. It would obviously be a great inconvenience to Members coming up on the first day of the House re-assembling, and, no doubt, those Members who did come up would be glad to consult with each other before committing themselves to any particular line of action. He, therefore, hoped that the Prime Minister would agree to the general wish that on the first meeting of the House after the Easter Holidays a matter of this great importance should not be taken?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: In answer to the right hon. Gentleman, all I can say at present is that my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister will be here at 2 o'clock this day, when the House meets, and what the right hon. Gentleman has said will be conveyed to him. I would prefer that the opportunity of answering the Question should be reserved for my right hon. Friend.

Resolutions *agreed to.*

Ordered, That a Bill be brought in upon the said Resolutions, and that Mr. Playfair, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Lord Frederick Cavendish do prepare and bring it in.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 136.]

TRAMWAYS (IRELAND) ACTS AMENDMENT (*re-committed*) BILL.

(*Major Nolan, Mr. Corry, Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Mr. Gray, Mr. Tottenham, Mr. O'Shea, Mr. Collins, Mr. Litton.*)

[BILL 102.] COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clauses 1 to 6 *agreed to.*

Clause 7 (Alterations of section six in the Act of 1860 and section four of Act of 1871.)

Mr. M. BROOKS said, he entertained a strong objection to the clause. It proposed to repeal several Acts of Parliament which had been passed between the years 1868 and 1871; but the Committee would be surprised when he told them that it was proposed by this clause to enable Tramway Companies to carry tramways over ordinary roads at any level, even at a level 5, 6, or 7 inches higher than the level of the road, and thus render the roadway almost incapable of ordinary traffic. When the Bill was before a Committee, General Hutchinson, of the Board of Trade, stated that the laying of rails on the roads in this way would be productive of the highest inconvenience, and would prevent the ordinary traffic of the roads being carried on. Under these circumstances, and at that late hour, he submitted that the Committee ought not to pass this clause. The measure had been brought forward almost without Notice, and he firmly believed that if the opinion of the House had been taken upon it, it would have been rejected. He would, therefore, move that the Chairman report Progress, and ask leave to sit again.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. M. Brooks.*)

Mr. TOTTENHAM said, the Bill had been referred to a Select Committee, by whom the questions raised had been fully considered. It was considered that sufficient precautions would be taken to meet the objections of the kinds urged by the hon. Member opposite, by requiring that the consent of the Grand Juries and the Lord Lieutenant in Council should be obtained, and they had altered and amended the clause with that view. He trusted the clause would be allowed to pass.

Mr. M. BROOKS did not think that a Bill that provided for the turning of ordinary roads into railroads should be allowed to pass at that hour (2.25). If the Bill passed, it would reduce by one-half the width of every road upon which the tramway was proposed to be constructed.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Clause *agreed to.*

Remaining Clause *agreed to.*

Bill *reported,* without Amendment; to be read the third time *To-morrow.*

CHURCH PATRONAGE BILL.—[Bill 30.]

(*Mr. E. Stanhope, Mr. Albert Grey, Mr. Stanley Leighton, Mr. Stuart-Wortley.*)

SECOND READING. ADJOURNED DEBATE.

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [6th April], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

Mr. ILLINGWORTH said, he had noticed that when he was, yesterday, making the observation that the National Church of the country was a great Institution, for the management of which that House was responsible, there came from some parts of the House indications of dissent. He now repeated his opinion that the Established Church of the country was essentially a National Institution for which Parliament was responsible; that the clergy of the Church were also national officers; and that the House was responsible for the management of the Church and for the regulations under which the clergy enjoyed their benefices. If there was any foundation for the statement that the Church was not a National Institution, then he ventured to ask why was that House continually troubled with the affairs of the Church—why were its internal affairs not managed in the same way as the internal affairs of other Churches? It was rather late in the day to hold the opinion that the Church was not a National Institution When the Irish Church Act was carried through Parliament, the Representatives of the people, by a very large majority—with regard to an Institution which held at that time a position identical with that of the Established Church in this country—treated the Irish Church as a National Institution, its officers as public officers, and dealt with it accordingly. If that were so, it was clear that the affairs of the Church of England were affairs that must come under the observation of Parliament, and of which Parliament must take cognizance. He experienced some difficulty in approaching the consideration of this matter, because the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Stanhope) had stated that this was not the actual Bill which would be discussed; that, in the first place, the Bill was to be cut in two, and that, in the next, some of the clauses were to be struck out. It was impossible to say what part of the Bill was really under discussion at that moment, and what part of it was to be postponed to a future occasion; and, therefore, he thought there were objections of the strongest character against assenting to the second reading of the measure. The House should not, blindfold, give its consent to the principle which it embodied. There were several points upon which he desired information. For instance, was it the intention of the Mover of the Bill to provide compensation in view of the important pecuniary interests involved? Again, further explanation was needed with regard to the 17th clause, authorizing exchanges and resignations for pecuniary considerations.

Mr. E. STANHOPE: I stated yesterday that the clause would be withdrawn.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH urged that, although the Bill might have been discussed in "another place," it had not received sufficient consideration in that House, and, therefore, they were not justified in assenting to the principle of a measure of which they knew very little. Notwithstanding that the Bill had been described as a small Bill dealing with a very large question, he should venture to move that, in the opinion of the House, it was inexpedient to pass any measure which gave legal sanction to the sale, under any circumstances, of the right of appointing ministers to parochial or other benefices. Had a Bill embodying that principle been brought before the House, it might have been said that it had a general concurrence of opinion in its favour. But he wished to know why the House was asked, so to speak, to nibble at the question, instead of manfully grappling with it as a whole? The hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire would be obliged to admit that the Bill only touched the fringe of the question, and that it was leaving untouched, and, in fact, renewing, Parliamentary sanction to the sale of advowsons. The National Church of the country was in a somewhat anomalous position. At times its adherents were disposed to assert that it was not a National Institution, and that its management should be confined to those who were its avowed adherents. At other times, and to serve other purposes, it was loudly proclaimed to be the National Church, and that all other Denominations, and all citizens were alike obliged to bow to that fact. He held, in the case of any alteration of the law affecting the Church, that it must be treated as a national question, and that Parliament must be consulted, and that the citizens of the country, whether they belonged to the Church of England, or other religions, or no religious body, were entitled to express an opinion as to what should be the direction of legislation with regard to the National Church. It could not be urged in that House that the measure had received the consideration of the country, or of the Representatives of the people, or that it would not be a departure from sound precedent if it were admitted to a second reading, especially as hon. Members were informed that the Bill would be re-cast immediately afterwards. He regretted very much to stand between hon. Members and their beds at that hour (2.15); but he could plead that the fault did not lie with him. He thought that pressure had been attempted to be brought upon Members of the House in order to force on the carrying of this Bill against which he did not hesitate to protest. Again, the Bill proposed to give increased powers to the Bishops. That, of course, raised a most important question; and if it were laid before the public, he thought there would be found a great majority of the people who held that, so far from giving increased powers to the Bishops, there was deep dissatisfaction with the way they used the power they had already. Take, for instance, the question of patronage. The Archbishop of Canterbury was reported to have said that he regarded Church patronage as a public trust. Nevertheless, they were told that, in exercising the patronage that had fallen to his lot, he had used it largely in favour of his own relatives and friends. The question was one of great importance, and he believed there were strong reasons for believing that the Archbishop committed frequent acts of nepotism in so exercising what he regarded as a public trust. He had received a pamphlet from a clergyman which drew public attention to what the writer considered to be a gross abuse of power on the part of the Archbishop. If these statements were well founded, he, for one, objected to further powers being conferred upon the Bishops. He did not think the Archbishop was alone in the use he made of Church patronage; on the contrary, he believed there were many Bishops who thought they did well in regarding relationship as having the greatest claim upon them for the best offices at their disposal, and that there were many just complaints from the best men in the Church that they were forgotten and thrust aside in favour of the fortunate gentlemen who happened to be relatives and friends of the Bishops and Archbishops. Further, it appeared to him that even if the sale of the right of next presentation were barred by this Bill, there would be the same traffic by evasion as now in the offices of the Church, the only difference being in the way the trust would be exercised by A or B. On these grounds, he thought the House would act rightly in insisting that if there was to be a new Bill much more limited than the one offered for their notice which they were now asked to read a second time at that untimely hour in the morning, it should go through the ordinary stages of a Bill in Parliament. In reality, this measure had made next to no progress, and the more it was known the more objectionable would it appear to people out-of-doors. What was held by the great mass of the people of this country was that the

English Church was gradually approaching Disestablishment. Parliament had disestablished the Irish Church, and when the English Church was dealt with in the same way, Episcopalians would have their freedom—they would have liberty to manage their own affairs; but, in the meantime, they must make up their minds to bear the many inconveniences that an Established Church brought in its train, one of which was this exercise of patronage. The whole question of the sale of advowsons was, he must say, too huge a matter for a private Member to attempt to deal with; but, if that was so, there was little advantage in entering upon the settlement of so small a portion of the subject as the sale of the right to next presentations. It would be useless to deal with this matter until public opinion expressed itself in such a way as to enable Parliament to carry through a measure to terminate an evil under which the Church was groaning. Why could not the larger question be dealt with at once? Would any Member of the House, or any person in the country, say that it was not an evil which ought to be terminated? No. Then, if there were a majority of Members in that House, and a majority of Members in the House of Lords, who deplored the continuance of this system of the purchase and sale of livings in the Church, why did not Parliament undertake the work in real earnest, and deal with the whole evil? Where was opposition to come from? He apprehended it would not come from the Dissenters, but he believed the difficulty lay in the enormous amount of the money value of the advowsons. He wished to ask this question of the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Stanhope). If he was prepared to go the length of this Bill, why should not Parliament go one step farther, and declare patronage to be altogether a matter of trust and not of property? The hon. Member would deal with next presentations, looking upon them as other than property; and he did not propose to give the slightest compensation to those deprived of the right of sale. Clearly, that was interfering with the right of property of the present owners of advowsons. He asked if the hon. Member was entitled, without lying under the imputation of interfering with the sacred rights of property, to take 25, 20, or 10 per cent from the value of advowsons? Did not the principle, once admitted, strike at the root of any claim which might be made by the owners of advowsons in the country? If that was so, the whole thing was settled; because, once this difficulty out of the way, there would be absolute unanimity in the House, and in "another place," in favour of grappling with the question, instead of taking it piecemeal, as the hon. Member proposed to do. There were several great inconveniences in attempting to deal with a matter of this kind at that hour of the morning, and not the least of them was that no reports of the discussion could now appear in the newspapers; and hon. Members had a right to complain, considering the importance of the matter, that at that hour an attempt should be made to push the Bill to another stage. He begged to move the Amendment of which he had given Notice.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the opinion of this House, it is inexpedient to pass any measure which gives legal sanction to the sale under any circumstances of the right of appointing ministers to parochial or other benefices,"—(*Mr. Illingworth,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I entirely agree with what the hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth) has said in respect to the National Church, that every person in the country, and, above all, every Representative of the people, whether he is a member of that Church or not, has a right to express his opinion and to give effect to his views. That is the view the hon. Member for Huddersfield has long entertained on this subject, and, year after year, he has brought forward, with the strong approbation of the Nonconformists, a proposal to remove the scandal in the Church of the sale of next presentations. Churchmen have admitted that the scandal exists, and ought to be redressed. The hon. Member for Bradford says the matter is not dealt with in this Bill, and, technically speaking, that is true; but we had what is equivalent to a second reading discussion on the Bill the other night on the Motion of the hon. Member for Huddersfield. The hon. Member for Huddersfield, in the Resolution he brought forward, practically propounded the second reading of this Bill, in principle——

Mr. ILLINGWORTH: Might I be allowed to explain? The hon. Member for Huddersfield (Mr. Leatham), I believe, dealt with the whole question of the sale of patronage, and did not limit his Motion to the sale of next presentations.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: Certainly, the Resolution the hon. Member for Huddersfield brought forward was mainly, if not entirely, directed to the sale of next presentations. ["No, no!"] I beg pardon; but I think I am right. Now, I have read what, I dare say, a great number of Members have not read—that is, the Report of the Committee—and I am, therefore, entitled to say that I know that the scandals are connected with the sale of next presentations; and, to the best of my recollection, the instances given by the hon. Member for Huddersfield were exclusively of that character. I, therefore, think I am right in saying that, practically, we had the discussion of the second reading of this Bill on the hon. Member's Motion. I will not, at this late hour, argue the question of the difference between the sale of next presentations and advowsons; but, in my opinion, there is a great difference between the two; but, at all events, here is a Bill which promises to do the very thing which, year after year, the hon. Member for Huddersfield has demanded shall be done. The hon. Member for Huddersfield had put on the Paper a Notice of opposition to this Bill; but, since the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire drew his attention to the changes which it is intended to make in the measure, he has removed his Notice. As, then, it is admitted that the Bill is to remove a grievance, and as the hon. Member for Huddersfield has, practically, assented to it, it is only fair and reasonable to ask hon. Members on this side of the House to pass it. The hon. Member for Bradford says there are certain clauses in the Bill giving larger powers to the Bishops; and he, very fairly and properly, from his point of view, objected to those clauses; but, I understand from the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire, that he does not intend to include those clauses into this part of the Bill—[Mr. ILLINGWORTH: This part?]—I mean into the Bill we are now discussing. I understand that all the clauses in question are to go out of the Bill—we have nothing to do with the question whether or no they are to be introduced into another Bill. As I understand it, the present measure is simply one for the sale of next presentations and the abolition of donatives, and one or two strictly collateral and subsidiary matters. That was what my hon. Friend said he was prepared to support; and he gave a pledge—and, if he were here he would say better than I do—that this Bill has plain and simple objects, and contains provisions that have been demanded by the hon. Member for Huddersfield on behalf of the Nonconformists of this country, and that will amend matters connected with the Church that Churchmen have admitted ought to be amended. Under the circumstances, I do hope—for though I entirely appreciate the point of view of the hon. Member for Bradford, I do not think the Bill can be considered as raising any of the great questions which I know he has taken a deep interest in—the House will understand the hon. Member is willing to confine the Bill to the objects stated, and will allow it to be read a second time.

Mr. WILLIS was sorry to address the House at that hour of the morning upon a matter of such great moment to the Church, of which he happened, by virtue of a seat in that House, to be a member of the Governing Body; but he opposed the Bill, not upon the ground that it proposed to abolish the sale of presentations to livings, but because it proposed to substitute a method of appointment in lieu of it, which would prevent that complete reform that was absolutely essential to the due development of spiritual life in the Establishment. He objected to this Bill principally with respect to two matters—first, the formation of the corporate body, which was to have the power of acquiring advowsons and many gifts of various kinds, for the purpose of putting into the hands of a body constituted of the Bishop of the diocese and three or four other persons, whose characters were not strictly defined, the power of appointing to livings to the Church of England—and most of the scandals in the Church of England resulted from the way in which men were appointed to livings; and, secondly, because, without regard to the feelings and opinions of those who worshipped in the Established Church, men could be appointed to discharge spiritual duties who were in no way in sympathy with the people to whom they administered, and who, if a vote of the congregation could be taken, would not for a moment be allowed to discharge those duties. He was not arguing for Disestablishment, and he thought he was as familiar with the grievances of members of the Church of England as any person who happened not to be a communicant, and did not attend its Services. The complaint was not of the sale of livings—many men had bought a living, and had shown themselves useful members of the Church—but the point was, that, entirely in disregard of the principles of the Church of Christ, in the Establishment a man was appointed to discharge offices the duties of which he neither desired nor possessed the required qualification to discharge; and if there was any person whom he would resist to the last having power to appoint a minister of the Church of England, it would be the Bishop of the Establishment, in respect of whose appointment the worldly features of the Establishment were more conspicuous than in any other of its arrangements. In a town with which he was acquainted, there was a Church of England clergyman, a very good man, who was beloved and esteemed by all his congregation. He was an elderly man; and if they were to ask the congregation the thing they most desired, they would say that it was that he might survive his Bishop, who, the moment he retired, by death or otherwise, would appoint a person in his place who might introduce doctrines, teachings, and practices which the congregation abhorred and disliked. It was a monstrous thing to give to one man such power as this, and he (Mr. Willis) would not be a party to the passing of a measure which would gather up in the hands of the Bishop the whole right of presenting to livings in the Church of England. It was disgraceful to call the traffic in livings merely "Simony." It was giving it too good a name. There was nothing so bad in the conduct of Simon; for when Simon saw the gifts which resulted from the possession of the Holy Ghost, he desired to possess it, and when he found he had made a mistake as to the method of acquiring it, he said—"Pray for me that none of these things happen to me." He should be glad to hear that the clergymen in the Church of England prayed at all. ["Oh, oh!"] He would repeat it, for he was perfectly in earnest; and it was immaterial to him whether he pleased those who were listening to him or not. He was speaking, he hoped, under a sense of responsibility, having resolved, as soon as he got into the House, not to argue for Disestablishment merely, but to secure, if possible, for those who loved the doctrines and teachings of the Church of England, and who were its living members, a voice in the management of its affairs, and in the selection of its ministers. Let them sanction this Bill, and it was a further obstacle in the way of reform. Once they got a body, like the Bishop and two or three others, to control the livings of the diocese, there was a new obstacle in the way of true reform in the Church of England. There was an hon. Member who sat on the Bench opposite who practised in the Profession he (Mr. Willis) belonged to—the hon. Member for Mid Lincolshire (Mr. E. Stanhope)—and he had known that hon. Member to be a man desirous of promoting the best interest of the Church of England; but to think that that Bill would ever satisfy this hon. Member's notions of what the Church of Christ ought to receive, was the regret he (Mr. Willis) felt. Let them think for a moment what the Bill proposed to do. It proposed to determine the methods by which persons should be appointed; and the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire thought the interest of the Church of England would be met if they could appoint a man to discharge the duties of pastor against whom they could not charge any one of the three offences that could preclude him from holding a living, and who was not incapable of reading the Lesson; and the hon. Member proposed that before this person could be appointed, two or three people should sit to inquire whether he was physically fit. He urged that members of the Church of England should have the liberty which the Church to which he belonged enjoyed, of selecting their own pastors, and that this most improper practice of allowing a man to buy an advowson and present some other man to it, should be abolished, and the life of the Church be thereby increased. He was astonished that the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire, who was a true Churchman, should even have thought of legalizing such transactions. Nothing, he believed, could so effectually prevent Disestablishment as the giving of self-government to the members of the Church. The present state of the Church was creating many sects within it, and unless this system of creating divisions was done away with, nothing could save it from being freed from the control of the State. In order that men who were interested in the question, and who were resolved to discuss it upon purely Christian grounds, and to show the injustice that had been done to spiritual life in England from the creation of the Establishment till now, might have an opportunity of discussing it in the House, he begged to move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Willis.*)

Mr. E. STANHOPE said, he hoped the hon. and learned Member would withdraw the Motion, believing that he could set at rest the difficulties in his hon. and learned Friend's mind. The hon. and learned Member, perhaps, had not quite followed what the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary had said as to the procedure to be adopted in regard to this Bill. What was intended was this. He accepted, a few days ago, a proposal made by the Government that the House should, *pro formâ*, go into Committee, and then cut the Bill into two parts, the first to contain the proposals mentioned by the Home Secretary, and all the rest to be put into the second. Every single proposal to which the hon. and learned Member had referred was contained in the second part, and was distinct from the first part, upon which the Prime Minister had said he would look with special favour. Therefore, he thought the hon and learned Member might rest assured that the points to which he had alluded would not come under discussion in the first part of the Bill, and he hoped the hon. and learned Member would not be disposed to continue his opposition. The last thing intended was to limit discussion on this Bill; all that was intended was that after the discussion the other day on the Resolution of the hon. Member for Huddersfield (Mr. Leatham), when a general feeling was expressed as to the desirability of pushing forward this Session certain clauses of the Bill dealing with the urgent portions of this matter, the House should have the earliest possible debate on the amended Bill, and should lose no chance of effecting a reform which every man in the House really desired to have carried out.

Mr. THOROLD ROGERS stated that he should vote with the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire either on the second reading or on the adjournment. He did not say that there had not been in the history of the Church of England instances in which Bishops had appointed bad men; but he could not look with approval on the alternative of his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Willis)—namely, popular election. In his own borough there was a popular election going on at the present time; there were committee meetings—he believed in public-houses—there was all the usual machinery——

Mr. WILLIS, interrupting, said, that was farthest from his thoughts. He only proposed that those who elected should be such as had joined themselves to the Church and become communicants.

Mr. THOROLD ROGERS thought that if the suggestion of the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope), which he thought an extremely judicious one, was got rid of, then we might get the popular machinery such as was referred to; but he was not persuaded that that was a better alternative. In his opinion, if the clergy were nominated by the Bishops, and the Bishops had some such power in regard to the benefices as the Benchers had over the lawyers, we should have better ministers, and get rid of a great deal of rubbish. If the Bishops had greater power in regard to discipline, he believed an ancient sore would be removed, and a better result would be arrived at than was now obtained by the machinery of the law.

Mr. MONK observed, that the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire said the Bill might be cut into two parts, and that he did not wish to avoid discussion;

but as the House did not know which part of the Bill was to be pressed forward, he would recommend the hon. Member to withdraw the Bill. It would be easy enough then to bring in a new Bill, which, he presumed, would contain only two or three clauses. He might bring in two Bills; but if this was not to form two Bills, but one Bill—[Mr. E. Stanhope: This Bill cut into two parts.] He understood that by the Forms of the House the hon. Member had no power to cut the Bill into two parts after the second reading had been carried. At all events, he himself wished to have an opportunity of expressing his opinion of it before that operation was performed. He agreed with very much of what had fallen from the hon. and learned Member (Mr. Willis), and he did not wish to give his vote in favour of the second reading without having an opportunity of discussing so important a measure.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS: I hope the hon. and learned Member for Colchester (Mr. Willis) will withdraw his opposition and allow us to divide on the Main Question. This matter is not now brought forward for the first time; it is 10 years since the House first passed a Bill upon the subject. If the hon. and learned Member for Colchester opposes this he must take the responsibility, and I must throw the responsibility upon him of rejecting this measure, which, in former years, we supported. I entirely approve of the course my right hon. Friend has taken. It is quite in the power of the Committee, if the House gives it the power, to divide the Bill into two parts, one of which, I hope, will be passed in the course of the present Session.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 23; Noes 62: Majority 39.—(Div. List, No. 183.)

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. EVANS WILLIAMS begged to move that the House do now adjourn. He had never taken part in any obstructive Motion; but he did not think it was right that a Bill of this kind should be considered and discussed at that hour of the morning (3 o'clock). Many hon. Members who were now forcing on the present measure had strongly insisted upon the adjournment of the debate on the Bill which was last before the House, because it was felt that at such an hour it could not receive adequate discussion. They had now been for more than an hour considering the present measure, amid the impatience of hon. Members opposite; and because the hon. Member for Gloucester (Mr. Monk) expressed his surprise at the course which was being taken, he was at once classed by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross) with the opponents of the Bill. It was impossible to discuss the measure fairly at that hour of the morning; and he would, therefore, move the adjournment of the House.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. Evans Williams.*)

Mr. E. STANHOPE wished to point out that the other day there was a very long discussion upon the Motion of the hon. Member for Huddersfield (Mr. E. Leatham), and a very substantial decision was arrived at upon the main portions of the question involved in the present Bill. It must be perfectly understood by hon. Members opposite that it was these main portions only that it was intended to proceed with. He hoped, therefore, that the hon. Member for Radnor (Mr. Evans Williams) would not persevere with his Motion for the adjournment of the House, but that he would allow a division to be taken upon the Main Question.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH rose to correct a misapprehension on the part of the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Stanhope). The hon. Member for Huddersfield (Mr. E. Leatham), in his Motion the other day, assailed the whole question of the sale of patronage, including that of advowsons; and it was altogether a mistake to assume for a moment that by assenting to a more limited Amendment he was insuring for himself the support of a large body of the Members of that House and of the country. It was felt that this limited Amendment only dealt with the fringe of the question, and that by manifesting a proper amount of courage it would be perfectly feasible to deal with the whole subject. It was altogether a misapprehension to suppose that the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire had received any sanction from hon. Members on that side of the House who were indisposed to the traffic in livings, for the limited proposal which he now made. His (Mr. Illingworth's) own opinion was that the hon. Member would make more progress by withdrawing the present Bill and introducing another, informing the House first what the nature of the provisions was which he proposed to insert in the other Bill. What the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire now asked the House to do was to assent to the second reading of a Bill of 17 clauses; whereas, in reality, the Bill to be presented to them subsequently, and which they would be asked to accept, was a Bill of three or four clauses only. If that were the case, he contended that it was an unusual and an unreasonable proceeding to call upon the House at that hour of the morning to accept a Bill presented to them under such circumstances. He certainly hoped that all the powers of obstruction hon. Members on that side were able to exercise would be exhausted before they would consent to adopt the course suggested by the hon. Member, and he would appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary not to lend his assistance to a proceeding so extremely distasteful to Members on that side of the House, and which had so little to recommend it. It was felt by himself and his hon. Friends that if they yielded the point now, instead of reading the Bill which the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire had introduced, they would in reality be consenting to read one which was altogether different, and in regard to the provisions of which they knew nothing. There was one point more to which he wished to advert. When his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Willis) spoke, as he had done, in proper terms against what he termed the principle of popular election, he (Mr. Illingworth) did not think any hon. Member would suppose that that principle was offered as an alternative. What would happen if the Bill was read a second time? They would be precisely where they were at this moment. He should be sorry to see the Church of England go through the degradation of having to resort to popular election; but it would, in reality, only be applying further the principle governing the Established Church at the present moment—namely, that the people should not be debarred from a share in the management of its affairs. What was the Church of England contrasted with a sect? The Church consisted of those who were willing and those who were unwilling members. The willing and the unwilling were bound together by Acts of Parliament, and so long as those Acts remained they must permit the interference of all. Only the other day a clergyman, pleading on behalf of the funds of the Church Pastoral Aid Society, stated that in a district in the East of London there was a population of 60,000 inhabitants, and that 57,000 out of the 60,000 did not attend any place of worship at all. Yet, according to law, the whole of these 57,000 were members of the Church of England, and could not be deprived of the right of interfering in her affairs. His hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Willis) had erroneously spoken of them as the "Governors" of the Church of England; but, undoubtedly, they had the right of interfering in her affairs and in sending Members to legislate for the Church in the House of Commons. He was compelled to acknowledge that this was a most undesirable condition of things for any Christian Church to be placed in; but he believed there was only one remedy for it. When the Church invited or accepted the position of an Establishment, it placed itself under the power of those who, if not absolutely hostile to its communion, were, at any rate, indifferent. He further urged that no Christian Church could be in a position to discharge its duties to the people which had bartered away its freedom. That was the present position of the Church of England. [Mr. R. N. FOWLER: Oh!] He did not at all wonder at the impatience of the hon. Member for the City of London. It was rather an illustration of the way in which any discussion of this kind was received. The hon. Member must, however, allow him to say that he was stating the objections which he entertained to the present Bill, and those objections went to the very root of any Church Establishment. What he urged was, that for better or for worse, the inconveniences of the Church must be borne so long as it remained a National Establishment. When its adherents took the management of the affairs of the Church into their own hands, they would be in the position of the Disestablished Church in Ireland, which now managed its own affairs without any interference or aid from the State. Upon these grounds, he thought they were not called upon to read the Bill a second time—neither upon the ground of the form in which it was proposed to take the Bill, nor in regard to the details which the measure involved.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER said, he could not forget that the hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth), who had just sat down, was, in former years, conspicuous for his envenomed hatred of the Church of England.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH rose to Order. He wished to ask if the hon. Member was entitled to use any such expression towards another hon. Member, that he had displayed envenomed hatred towards the Church of England? He entirely disclaimed any such intention or desire, and by way of explanation he would say that, personally, he should not care if every individual in England was an Episcopalian.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER said, he would substitute the words hostility towards the Church of England.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH: To the Church Establishment; that is all.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER said, the manifest object of the action of the hon. Member was to prevent any reform of the Church of England at all; while it was the object of the Bill to introduce reforms that were much needed.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 23; Noes 56: Majority 33.—(Div. List, No. 184.)

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. BRIGGS said, he did not think it unkind to hon. Members to interfere between them and any debate which might follow; and he had, therefore, risen for the purpose of moving that the debate be now adjourned. Hon. Members opposite must have seen that the Nonconformist Members of that House took a great interest in this question. But many of them had gone away under the impression that the question would not be brought on. This was unfortunate, because, as hon. Members were aware, when questions that concerned the Nonconformists did come on in that House, they usually took very good care to be present. He might say, further, that hon. Members on that side did not mind stopping up until any hour of the morning when the cause was a good one; but they thought it was too much for the Front Bench to keep them there for a considerable time unnecessarily, when they might be enjoying that repose to which they were legitimately entitled. He trusted that after another division or two, they might be able to bring the debate to a conclusion. [An hon. Member: Obstruction.] He quite accepted the word. He gathered from the other side of the House that there had been some obstruction; but if the debate had been allowed to terminate a short time ago, they would never have had to listen to that cry. He hoped the debate would now be allowed to terminate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned." —(*Mr. Briggs.*)

Mr. E. STANHOPE remarked, that after the kind of opposition with which the Bill had been met, it was perfectly useless for him to persevere in the attempt to get the Bill read a second time that night. It was right, however, that the House and the country should know the position in which he was placed. A member of the Church of England, supported by the whole of the Church of England Members, and by many Nonconformists, had brought in a Bill for the purpose of reforming certain grave abuses in connection with Church patronage, and his endeavour to carry it to a successful issue had been met with every obstacle by a certain small section of the Nonconformist Members, and by the hon. Member for Gloucester (Mr. Monk). Never again would they be entitled, in any subsequent debates upon Church Patronage, to allege that an honest effort had not been made to deal with its abuses.

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD denied that he had opposed the Bill. He had voted for the adjournment of the debate and the adjournment of the House, in view of the Motion of the hon. Member for Bradford being proceeded with at that late hour.

Mr. MONK said, the speech just delivered by the hon. Member for Mid

Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope) was one of the most monstrous he had ever heard. The hon. Member had charged him, in concert with Dissenters in that House, with opposing the Bill. He had done nothing of the sort. He had not said one word against the Bill, but had merely stated his desire to know what part was to be preserved and what part was to be rejected. There was a good deal in the Bill which he entirely approved, and he should not have voted against the Bill had it gone to a division. He wished to know whether the parts of the Bill to which he took strong objection were to be preserved or not?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT thought it better that the debate should not be continued. The hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire had agreed to the Motion for adjournment, and, on the whole, he thought it would be best to accept that position.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER reminded the House, in reply to the remarks of the hon. Member for Gloucester (Mr. Monk), that the hon. Member had a Notice down calling attention to the crowded state of the Order Book, and indicating certain Motions which he intended to move in consequence. Among other things, he proposed to give certain facilities to private Members for bringing their Bills before the House. The House would probably remember, when his Motion came on, the kind of opposition he had given to this very important Bill introduced by the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow,* at Two of the clock.

AGRICULTURAL TENANTS' COMPENSATION BILL.—[Bill 10.]

(*Mr. Chaplin, Mr. James Cowan, Mr. J. C. Lawrance, Mr. Birkbeck.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."—(*Mr. Chaplin.*)

Mr. CHAPLIN said, if the House would agree to the Motion for going into Committee, he would not proceed any further that night.

Mr. M'LAGAN said, the principle of the Bill had been generally approved; but as the House was so burdened with Business, he thought the Bill ought to be referred to a Select Committee.

Amendment proposed, to leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "the Bill be committed to a Select Committee,"—(*Mr. M'Lagan,*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. CHAPLIN said, although, on the whole, the proposal of the hon. Member for Linlithgow was not one which he should have preferred, it was not unreasonable. The Bill undoubtedly dealt with a serious question, and he could understand that many Members should think it ought to be referred to a Select Committee. Under those circumstances, he should not oppose the Motion of the hon. Member.

Sir THOMAS ACLAND said, he had also a Bill relating to this subject, which, instead of being placed before the House that day, had, without any arrangement on his part, been deferred till a later day.

Mr. COURTNEY said, the proposal to refer the Bill to a Select Committee had come upon the House very suddenly. In the absence of any more responsible Member of the Government, he thought they were hardly in a position to enter into an agreement to refer the Bill to a Select Committee; and, therefore, in order to avoid misunderstanding, he should move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Courtney.*)

Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 36; Noes 25: Majority 11.—(Div. List, No. 185.)

Debate *adjourned* till *Monday* 25th April.

MOTIONS.

BANKRUPTCY BILL.

MOTION FOR LEAVE.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the Law of Bankruptcy."—(*Mr. Hibbert.*)

Debate arising;

Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow,* at Two of the clock.

SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE.

Resolved, That whenever the House shall meet at Two of the clock, the Sitting of the House shall be held subject to the Resolutions of the House of the 30th day of April 1869.—(*Mr. Hibbert.*)

House adjourned at a quarter before Four o'clock in the morning.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 8*th April*, 1881.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Elementary Education Provisional Order Confirmation (London) * (68); Elementary Education Provisional Order Confirmation (Clay Lane) * (69); Inclosure Provisional Order (Wibsey Slack and Low Moor Commons) * (71); Army Alternative Punishment * (72).

Report—Sea Fisheries (Clam and Bait Beds) * (53).

Royal Assent—Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual) [44 *Vict.* c. 9]; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Clonakilty, &c.) [44 *Vict.* c. iii.]

THE MINISTRY—RESIGNATION OF THE DUKE OF ARGYLL.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL: My Lords, I have a few words to address to the House of the nature of a personal, and, I am sorry to say, a very painful, explanation. My Lords, I have resigned the Office which I have held in Her Majesty's Government, and that resignation has been accepted by the Queen. It is usual for a Minister, under such circumstances, to give some explanation in Parliament of the causes for the course which he has taken. There are, however, some great difficulties, and, indeed, insuperable difficulties, in the way of my giving, on the present occasion, any explanation which can be really satisfactory to your Lordships or to myself. My differences with my Colleagues concern—and concern only—a measure which is now before the other House of Parliament; and, quite obviously, it would be improper for me now, and in your Lordships' House, to enter upon the discussion of that Bill. I can only, therefore, say in the very general terms that whilst I approve and heartily support every measure which can reasonably be taken to increase the number of owners of land in Ireland, I am opposed to measures which tend to destroy ownership altogether, by depriving it of the conditions which are necessary to the exercise of its functions. My Lords, it has been one of the professed objects of the Liberal Party for many years to get rid, as much as possible, of those restrictions which constitute what is called "limited ownership" in land. My opinion is, that the scheme of the Government will tend to paralyze the ownership of land in Ireland by placing it, for all time to come, under new fetters and limitations, under which it is not placed in any other civilized country in the world. Under this scheme neither the landlord nor the tenant will be owner. In Ireland, ownership will be in commission, or in abeyance. My Lords, I regard this result as injurious to the agricultural industry of any country, and especially injurious to a country in the condition of Ireland. I am not able to develop this opinion, or to defend it now; but I trust, at least, it will be recognized by your Lordships as an opinion which represents an objection fundamental in its character, and affecting, more or less directly, several leading proposals of the Government. Holding the opinion I have indicated of the Government scheme, I felt I could not, as an honest man, be responsible for recommending that scheme, as a whole, to the adoption of Parliament. My Lords, I have only further to say that I have taken this step with deep regret, on account of the separation which it makes between myself and my noble Friends near me, and especially the separation which it makes between myself and my right hon. Friend at the head of the Government. My Lords, I have had the honour of a close political connection with my right hon. Friend now for the long period of 29 years—a connection on my part of ever increasing affection and respect. Nothing but an absolute sense of public duty, in relation to a question of immense and far-reaching consequence, could have compelled me to take the step which I now most reluctantly communicate to your Lordships.

TURKEY — SIR A. H. LAYARD, LATE H.M. AMBASSADOR AT THE PORTE.

ADDRESS FOR PAPERS.

LORD **STRATHEDEN AND CAMPBELL**, in rising to call attention to the recent Correspondence upon Turkey, and to move for the despatches which explain the withdrawal of Sir Henry Layard from the Embassy at Constantinople, said: My Lords, the Notice I have to bring on to-night relates chiefly to the foreign policy of Her Majesty's Government, of which much appears in the Correspondence I refer to. It has been deferred during the absence of the noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. But it is not so much directed against him as might be possibly imagined. We are too much inclined in ordinary language to connect the Secretary of State exclusively with everything which occurs in foreign policy, as if he was an autocrat who swayed it. It is forgotten to how many other forces he may be possibly accountable. It might, indeed, be easily perceived by referring to a volume which a Member of this House has recently produced, the diary of the late Lord Ellenborough. It is there seen how little influence on foreign policy even so eminent and gifted a Secretary of State as the late Lord Dudley usually exerted. In one capital of Europe, at this moment, the whole diplomatic world would laugh at the idea of the Secretary of State having any great responsibility for the affairs of his Department. My Lords, the Blue Books relate to a variety of subjects—Ottoman finance, the Montenegrin Frontier, and the condition of Eastern Roumelia—from which important lessons are derivable. On the condition of Eastern Roumelia it is important for anyone to see what Colonel Wilson has written in No. 19 of 1880, page 139. But the only despatch I need refer to more particularly is that which bears directly on the Motion. It is in No. 7 of 1880, page 8. It is a despatch from Lord Granville to Sir Henry Layard expressing the greatest satisfaction with his conduct, notifying that leave of absence has been granted to him, and that Mr. Goschen has been appointed on a special mission. None of the Blue Books explain his final disappearance. None of them point out in what manner the original intention, as announced by the despatch which is before us, was abandoned. On my part, there is no prejudice against Mr. Goschen, whose financial services in Egypt, in common with many persons, I appreciate. I happen to have no acquaintance with Sir Henry Layard, who, as regards this proceeding, is entirely irresponsible. He is the only one, in a long series, who have held his recent post, from Lord Stratford de Redcliffe downwards, to whom I have not had the opportunity of listening upon the Eastern Question. Now, on these grounds, the recall of Sir Henry Layard, against the positive design the Government had indicated, seemed to be impolitic. His particular connection with the East as an explorer, or discoverer of Nineveh, is too well known to be stated. Having been sent out as Ambassador just before the war of 1877, he was in full possession of the labyrinth which followed it. If he was not actively engaged in reviving the Ottoman Assemblies—a point the Government professed to aim at — he watched their infancy, he had proclaimed their importance, and when the Russian Army reached San Stefano he had been a witness of their downfall. He had considerable access to the Palace and the Sultan. In other capitals the functions of Ambassadors may be restricted to persuasion; in Constantinople it must be frequently extended to direction. Direction is impossible, without experience and knowledge, together with the tact, assurance, or, at least, authority which spring from them. It has become a maxim at Constantinople, which I have often heard there, that until he is acclimatized to its intrigues and passions by a residence of months the best diplomatist is scarcely capable of acting. Sir Henry Layard is withdrawn, not to make way for anyone whose past experience or local knowledge might prepare him; but for a Member of the Legislature beyond the sphere of the profession, who must have found himself a novice in the capital which he approached, and who, therefore, needed a preparatory interval, although immediate action was required of him. An arrangement of the kind can hardly be defended, unless its consequences have been fortunate. It seems to me to have been followed by a series of errors of which one may be adverted to at present. The principle has been habitually laid down by Her Majesty's Government that we ought to insist on the Treaty of Berlin in all its parts being faithfully and literally executed. The principle, although a specious one, before we acquiesce in it, requires much consideration. In the first place, the Treaty of Berlin was unavoidably connected with, and emanated from, the victories of Russia. It contained many things which the other European Powers, had they stood as they did in 1856, would never have admitted. It cannot, therefore, be urged that its total and immediate execution was an object of Great Britain. But while the Treaty of Berlin contained much which Russia valued or exulted in, it contained a good deal which she reluctantly assented to. A Government which constantly insisted on the execution of the Treaty found itself in the anomalous position of acting with Russia and against her simultaneously. The only escape was to aim merely at the execution of the Articles with which Russia found her interest identified, or merely at the execution of the Articles by which her progress was in some degree restricted. The former course appears to have been chosen, as regards the whole transaction of the Montenegrin Frontier. No power but Russia had the slightest interest in the aggrandizement of Montenegro, which had long been virtually dependent on her. It was brought about, however, by a Naval demonstration which involved considerable hazard, and in spite of the Albanian resistance which threw considerable doubt upon its policy and justice. The Conference at Berlin is much harder to defend, however, than the Naval demonstration. In the course of the Session the Prime Minister is stated to have offered an extraordinary plea for it. It is that he only followed the French initiative in joining it. Since 1870, on grounds too numerous to mention, the French initiative has not been altogether the directing force which any prudent guide of foreign policy would look to. A Minister who openly declares that, on a subject of that kind, he is controlled by the initiative of France, has said a harder thing against himself than he is likely from any other quarter to encounter. The result of the Berlin Conference has been to implant in the Athenian Government the absolute delusion that they possess a legal title to a territorial concession without exchange or purchase, or any other form of sacrifice to win it. That it is an absolute delusion the French Secretary of State himself has laboured to establish in a series of despatches I recently adverted to, which it would well become the Foreign Office fully to produce, as they may all be copied from the French official volume. But, although it is an absolute delusion, the King of Greece, in his Royal Speech to Parliament, was led by his Advisers to endorse it; the Prime Minister of Greece habitually endorses it; it forms the basis of Athenian Manifestoes; it has forced the mediating Powers into the most open contradiction as regards the many Frontiers they have traced, the various opinions they have sanctioned. My Lords, although it is an absolute delusion, it is much to be feared that the Government have patronized it, or, if they have not patronized, done nothing to rebuke it, and left to France the undivided labour of contending with it. If, indeed, the Berlin Conference had been the means of drawing Germany towards us, the result might have atoned for many inconveniences. But you have only to consult the German Press, you have only to breathe the atmosphere of Berlin—which it occurred to me to do during November and December—to form an opposite conclusion. At no previous time has the Ministerial position of Great Britain been more obnoxious to that capital. The explanation may present itself. In 1879 its ruling forces were led into a new system and detached themselves from Russia. The celebrated journey of Prince Bismarck to Vienna is thought to have begun, at least it marks, the epoch I refer to. It was hard for the ruling powers of Berlin to detach themselves from Russia. There were certain risks to be incurred and certain prepossessions to be sacrificed. But it was harder to find that they had alienated Russia—to some extent at least—when Russia was doomed in a short time to be sustained, encouraged, fostered by Great Britain. In 1877 the deepest penetration could not have enabled them to realize such a contingency. It is quite true, no doubt, that both of these proceedings have been sheltered as the action of an European concert. The imposing term of European concert has been so much resorted to of late, that it becomes desirable to look into its actual significance. An European concert to oppose the interest and aim of nearly every European State is, in itself, a paradoxical conception. The European concert we are asked to bow to, as a mystic force, does not work for the revival of the Ottoman Assemblies which it might easily have compassed. It does not work for the establishment of a more firm, more civilized, and more invulnerable power on the Bosphorus than any which the head of the Mahometan religion can present there. It does not endeavour to arrange upon the Pruth a barrier against the enterprizes which have three times within about 50 years exposed Constantinople to the march of an invader. It does not seek the balance of power. It is literally founded on its ruin, or at least on its abeyance. It is a concert for transferring to the scale of overbearing force as many Kingdoms and Republics as can be persuaded to adhere to it. It is arrayed not against that which it is desirable to check, but against that which it is desirable to strengthen and uphold, so long as no equivalent is found for it. Under its auspices the Law of Nations is defied, and territorial encroachment insolently aimed at. Aspiring to usurp the name and speak with the authority of Europe, it excludes from its circle not only such well-known States as Belgium and Holland, but all the Scandinavian Kingdoms, and the whole Iberian Peninsula. It wholly overlooks the principle of 1856, that the Sublime Porte was to be incorporated in the system of the Continent. It tends to reduce that Empire to a lower depth than it had reached before of both humiliation and insolvency. It is viewed with conscientious shame and ill-concealed aversion by nearly all the Powers which technically form it. But to put it in its proper light, and to suggest the mode in which it ought to be regarded, we should reflect a moment on the way in which a concert so arranged would have affected modern history had it been allowed to supersede the higher and the nobler forms of combination which have usually existed. During the half century which followed Ottoman success in 1453, it would have declared its confidence in the Mahometan dominion, and helped the warlike Sultans of that age by fire and sword to reach the Adriatic. It would have been the faithful instrument of Austria and Spain when, under Charles V. and his successors, they became a menace to the Continent. As soon as that ascendancy subsided at Westphalia in 1648, during another century it would have allied itself with France and those who ruled her, have fed upon their promises, confided in their virtue, and ministered to their supremacy. If that idol, under such preserving adoration, had ever passed away, this form of concert would have found its present object of subserviency. Had it prevailed 300 years, instead of being invented by the present occupant of Downing Street, Europe must have fallen under the general dominion which it is the leading aim of foreign policy to obviate. My Lords, this type of European concert has lately had a signal illustration in the Memoirs of Prince Metternich, who, in strict accuracy, may be regarded as its founder, and from whom the present Leader of the Government appears to have derived it. These Memoirs are accessible to everyone. In them we watch with the assistance of the master who directed it, the operation of the system at Troppau, at Laybach, at Verona. It arrayed itself, as now, against the States which were not able to resist it. Its aim, however, was more limited than modern fashion has bestowed upon it. It required weaker States to guard their institutions from reform. It did not call upon them to give up their territory at the dictation of a rival. In this connection there are many topics which I abandon for the present. Let me conclude, as I began, by absolving the noble Earl the Secretary of State from any great responsibility. Nothing has occurred which might not have been anticipated and predicted from the sinister form the Government assumed after the General Election. If these despatches are withheld, the recall of Sir Henry Layard will hardly seem to have the vindication which it calls for. If they are produced, the Motion cannot be considered as an useless one.

Moved, That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for Copies of the despatches which explain the withdrawal of Sir Henry Layard from the Embassy at Constantinople.—(*The Lord Stratheden and Campbell.*)

Lord HOUGHTON thought that, in having discouraged discussion on this subject, his noble Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs had not acted with his usual prudence, because a more outspoken expression of Parliamentary opinion on it might have been of considerable advantage in preventing the painful impression which now prevailed in respect of the differences between Turkey and Greece. He apprehended that it would be difficult to find in diplomatic history any precedent for what had occurred at the Berlin Conference, and, since it was held, in regard to the Greek Question. It would be difficult to find any other instance in which a Conference of the Powers was summoned for the purpose of considering and determining a certain question, and in which, an arrangement having been come to by that Conference, quite a different arrangement was subsequently proposed by the Powers. The change in the complexion of this question between Turkey and Greece had produced alarm in the minds of those who felt an interest in the peace of Europe and in the future of the Hellenes. Two courses had been open to the Powers. They might by force have compelled Turkey to submit, which, though it would have been hard and unjust, yet would have been consistent with the determination come to at the Conference, and it would have prevented the possibility of Turkey remaining under any delusion. On the other hand, they might have designed a new Frontier, and announced that their decision was to be final; but neither of those courses had been adopted. He looked with dismay on the present state of feeling in Europe. The Greeks were armed to the teeth, and declared themselves ready to accept any sacrifice in the pursuit of their objects; and he would ask their Lordships to realize what those sacrifices might be. It was not too much to say that the Throne of the King of Greece tottered in the balance, and that civil strife would soon be added to foreign complications.

LORD DENMAN: My Lords, I regret that the noble Lord opposite has brought forward his Motion at a time when, to use the words of a noble Lord, chairman at a public meeting, the question of peace or war rests, as it were, on a razor's edge. It would be better to leave the case in the hands of the Plenipotentiaries who are trying to agree. But the noble Lord has alluded to the time of Charles V., and has touched on the European concert; while the great scheme of Henry IV. of France, and our Queen Elizabeth, devised a reduction of armaments, with a police of all nations. The injustice of that scheme consisted in this—that while scheming to weaken the great combined power of Spain and Austria—they were one at that time, in the reign of Philip, late husband of "Bloody Mary"—it tended to secure compensation to them, for losses in Europe, by a partition of territory in the East, to be wrested from the so-called Infidels; but peace was the only opportunity for arriving at truth. In the Memoirs of the noble Lord's (Lord Stratheden and Campbell's) father, there was an interesting account of his late Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester, who, when in action—his men were firing too soon—threw himself before them to check them. England, as a herald between combatants, might prevent war; while, if she acted as a partizan, she would find the Turks, as at Sistovo (1791), very slow in their concessions, if not determined on war. There was no doubt that the Conference had, at first, demanded too much, as was proved by their subsequent moderation, which he (Lord Denman) hoped might lead to peace.

EARL GRANVILLE said, that his noble Friend who spoke second on this question complained that he did not give sufficient encouragement for the discussion of foreign subjects in their Lordships' House. He must say that if he had had to discourage such discussions, his efforts in that direction had not had much effect on the bashful and retiring nature of his two noble Friends. One of his noble Friends had been kind enough towards himself personally not to hold him responsible for the foreign policy of the Government, and referred to the statement concerning Lord Dudley in the Memoirs of Lord Ellenborough to show that such responsibility was not properly chargeable to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. Now, he was by no means unconscious of his own imperfections; but he must accept the responsibility of the foreign policy of Her Majesty's Government, though, of course, he shared that responsibility with the Prime Minister and his other Colleagues. Certainly, Lord Dudley, of all Foreign Ministers, was the one who was the least efficient in that Office. Lord Ellenborough claims in his Memoir a great share of the work of the Foreign Office; but it was notorious at the time that Mr. Huskisson transacted nearly the whole business of the Foreign Office. He did not, however, mean to deny the wit and cleverness of Lord Dudley; and he felt that if he had only one-half of that cleverness he might have done what he had been unable to do—have followed the arguments of the noble Lords who had spoken first and third in the discussion. His noble Friend wanted him to give more encouragement to the discussion of foreign affairs. He could only say that if, at the proper time, the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Salisbury), or the noble Earl (the Earl of Beaconsfield), the cause of whose absence from that House they all deplored, wished to bring forward the subject, he would be most ready to afford an opportunity for its full discussion; but the noble Lord (Lord Houghton), in order to show in what a judicious way foreign affairs might be treated in the House, selected for a discussion on the Greek Question the very day after they knew that an unanimous Note had been presented of a most important character, on the part of the Powers of Europe, in the hope of maintaining peace, and of arriving at a satisfactory settlement—a Note which the Greek Government had to consider, and which he hoped that Government would consider with that statesmanlike self-control which ought to distinguish a nation so brilliantly intellectual, with whom English sympathies were so much in accord. He must entirely decline to follow his noble Friend (Lord Stratheden and Campbell) into the subject he had raised. His noble Friend had taken a course which was inconvenient not only to the person filling the Office of Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, but to their Lordships' House. He first put on the Paper a Notice of the vaguest character. On seeing it he took the liberty of addressing to his noble Friend a private note asking him to give him more definite information as to the scope of his Notice. On that his noble Friend courteously changed his Notice, and he now expressed his wish for information on the subject of the withdrawal of Sir Henry Layard from Constantinople. Now, he doubted whether, except in the case of very grievous errors, it was desirable to discuss in Parliament the qualifications of Ambassadors employed under the Crown; but, at the same time, as his noble Friend desired information on the subject, he would state very shortly the state of things as regarded the recall of Sir Henry Layard. Sir Henry Layard was appointed special Ambassador at Constantinople some three years before the late Government went out of Office. He was appointed in lieu of Sir Henry Elliot, who first remained Ambassador, was then put on half-pay, and ultimately transferred to another post. Sir Henry Layard was a man of great ability and great knowledge of the East and Eastern Affairs. He had served with energy and ability the late Government; and he had executed instructions which, whether right or wrong, were known at the time not to be in accordance with the opinions of the Party to which he (Earl Granville) belonged. Besides that, Sir Henry Layard had eventually written a remarkable despatch, in which he showed how ineffectually he had worked to attain certain objects desired by the then Government—sometimes approaching the Porte in language almost of menace, and sometimes in language of persuasion. Sir Henry Layard declared that he had exhausted all the power he possessed; and that at the time he wrote that despatch the English Government had no influence over the Porte. The present Government, when they came into power, thought, under all the circumstances, it would be desirable to make a change. A special Embassy had some advantages and some disadvantages; but the Government had adopted a policy of great difficulty, that of obtaining the fulfilment of the remaining conditions of the Berlin Treaty, and they thought it desirable to give some significance to their change of policy. They, therefore, appointed Mr. Goschen special Ambassador. He did not think they could have selected a better man to succeed Sir Henry Layard, or one who could have more fully justified the trust put in him than Mr. Goschen. And there was a great advantage in having a man so intimately acquainted with the opinions of the Government to carry out that policy. With regard to Sir Henry Layard following the precedent of his Predecessor they placed him on leave, and after a short time put him on half-pay, exactly following previous precedents in the matter. No doubt it was hard on Sir Henry Layard, who was at the same time without employment and without pension; but it was felt to be impossible to pay two Ambassadors at the same time.

The Marquess of SALISBURY said, he agreed with the noble Earl that this was not precisely the moment at which it was expedient to discuss the matters which had been brought forward. He regretted what appeared to him hasty action on the part of the Conference of Berlin, and the impression that had got abroad that there was meant to be a more positive policy and one to be sustained by more energetic action than was really in the mind of the Government by which that Conference was guided. But, reserving to himself the full right of discussing these questions hereafter in detail, he did not think it was in accordance with the precedents their Lordships had followed, or that it would be for the public service, or for the promotion of what they all desired to see attained—the peace of Europe—that they should go further now into matters which were very delicate, and which had most probably reached the most delicate stage of negotiation. One word he would wish to add. The choice of Diplomatic Agents it was absolutely necessary to leave to the Government of the time. He was not aware of all the reasons which had induced Her Majesty's Government to prefer the services of Mr. Goschen to those of Sir Henry Layard. He would only say that Sir Henry Layard had served the Government of the Queen, so far as he had an opportunity of observing, with great energy, self-devotion, and ability; and he had claims on the public which the noble Earl opposite, he was sure, would be the last not to acknowledge. But the Government must be allowed to carry on their own policy in their own way, which was the right of every Government, and the responsibility for which they would not try to diminish.

Lord STANLEY of ALDERLEY said, that the late Lord Stratford de Redcliffe had stated that Greece had no rights and no claims. What, then, was to be gained by upsetting the Ottoman Empire and diminishing the influence of England in the Mediterranean for such a nation as Greece? The Prime Minister, by his Mid Lothian speeches, had encouraged both the Greeks and the Boers. But he seemed to have forgotten his former phrases. Since the right hon. Gentleman's mind had been taken from foreign affairs, and entirely engaged on the Land Law (Ireland) Bill, counsels of moderation had at last appeared to have made some way at the Foreign Office.

The Earl of KIMBERLEY said, that as his noble Friend (Earl Granville) had stated if some responsible person on the other side, well acquainted with foreign affairs, brought forward this important subject for discussion at a proper time, it would be discussed by persons well qualified to give an opinion upon it. But at present it was important that there should be no question on the subject; and if Members of the Government did not prolong the debate, it was not because they admitted, in the slightest degree, the representations made by the four noble Lords. If the whole question was discussed, the Government would be able to show their Lordships that the course they had pursued, in accord with the Great Powers of Europe, could not be disposed of in a few speeches.

Viscount SHERBROOKE said, he hoped noble Lords would not suppose that if he and other noble Lords did not take part in this debate they had not got the strongest possible opinion of the impropriety of pressing this matter. He only rose for the purpose of expressing his own opinion, and he was sure he spoke for many others, that they thought it extremely undesirable to do anything which might interfere with or impede the negotiations now in progress. He hoped they would not prolong this debate. Nobody knew the mischief which might result from doing so.

Lord STRATHEDEN and CAMPBELL would not detain the House; but, as his noble Friend beneath (Lord Houghton) could not speak again, he felt bound to answer some of the reflections which the noble Earl the Secretary of State had tried to cast upon him. Had the language of his noble Friend been calculated to promote hostilities between Greece and the Sublime Porte, such reflections might be justified. His language tended altogether in the opposite direction. In exact proportion as the false interpretation of the Berlin Conference was rectified; in exact proportion as the Greek ambition was discountenanced; in exact proportion as the Law of Nations was asserted to correct it, the hope and chance of an adjustment was augmented. His noble Friend had, therefore, been promoting the very object of the Government. If he was, besides, possessed of special information, he was bound to use it in the interest of peace, as he had done on this occasion. The noble Earl the Secretary of State had endeavoured to persuade the House that some irregularity attended this proceeding. On his (Lord Stratheden and Campbell's) part there had been no irregularity whatever. He had given Notice to call attention to certain Correspondence a fortnight before the day selected for discussion. The Notice had never been changed at all; it had only been completed, in accord with the most established usage, by a Motion being attached to it. It had been then repeatedly postponed during the absence of the noble Earl, and at the request of Her Majesty's Government. But the noble Earl had made another observation, which was even more remarkable. He had complained that all discussion of foreign policy was inconvenient at that moment to the Government. In that case, why did he not avert it? He might immediately have done so. During the last five years, neither under the late Government, nor the existing one, had he (Lord Stratheden and Campbell) ever hesitated to suspend a Motion when the Secretary of State declared negotiations would be hindered by it. But when the noble Earl accepted the debate he could not properly complain of it. Considering how much forbearance had been shown during his absence, and how on every point his wishes had been followed, in hazarding censorious remarks, the noble Earl had not displayed the prudence or the taste for which he used to be conspicuous. There was nothing further to reply to. He had maintained that the withdrawal of Sir Henry Layard wantonly destroyed an efficient agency for British objects in the Ottoman Dominion; that the withdrawal was an error; and that it had soon been followed by errors greater than itself.

Motion *agreed to.*

ARMY RE-ORGANIZATION—THE REGIMENTAL UNIFORMS.

The Earl of GALLOWAY moved for a Return showing the amount of expenditure estimated by the change of uniform involved in the proposed organization of territorial regiments, both as affecting individual officers and the public purse. He hoped the Government would find it convenient to lay the information upon the Table the first day after the Recess.

Moved, That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for Return showing the amount of expenditure estimated by the change of uniform involved in the proposed organization of territorial regiments, both as affecting individual officers and the public purse.—(*The Earl of Galloway.*)

The Earl of MORLEY could not assent to the Motion. The expense of the proposed changes would not be considerable in the case of the large majority of regiments, as only badges and facings would be changed this year. The more important changes, such as alterations in the colour of uniforms, would be deferred till the next issue of new clothing. Besides, it would be almost impossible to produce a Return that would not be misleading.

The Earl of LONGFORD said, such an extraordinary scheme as that to which the question referred might have been devised in Colney Hatch.

The Earl of GALLOWAY said, after that expression of the noble Earl the Under Secretary, he would, of course, not press the Motion; but he could not refrain from expressing his surprise that this great change had been decided on without the War Office apparently having any information as to the expense.

Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

TURKEY—THE LAND LAW—ADMISSION OF FOREIGNERS.

ADDRESS FOR A PAPER.

Earl DE LA WARR moved an Address to Her Majesty, for the Protocol, dated the 18th of June, 1867, entitled, "Regulation for the admission of foreigners to enjoy real property throughout the Ottoman dominions."

Earl GRANVILLE said, that the document moved for had been presented to the House; but there would be no objection to its being re-printed if necessary.

Motion *agreed to.*

Protocol relative to the admission of British subjects in Turkey to the right of holding real property, signed at Constantinople 28th July 1868; and Law of 18th June 1867, granting to foreigners the right to hold real property in the Ottoman Empire (presented by command 31st May 1869): To be *re-printed.* (No. 71.)

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION PROVISIONAL ORDER CONFIRMATION (LONDON) BILL [H.L.] (No. 68.) A Bill to confirm a Provisional Order made by the Education Department under "The Elementary Education Act, 1870," to enable the School Board for London to put in force the Lands Clauses Consolidation Act, 1845, and the Acts amending the same: And

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION PROVISIONAL ORDER CONFIRMATION (CLAY LANE) BILL [H.L.] (NO. 69.) A Bill to confirm a Provisional Order made by the Education Department under "The Elementary Education Act, 1870," to enable the School Board for the United School District of Clay Lane, Derby, to put in force the Lands Clauses Consolidation Act, 1845, and the Acts amending the same:

Were *presented* by The LORD PRESIDENT; read 1ª, and *referred* to the Examiners.

ARMY ALTERNATIVE PUNISHMENT BILL [H.L.]

A Bill for alternative punishment under the Army Discipline Regulation Act, 1881—Was *presented* by The Lord DENMAN; read 1ª. (No. 72.)

House adjourned at a quarter before Seven o'clock, to Thursday the 5th of May next, half past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 8*th April*, 1881.

The House met at Two of the clock.

MINUTES.]—NEW WRIT ISSUED—*For* Chester County (Western Division), *v.* Sir Philip De Malpas Grey Egerton, baronet, deceased.

PRIVATE BILLS (*by Order*)—*Second Reading*—Medway Conservancy (No. 1) *.

Considered as amended—Skipton and Kettlewell Railway (Extension to Aysgarth).

PUBLIC BILLS—*Ordered—First Reading*—Bankruptcy [137].

Second Reading—Local Government (Highways) Provisional Order (York) * [132]; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) * [130]; Local Government Provisional Orders (Bath, &c.) * [131]; Inland Revenue Buildings * [125]; Churchwardens (Admission) [47], *debate adjourned.*

Committee — Teinds (Scotland) * [118]—R.P.; River Floods Prevention * [35], *discharged;* and Bill *committed* to the Select Committee on the Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention Bill.

Committee—Report—Married Women's Property (Scotland) (*re-comm.*) * [128].

Report—Inclosure Provisional Order (Thurstaston Common) * [122].

PRIVATE BILLS.

Ordered, That Standing Orders 129 and 39 be suspended, and that the time for depositing Petitions against Private Bills, or against any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order, or Provisional Certificate, and for depositing duplicates of any Documents relating to any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order, or Provisional Certificate, be extended to Monday the 25th instant.—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

SKIPTON AND KETTLEWELL RAILWAY (EXTENSION TO AYSGARTH) BILL (*by Order.*)

Order for Consideration read.

MR. BRYCE said, he had given Notice of his intention to move that the consideration of this Bill, as amended, be deferred until that day six months. The Bill, as it originally stood, proposed to interfere prejudicially with some common lands, and it had not complied with the Standing Orders of the House by giving proper Notice. The promoters, however, had agreed to insert a clause by which they bound themselves not to take any common lands; and, that being the case, he did not intend to offer any further opposition to the progress of the Bill.

Bill, as amended, *considered;* to be read the third time.

QUESTIONS.

STATE OF IRELAND—DISTRESS IN CASTLEBAR.

MR. O'CONNOR POWER asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What steps, if any, the Irish Local Government Board intend to take with a view to relieving the distress of the small farmers in the Castlebar Union, which has been brought under the notice of the Board by the Poor Law Guardians of Castlebar and the Catholic Clergy of the district?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: The Local Government Board have under their consideration proposals for proceeding with various public works, the estimated cost of which amounts to a large sum. The Board will consult their Inspector before deciding which of the works should be proceeded with. A decision will be arrived at with as little delay as possible.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—BALLYHANNIS PETTY SESSIONS.

Mr. O'CONNOR POWER asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is true, as alleged, that the attendance of magistrates at the petty sessions court held at Ballyhannis, county Mayo, is very irregular, and inflicts considerable inconvenience on those who are summoned; and, if true, whether steps will be taken to ensure the regular attendance of magistrates in future?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: In reply to the Question of the hon. Member, I have to say that I find that on nine occasions in the past year the petty sessions referred to could not be held, owing to the non-attendance of magistrates. The Irish Government have called the attention of the lord lieutenant of the county to the inconvenience arising from that fact. I am not aware that we have further power in the matter; but I will confer with my noble and learned Friend the Lord Chancellor of Ireland on the subject.

INDIA—THE CINCHONA PLANT.

Captain PRICE asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether it is the fact that the Indian Government are exporting large quantities of cinchona bark for sale in London; and, whether, in introducing the cinchona plant into India, the Government did so with the object of encouraging private enterprise, or of competing in the market with the private trade?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: The object of the Government in introducing the cinchona plant into India was to provide an abundant supply of a cheap febrifuge for the people of that country. Almost all the bark produced in the Bengal plantations is manufactured in India for use there. A difficulty has been found in treating the produce of the Madras plantations in the same way, and for this reason the greater part of it has been sent to England. It is believed that the sale of this bark, which has established the reputation of the Indian-grown bark, is of great advantage to private growers; but an experiment is now being made on a large scale with a view to the manufacture of this bark in England on Government account; and, if this prove successful, it is probable that the supply from India will be discontinued.

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL—REVOCATION OF LETTERS PATENT, 1879.

Mr. GIBSON asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether it is intended to revoke the Letters Patent relative to the Transvaal, dated 8th November 1879; and, if so, when; and, whether, if such an intention exists, any opportunity will be afforded to the loyal English, Boer, and Native inhabitants of the Transvaal to show cause against the revocation of such Letters Patent, and the withdrawal of the Proclamation of Annexation under which they became subjects of the Queen, and entitled to the benefits of the English Constitution, and the security of its Laws?

Mr. GRANT DUFF: In reply to the right hon. and learned Gentleman's first Question, I have to say that the manner of giving effect to the final settlement cannot be determined till the Commission has done its work; but, assuming that the settlement is completed on the basis of the agreement made by Sir Evelyn Wood, the revocation of the Letters Patent passed in 1879 for the creation of a temporary Constitution would, I apprehend, follow as a matter of course. In reply to his second Question I have to refer him to the answer given by the Prime Minister on Tuesday to the hon. Member for Carlow County, and to add that the same kind of claim as that to which the right hon. and learned Gentleman alludes was made when the Orange River Territory was relinquished, but that it was not entertained.

Mr. GIBSON: Does the right hon. Gentleman mean to convey to the House that it will be within the power of the Commission to decide that the Letters Patent may continue in existence?

Mr. GRANT DUFF: No, Sir; but I understand that if the settlement of the Commissioners is made upon the lines of the agreement with Sir Evelyn Wood, then the Letters Patent will have to be revoked as a matter of course. The Letters Patent were issued simply for the purpose of calling into existence a temporary Legislature for the Transvaal.

Mr. GIBSON: That is not the point. Does the right hon. Gentleman mean to convey that it will be competent to the Commission to depart from the lines of the agreement with Sir Evelyn Wood?

Mr. GRANT DUFF: No; except it be under the instructions of Her Majesty's Government.

THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—BUCKSHOT.

Mr. O'KELLY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he will consent to lay upon the Table of the House a Return of the number of unarmed persons killed and wounded in Ireland since the introduction of the use of buckshot by the Irish Constabulary?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I cannot give the Return as asked for. I cannot admit that persons who use sticks and stones come under the designation of unarmed persons. In the late sorrowful business in Mayo, one constable was beaten so severely that he has died since; and another man was similarly treated. I have no objection to state the facts with regard to the use of buckshot. On the 24th of February, 1880, the late Government applied to the Treasury to sanction the cost of the issue of buckshot to the Constabulary; on the 3rd of March the Treasury gave the necessary sanction; on the 15th of March the first issue was made; the first occasion on which it was necessary to fire was on the occasion of the Dungannon riot on the 16th of August; there have been only two other cases in the county of Sligo since, and I trust no more will occur.

Mr. A. M. SULLIVAN: Then I understand the real originators of buckshot were the late Government?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: The order was issued by the late Government; the inquiry was made by the late Government; and the present Government, after inquiry, did not think it their duty to cancel or withdraw the order.

INDIA—MADRAS COVENANTED CIVIL SERVICE.

Mr. GIBSON asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether his attention has been directed to the deadlock in promotion in the Madras Covenanted Civil Service; whether that deadlock is greater there than in the other Presidencies to which favourable terms of retirement and pay have been extended; and, whether, in the event of such terms not having been already extended to the Madras Service, there is any reason why they should be longer withheld?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Early in 1879, the Government of India transmitted to the Secretary of State three Memorials from Madras Civil servants asking to be allowed to retire on special pensions similar to those allowed to officers in Bengal and Bombay in order to accelerate promotion. The Government of India did not recommend compliance with the requests contained in those Memorials; and my Predecessor concurred in the view taken by that Government. I find that in April, 1880, further Memorials from members of the Madras Civil Service were sent to the Government of India; but that Government has not deemed it necessary to forward them for the consideration of the Secretary of State in Council. I am, therefore, unable to answer the Questions put by the right hon. and learned Gentleman. I will make a communication to the Government of India with reference to these Questions. Any action must be dependent upon the answer which I receive.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—PENALTIES OF PROSECUTIONS.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that a Circular has been recently issued to the Constabulary in Ireland instructing them to apply for a portion of the penalties recovered in cases in which prosecutions are brought by them at Petty Sessions; and, if so, whether the said Circular was issued with his knowledge and authority?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: No such Circular has been issued; and any fine would go, not to the constable himself, but to the Constabulary Force funds. The right of the Constabulary to these fines has been confirmed by the Superior Courts. In a certain case, application was made in accordance with the terms of the Act under which the proceedings were taken for a moiety of the penalty, which the petty sessions clerk refused to pay; and, therefore, advice has been given that the next case of that kind which occurs shall be used as a test case for settling the dispute.

CONSOLIDATED FUND — MISCELLANEOUS PENSIONS (IRELAND).

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, If he will state who are the persons referred to, at page 49 of the Finance Accounts, as having "suffered by the Rebellion in Ireland in 1798," and for whose pension a sum is still charged on the Consolidated Fund?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH: The persons referred to are the last two survivors of those who suffered by the Rebellion of 1798, and who received compensation under the Act of the Irish Parliament, 40 *Geo.* III. c. 49. One of them is Mrs. Anne Collins, daughter of Captain Lister, of the Fifeshire Fencibles. She receives an annuity of £18 9*s.* 4*d.* The other is Mrs. Mary Quin, who receives an annuity of £13 17*s.* in trust for herself and her sisters, daughters of Sergeant Major Lane, who was killed.

ARMS ACT (IRELAND)—PROCLAMATION OF THE COUNTY OF LONGFORD.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he can tell the House what has happened since the 25th of January last to render it necessary that the petty sessions district of Granard, county Longford, should be included in the Proclamation under the Arms Act, seeing that on that day he stated that the magistrates of the district bore public witness to its tranquil and orderly condition?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: It is quite true that on the 25th of January I stated that the magistrates had borne witness to the tranquil and orderly condition of the district; but we have since considered that the Proclamation under the Arms Act ought to apply to the county generally.

EVICTIONS (IRELAND).

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that Captain Douglas, a landlord, has served about forty notices of ejectment on tenants in the district of Drumlish, county Longford; and, whether, inasmuch as these tenants were receiving public relief last year, and are therefore presumably unable to pay the rents claimed; and that several other landlords in the same district have announced their intention of serving notices on their tenants, he will advise landlords to delay their action until after the passing of the Irish Land Bill?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I have no information on the subject, and it is possible I mây not have. I get information of all cases of actual ejectment; but, unless it is necessary to give the protection of the police in the serving of notices, I should not hear. I have no information with regard to these cases; I cannot tell what the position of the tenants was last year; and I am not aware of the present position of the tenants. I do not know that there will be any great advantage in my giving advice; but, if I am asked, I should advise the landlords to be forbearing in the present circumstances, and especially not to serve ejectments upon tenants who they have reason to believe are not able to pay. I am well aware that there are many landlords who are very hard pressed themselves, and who may be in the hands of other persons, making it impossible for them to delay. As the hon. Member alludes to advice, he must allow me to say, respectfully and without offence, that I think other advice might be given, in the interest of the condition of Ireland, by those who have influence, or try to have influence, and that they should advise the tenants to pay when they could. If persons who are interested in the prosperity of the country, and who have influence over their fellow-countrymen, would use it, and advise those tenants who are able to pay their rents to do so, or even if they would refrain from going about the country advising the tenantry not to pay rents, the condition of Ireland would be better, and the difficulty of maintaining law and order greatly diminished.

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT — THE PROBATE AND LEGACY DUTIES.

MR. GREGORY asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If he can lay upon the Table of the House the calculation on which the anticipated increase of the Revenue from the new arrangement of Probate and Legacy Duties is founded?

MR. GLADSTONE: I should not like to set the example of formally laying on the Table a document of this kind, because it would have the tendency to operate adversely to the sound principle that the exclusive responsibility should rest on the Chancellor of the Exchequer. At the same time, in this case all the particulars that could be produced or asked for are already before the House—both what was produced under the old system and what it is estimated the new system will yield. Placing the losses from one against the gain on the other, and deducting the loss connected with the new arrangement for debts, all the particulars that could be given are arrived at.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Perhaps I may be allowed to repeat the Question I put a few days ago, which is substantially what my hon. Friend asks. What is the real calculation that was made in order to show what the gain upon the Probate Duty would be, and what would be the set-off by loss of debts and deficits? On the Budget night a certain statement was made of a gross gain on the Probate Duties of £576,000, or something of the sort, against which there was a loss of £400,000 for debts, and £150,000 on Legacy Duty, the loss coming to more than the gain. We were told what the net result was; we have not been told how far the statement was misapprehended, nor what was the gain on debts or the loss by Legacy Duties.

MR. GLADSTONE: I am not aware that anything I said should have given rise to misapprehension. I have not read the report of my speech, nor can I think that any man actively engaged in Public Business would have either time or inclination to do so. I have been informed as to the report, and I can only say that I believe I stated exactly what the duty had produced, and what it was estimated to produce. I also stated the deductions that were to be made from the gross amount, and that showed what the net gain will be. If there is any doubt I shall be most happy to answer any question.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: In the report of the speech there are set forth two sums—one of £400,000 as loss on debts, and another of £150,000 as loss on Legacy Duty. Are those figures correctly stated?

MR. GLADSTONE: Quite correctly.

CRIMINAL LAW—THE "IRISH WORLD."

MR. TOTTENHAM asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the last number of the "Irish World," a newspaper, the avowed object of which is to incite the Irish people to sedition and rebellion, and in which the assassination of the Czar is treated as a legitimate incident in a civil war, in a paragraph headed "The War in Russia, the Commander of the Imperialists slain, and a score of Staff Officers and Cossacks killed and wounded," and the "Nihilist Victory" is fully described; wherein also the following paragraphs appear:—

> "England is 'intoxicated with power and robbery, a peace-destroyer and a right-invader. Her record of infamy is not of one period, but of to-day and all time. Her presence is ever a lifelong damnation and curse.' The whole Irish race is exhorted to pray on their knees 'to the Most High for the suppression of the British Empire:'
>
> "The British Government, better known as the 'Pirate Empire,' constructs gallows for patriots, dungeons for statesmen, and palaces for their criminals. On, Ireland! in the agonies of the starving death—dowered with a curse by a Parliament of the most inhuman fiends known to history. They stand to-day the most perfect embodiment of unrelieved iniquity known since the days of Sodom:
>
> "My last words to-day are to study the use of arms; form military clubs; keep from whiskey and tobacco. Keep close mouths, and pray to our Heavenly Father fervently for the downfall of the 'British Empire' and the great wrongs it upholds;"

whether the Government allows the "Irish World" to be freely circulated through the whole length and breadth of Ireland; whether he is aware that the gratuitous circulation is largely subscribed for by the Land League branches in the United States as a means of Socialistic and revolutionary propaganda directed against the maintenance of English rule and the recognition of property in land; and, whether he intends to take any steps to check or put an end to the circulation of such a production?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I must say that I think I answered with sufficient fulness in reply to an inquiry which was put to me yesterday by the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill). The attention of Her Majesty's Government has been directed to *The Irish World* and to the particular copy of it to which the Question of the hon. Gentleman refers; but I would say that nothing is more difficult than to stop the circulation of a foreign newspaper in these Kingdoms. It is easy, and is therefore the duty of the Government where there is a publication of which we have heard recommending assassination, to proceed against the publisher, when they find the Press established in this country; but the difficulty in doing this in the case of the introduction of a foreign newspaper is very great, and I cannot understand any hon. Member failing to see the difference between the two cases.

Mr. TOTTENHAM: What I wish to know is whether there are or are not legal powers to deal with the newspaper; or whether it is not deemed advisable to exercise them?

Mr. A. M. SULLIVAN wished to know whether, if there was any such power, it was only intended to use it against persons found in possession of the paper—persons, in fact, in the position of the hon. Member who put the Question.

Mr. HEALY: And is the right hon. Gentleman aware that since the Questions on this subject were put to the House the circulation of *The Irish World* has increased?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: The hon. Member asks what legal measures can be taken? Suppose I were to tell him, does he think it would be to the advantage of law and order?

Mr. TOTTENHAM: The right hon. Gentleman is in error. All I want to know is whether there are legal powers to deal with the matter?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: The articles published in *The Irish World*, and the fact of its circulation in Ireland, are occupying the attention of the Government.

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL—LETTER OF KING CETEWAYO.

Mr. GORST asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether a joint letter of condolence on the recent disasters to the British Arms in the Transvaal containing advice as to the further prosecution of the War, has been addressed to Her Majesty by Cetewayo, late King of Zululand, and Langalibalele, now in captivity at Robbins Island; and, whether the interests of the public service would allow of this letter being laid upon the Table of the House?

Mr. GRANT DUFF: The letter from Cetewayo, who, like Langalibalele, is not in Robben Island at all, but in much pleasanter quarters on the main land, will certainly be given to Parliament, and soon.

Mr. GORST: Does the right hon. Gentleman mean to say that there is such a letter, and that it will be laid on the Table of the House?

Mr. GRANT DUFF: Most unquestionably there is such a letter from Cetewayo; and I may say it is a very remarkable letter. He speaks of the deaths of soldiers as a soldier should —he speaks of them gravely and seriously. It would be of some advantage, I think, if the hon. and learned Member were to take a lesson from its tone.

ARMY RE-ORGANIZATION—UNIFORMS—THE BUFFS.

Major VAUGHAN LEE asked the Secretary of State for War, If, whilst preserving the name of the Buffs to the 3rd Infantry Regiment, he proposes to take away their buff facings, which was the sole reason for this designation; and, if so, if he would explain why?

Mr. CHILDERS: In reply to the hon. and gallant Gentleman, I have to remind him that buff facings become white after they are once pipeclayed; so that, practically, the Kentish regiment will have the same facings as now. All the English regiments will have white facings unless they are "Royal," when their facings will be blue.

TUNIS—THE KROUHMIR TRIBES—MILITARY PREPARATIONS OF FRANCE.

Mr. MONTAGUE GUEST asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether, in view of the important military preparations now being made by France, with the ostensible object of punishing the Krouhmir tribes on the Tunisian frontier, Her Majesty's Government have received or have asked for any assurances from the French Government that the statu quo in Tunis, as recognised by the European Powers, will in no way be interfered with?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: The French Government has informed the Government of the Queen that their military operations will be confined to the neighbourhood of the Frontier and to the punishment of the lawless Frontier tribes.

SALES OF LAND (IRELAND) RETURN.

Mr. ION HAMILTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, in consequence of the information contained in Part 2 of the Sales of Land (Ireland) Return, distributed on the 7th of April, not being arranged in order of date, rent, valuation, purchase money, and locality, or alphabetical order of names, he would consider whether he could not reprint same in some form giving greater facilities for reference and comparison, and, at the same time, append the title of the matter in which the sales took place?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: The Return has only just been circulated, and I have not had time to examine it carefully. I will do so, and confer with the authorities and see whether it is necessary to make the alteration referred to in the Question of the hon. Member.

THE SUEZ CANAL COMPANY—THE BRITISH SHARES.

Baron HENRY DE WORMS asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he still adheres to the opinion expressed by him in his speech at Glasgow on the 6th December 1879, that the purchase of the Suez Canal shares was a "delusion," and a "financial operation of a ridiculous description;" and, whether, seeing that the present value of the Suez Canal shares is officially stated to be £8,826,000, he proposes to take steps for realising by their sale the accrued profit of £4,826,000?

Mr. GLADSTONE: The manifest object of the hon. Gentleman's Question is to obtain from me a confession, which I am sorry to say he will fail in obtaining. I am not disposed to make any confession whatever on the subject. I do not wish to repeat all that was said in a very important discussion. My objection to a Question of this kind is, that if a person is not prepared to confess, he cannot do otherwise than seem to revive matters on which I have no desire to go back. I will simply draw this distinction—that all the censures I bestowed on the operation at the time, or the period of the Election, had no reference to the financial operation, considered as a financial operation, conceived and executed by a stockbroker. I took no objection of that kind. I have been from the first a recommender and promoter of the Suez Canal, and was one of those who first encouraged M. Lesseps when he came to this country to persevere in the face of all opposition. The objection I had was that the operation was a complex one, and I cannot recede from that opinion, though I think it would be invidious now to repeat the reasons on which that opinion was based.

CORONERS (IRELAND) BILL.

Mr. HEALY asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, with reference to the Coroners (Ireland) Bill, which at his instance was committed to a Select Committee, Whether it is the fact that no steps have been taken in these six weeks to appoint this Committee; if this delay in appointing Committees is usual; and, if not, whether he can explain it?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Law), in reply, said, he hoped it would be possible to appoint the Committee almost immediately after Easter.

SOUTH AFRICA — THE TRANSVAAL (MILITARY OPERATIONS)—SURRENDER OF POTCHEFSTROOM.

Sir JOHN KENNAWAY asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether he can now inform the House the result of Sir Evelyn Wood's inquiries on the subject of the surrender of Potchefstroom, as to any knowledge which the Boers had of the armistice at the time of the surrender?

Mr. GRANT DUFF: No, Sir. We have no further information, doubtless because Sir Evelyn Wood has gone to Pretoria, and is beyond the range of telegraphic communication.

HOUSE OF COMMONS—ADDITIONAL ACCOMMODATION TO MEMBERS—THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

Sir EDWARD REED asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether he can state to the House the result of the negotiations with the House of Lords with respect to the Rooms proposed to be transferred to the use of the House of Commons?

Mr. O'SHEA also wished to know whether any further accommodation was to be provided for the reporters?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: I am glad to be able to say that the Committee of the House of Lords, to whom my proposals were referred, have agreed to recommend them to the House for adoption. They propose to surrender three Committee Rooms on the main floor of the building for the use of the House of Commons, and to take as compensation the rooms of the residence of one of their officers, who would receive an addition to his salary as compensation. There was, however, a considerable minority in favour of an alternative scheme which was proposed by Lord Aveland, and I understand there will be opposition in the House itself to my proposal. The alternative scheme is that as compensation for the three Committee Rooms on this floor to be surrendered to the Commons, we should give up three Committee Rooms to the House of Lords on the next floor, with the understanding that when not required for the use of the Lords they should be at the disposal of the Commons; and as the pressure of the Lords' Committee work is at the end of the Session, when our Committees are over, the rooms would be generally at our disposal, as now. I think, therefore, there is much to be said in favour of this alternative; and as the Lords have shown so much desire to meet our wishes in the matter, I think it would be well that we should endeavour, on our part, to meet them half way if we can. I have felt that I could not, on my own behalf, undertake to surrender three Committee Rooms of this House. I propose, therefore, to ask the House after Easter to appoint a small Committee to consider the alternative proposal of Lord Aveland, and also to report as to the disposition of the three rooms on this floor, which in any case we shall now obtain, and which will, I think, immensely add to the comfort and convenience of Members. I have been unable, at present, to see my way to increasing the accommodation for reporters. The subject is one of considerable importance, and I am very anxious to give such accommodation if possible.

PUBLIC HEALTH—SMALL-POX.

Mr. PULESTON asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he can give any statistics showing the extent of the present small-pox epidemic; whether this disease is more prevalent than in former years; and, if it is, whether he will cause such temporary hospitals to be erected for small-pox patients as were put up during the epidemic of 1877?

Mr. DODSON: At so short a notice I cannot give precise statistics of the extent of the epidemic; but up to the present time it has not been fatal to any appreciable degree except in the Metropolis. It is, unfortunately, more prevalent in the Metropolis than on an average of years. As compared with recent epidemics, it is believed that the present will about rank with 1877-8 or 1866-7; but that it is not anything like as fatal as that of 1871-2. The Local Government Board have recommended the local authorities to provide temporary accommodation for patients as far as practicable, and this has been already done or is in progress in some instances.

Mr. PULESTON inquired whether the Board had any powers to compel the provision of accommodation?

Mr. DODSON: No.

THE CENSUS, 1881.

Mr. PULESTON asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the numerous complaints of the way the Census enumerators have performed their duty; and, if so, whether, in view of the importance of the subject, he will take steps to inquire into, and to rectify such errors and omissions as are reported?

Mr. MONTAGUE GUEST also asked the President of the Local Government Board, If his attention has been directed to several letters which have appeared in the daily papers, stating that in many instances Census papers have not been left, and that the enumerator had failed to call; and, whether, in view of the expense entailed, he will institute inquiries, to insure as accurate a return as possible?

Mr. DODSON: Many of the complaints which have appeared in the public papers or been otherwise made arise from an erroneous impression that it was imperative that the Schedules should be collected on one day—namely, on Monday last. To carry out the enumeration of 26,000,000 of people by the agency of some 35,000 enumerators without some omissions and some mistakes occurring is impossible. But I am informed by the Registrar General that most of them are by this time rectified. All possible expedition has been used in inquiring into and supplying any deficiencies; and I have no reason to doubt that the Census will prove, at any rate, as accurate as any previous Census. As far as the Question of the hon. Member for Wareham is concerned, I may say that an erroneous impression gained currency that all the Schedules must be collected on the same day—namely, Monday last.

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL—PEACE NEGOTIATIONS — REPAYMENT OF LOAN.

Mr. PULESTON asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether in the instructions sent to the Commissioners for the settlement of terms with the Boers, provision has been made for the due consideration of the payment of the loan taken charge of by the British Government, which has since paid the interest and provided for the sinking fund, and for which the Crown Lands were specially hypothecated; and, whether, in view of the declaration that the British Government would never give up the Transvaal, which caused the bondholders to consider their investment as guaranteed by our good faith, Her Majesty's Government will, under the present conditions, continue to protect their rights?

Mr. GRANT DUFF: This loan has not been taken charge of by the British Government, and that Government has neither paid the interest nor provided for the sinking fund. The Commission, however, has been instructed to consider what arrangements should be made with reference to this loan and to the other debts of the Transvaal Government.

STATE OF IRELAND—MR. RANDLE PEYTON.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether he can say if Mr. Randle Peyton, Crown Solicitor for Leitrim, Roscommon, and Sligo, is the same Mr. Randle Peyton whose name lately appeared in the "Dublin Mail" as that of a subscriber to the Emergency Committee?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Law): I really cannot give the hon. Member the information he asks for. There are several families of the name of Peyton in the district.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY asked, whether the right hon. and learned Gentleman would make inquiry?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Law): I think, Sir, it is scarcely worth while.

ARMY DISCIPLINE AND REGULATION (ANNUAL) BILL—SUMMARY PUNISHMENTS.

Captain PRICE asked the Secretary of State for War, If the Government have made inquiries as to whether the proposed new corporal punishment of tying the soldier to the tail of a cart is in use in the Army of any other civilised nation; and, if there is any, and what, objection to exhibiting in the Library of the House a model or diagram showing the mode of carrying out the said punishment?

Mr. CHILDERS: In reply to the hon. and gallant Gentleman, I have to state that during the discussion of the Army Discipline Bill, and in his hearing, I undertook to consult general officers of experience in command on active service as to the Rules which should be made for summary punishments, and that until I had considered their advice I would make no Rules. Rules so made will be laid on the Table during the present Session; but until then I can give no information on the subject.

TURKEY AND GREECE (STATISTICS).

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he can state to the House the number of Greek and non-Greek inhabitants in the three cities of Janina, Larissa, and Prevesa respectively?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: There are no absolutely reliable statements relative to the populations of Janina, Larissa, and Prevesa. Janina is represented as having a population of from 16,000 to 30,000, of whom one-sixth to one-seventh are Jews, one-fourth Mussulman, and the remainder Christians of the Greek Church. Prevesa has a population of about 5,000, of whom 4,000 are Christians. There are no means of ascertaining the exact ethnological character of the inhabitants; but those described as orthodox Christians, as a rule, speak Greek, and call themselves Greek, and have Greek proclivities.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) BILL.

Mr. GIBSON: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland the following Questions, of which I have given him private Notice, relating to the Land Bill:—(1.) Whether the Land Bill distributed this morning and the Land Bill of 1870 are to be read together, except where they are inconsistent? (2.) Is the Bill confined to holdings agricultural or pastural in character, or partly agricultural or pastural? (3.) Can a tenant, compelled to quit his holding for non-payment of rent, claim full compensation for disturbance and improvements?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Law): In answer to the first Question of my right hon. and learned Friend, I beg to say that, according to the ordinary rule of interpretation, statutes dealing with the same subject-matter are always to be construed together, and the present case forms no exception to that rule. Besides this, the Bill proposes specifically to amend the Land Act of 1870 in at least two material points—one, being an alteration in the scale of compensation for disturbance; and the other, the providing of greatly increased facilities for tenants purchasing the fee-simple of their respective holdings. My reply to the second Question is that the Bill is confined, by its 46th section, to holdings agricultural or pastural, or partly one and partly the other.

Mr. GIBSON: Would the right hon. and learned Gentleman read the exception to that clause?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Law): The Bill proposes to give a tenant under ejectment for non-payment of rent the power to sell his tenant right at the best price he can get; and, if he does so, he has no claim on his landlord for disturbance or improvements, the value of both of which are obviously included in the purchase money of his tenant right. If, however, the tenant chooses to let himself be absolutely evicted without realizing the value of his tenant right, he remains, as at present, entitled to claim for improvements only.

Mr. GIBSON: Am I to understand, as I wish it to be perfectly clear, that the Land Act of 1870 and all its clauses and provisions in reference to the Bill distributed this morning can be relied on except where they are inconsistent? Secondly, am I to understand that a tenant who is evicted for non-payment of rent cannot claim compensation for disturbance? In other words, is Clause 9 of the Act of 1870 affected, or not affected, by the Bill distributed this morning?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Law): The two Bills must be read together, and the old Act will prevail so far as it is not inconsistent with the latter one. As to the second Question, a tenant who is evicted for non-payment of rent, if he does not choose to sell and thus avail himself of the power of realizing the value of his tenant right, will not get compensation for disturbance, although he will be entitled to compensation for improvements.

Mr. TOTTENHAM, amid *cries of* "Notice!" asked, Whether at the expiration of the judicial lease settled by the Court in lieu of the 31 years' lease the parties would be again free to contract; and, if so, whether the tenant would still be able to claim any and what tenant right in the event of his not to coming to terms with his landlord?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Law): I must ask the hon. Member to give Notice of the Question.

Mr. CALLAN rose to Order. He wished to know whether it was in accordance with the Rules of the House that the discussion on the second reading of the Land Bill should be anticipated in the guise of Questions put without Notice?

[No reply was given to the Question.]

TURKEY AND GREECE—AN EGYPTIAN CONTINGENT.

Mr. ARNOLD asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is true that the Turkish Government have applied to the Egptian Government for troops to be used in the event of war breaking out between Turkey and Greece?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: There is no truth in the statement that the Turkish Government has applied to the Egyptian Government for troops to be used in the event of war breaking out between Turkey and Greece.

THE MINISTRY—RESIGNATION OF THE DUKE OF ARGYLL.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I beg to ask the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury a Question, of which I have given him private Notice—namely, Whether it is true, as reported in the daily Press, that the Duke of Argyll has resigned his Office, and that the cause of his resignation is a difference of opinion between himself and the other Members of Her Majesty's Government with regard to the Irish Land Bill?

Mr. GLADSTONE: It is with the deepest concern, alike personal and political, that I have to state that it is true that the Duke of Argyll has resigned his Office, and that it is also true that the cause of his resignation has reference to the Land Law (Ireland) Bill. I ought, however, not to allow it to be supposed that his objection is to the whole of the Land Bill as it stands, because there are portions, and very important portions, of the Bill with regard to which the Duke of Argyll is quite at one with his Colleagues. There are, however, other portions which we regard as vital to the Bill, which are opposed to the known principles of the noble Duke, and his objections to those portions are so strong as to lead him to believe that they require his resignation.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—LAND LAW (IRELAND) BILL.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: There is another Question, Sir, which I wish to put to the Prime Minister, of which I have also given him private Notice, which is, Whether he will consent to put off the second reading of the Land Law (Ireland) Bill to a somewhat later day than that which has been mentioned? ["No!"] I, of course, am only speaking on behalf of a number of Gentlemen who are anxious to take sufficient time to consider so very important a measure, and who are strongly of opinion that it would be more convenient and fair to allow a longer time for consideration before the second reading than the first day of the re-assembling of the House after Easter.

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, I am very sorry indeed, in the case of the Question put to me by the right hon. Baronet, to be unable to reply in the sense which he indicates and desires, because I know he is really desirous to expedite the Business of the House, and that the Question he asks is put in entire good faith. At the same time I will appeal, in the circumstances, to his good feeling, and I will ask him to consider a little two or three matters as the ground of the intention of the Government. I am sure, first of all, that no one can be taken by surprise in this matter; because when I first intimated the day of the Budget, and the day of the introduction of the Land Law (Ireland) Bill, I said we should propose to take the second reading on the first day after the Recess. I know it may be said it is not a usual step, as in ordinary years the first day after the Easter Recess is generally given to subjects on which it is not necessary for the whole House to be in attendance. But the present Easter Recess is a little longer than the usual Recess. That, however, will not of itself govern us in the course that we propose; and I am bound to say that the Gentlemen whom I felt most bound to consider were the Irish Members, who might claim a few days after the Easter Recess, having to come a considerable distance, but that claim they have not made in this case. What, then, were the motives that urged us to take the second reading on the first day after

Easter? We have submitted to the House a Bill with regard to which I am of opinion that it contains as much matter for discussion, and that it requires as much discussion in order to its full elucidation and satisfactory settlement in the different quarters of the House, and that it may be expected to take as much time, probably, as any measure that has been laid before the House during the last 10 or 15 years. We introduced it on the very first day in our power; but that day was, unfortunately, only the 7th of April, though the House has sat for more than three months. The time given before the second reading is, undoubtedly, quite equal to that which is ordinarily given, even on most important questions—namely, from the 7th to the 25th of April. But that which we dwell upon is this—that we are under the conviction that it is our duty to omit no step, within our legitimate competence, to secure the disposal of this great subject in the present Session. Looking at the time of the year which we have reached, and desirous as we are not to hurry the House unduly in the discussion of the several stages of the Bill, we feel, to state the matter frankly, that we cannot lose a day, and that we are bound to go forward with the second reading at once. Of course, I have no expectation of obtaining the second reading on the night of the 25th. I anticipate a debate of more than one night, and generally I should say our desire would be that ample time should be afforded for the discussion. But, that being so, and looking forward to the ordinary period of the termination of Session, which, in this year, when we met so early, we ought not to pass if we can help it; looking also to the stock of strength, mental and physical, that Gentlemen bring to the discharge of their labours in this House, I feel it is absolutely necessary for us to omit no opportunity of asking the House to carry forward that great work consistently with other necessary demands, and limited by the necessities of Public Business. On these grounds, I am sorry to say it is a matter of absolute duty for us to adhere to the course we propose.

Mr. CHAPLIN would venture to make one further appeal to the right hon. Gentleman to re-consider his decision during the Recess. He quite admitted the difficult situation in which the right hon. Gentleman was placed; but he put to him whether, with a view to facilitate the progress of this measure, it was wise to insist on pressing forward the second reading of a Bill of this exceedingly complex and difficult character at a time manifestly most inconvenient to a very large section of the House? ["Order!"]

Mr. SPEAKER: I must point out to the hon. Member that the Question which has been put to the right hon. Gentleman has been answered. If the hon. Member desires to raise any further question, he will have the opportunity of doing so when the Motion is made for the adjournment of the House.

Mr. CHAPLIN said, he would take advantage of that opportunity.

MALTA—ANCIENT MONUMENTS.

In reply to Mr. Gregory,

Mr. GRANT DUFF said: I have to thank my hon. Friend for calling my attention to this subject, as some of the ancient monuments of Malta are known to be of the highest importance. We will communicate with the local Government.

CRIMINAL LAW—THE "FREIHEIT."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I said yesterday, Mr. Speaker, in replying to a Question which the Attorney General put to me, that at the meeting of the House to-day I would ask the leave of the House to make a personal explanation with respect to a Question which I put to the Attorney General yesterday; but after I had made that remark, the hon. Baronet the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs came to the Table and made a very unqualified and uncompromising statement with respect to the Question I had put. Under these circumstances, I would be the last person in this House to suggest that even a shadow of doubt could possibly remain after the statement of the hon Baronet, and therefore I would not think of pursuing the matter further. But perhaps the House will allow me to remark that the Attorney General, in replying to me, permitted himself to suggest that I had pursued a course of conduct which, in his opinion, was not a proper one. [Sir William

Harcourt: Hear, hear!] It appears to be a foregone conclusion in the mind of the Home Secretary. It is a remarkable proof of his judicial mind. I do not wish to be drawn into any controversy with the right hon. Gentleman; but it is a matter of some importance to myself to point out that I put a Question after having received information which, if correct, was of undoubted gravity. On that information I put a Question to the Government, and I venture to say that course was perfectly Parliamentary. The Attorney General said I made charges against individuals; but I made no charges at all. ["Oh, oh!"] Well, in my view, I did not make charges. I asked for information; and I have never heard it laid down before that if an hon. Member upon certain facts or information asks a Question of the Government, he is to be accused of making charges against individuals. The Attorney General stated the course I ought to have pursued was to have conferred with his Colleagues before putting the Question. I venture to say that would not have been a Parliamentary course at all. Whenever it happens to be my good or bad fortune to be in conflict with a political opponent, it is on the floor of this House that the explanation shall take place, and it shall not be by conferences in the Lobby and whisperings in the Corridor, which invariably lead to misunderstandings, and which will inevitably produce a whole crop of insidious and slanderous rumours. That is the course which the Attorney General suggested. It is not the Parliamentary course. It is a course which may suggest itself to a legal mind, but which is not usually adopted by Members in this House. I merely wished to make these remarks in order to defend myself, and to say that in putting the Question I did to the Government across the floor of the House I was pursuing a perfectly Parliamentary and proper course, and one which I shall invariably pursue again in spite of any strictures of the Attorney General.

IRELAND—THE IRISH CONSTABULARY —THE LAND LEAGUE.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether a list of suspected persons is kept at each constabulary station in Ireland, comprising the names of farmers, &c. who have never committed any offence except that of being members of the Land League; and, whether each police recruit is bound to learn the description of each suspected person, and is instructed to keep a constant eye upon him?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, the Constabulary in Ireland were instructed to keep themselves aware of those persons whom they think were likely to commit crime, especially members of the Ribbon Societies or other dangerous secret societies. It could only be in so far as they were suspected persons in that respect that any member of the Land League could come within the category.

ARMY DISCIPLINE AND REGULATION ACT—CASE OF PATRICK KING.

Mr. HEALY asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is true that Patrick King, a private soldier in the 16th regiment, stationed at Cardonagh, county Donegal, was tried by district court martial at Ebrington Barracks, Londonderry, on 10th February 1881, and sentenced to two years' imprisonment, besides being dismissed Her Majesty's Service, for having at Carndonagh, while in a state of intoxication, cursed the Queen; whether the inquiry was conducted in secret; and, whether, considering that the evidence was of a contradictory character, and all the circumstances of the case, the War Office will re-consider the case, with a view to granting some remission of the sentence?

Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN (for Mr. Childers) replied: Private Patrick King, of the 16th Regiment, was tried by district court martial at the place mentioned in the Question, on the 27th of January, 1881, for having at Malin, in the county of Donegal, used traitorous and disloyal words regarding the Sovereign. That I need hardly say is a very grave military offence; and, under the 35th section of the Army Discipline and Regulation Act, renders the offender liable to imprisonment with hard labour. The case was very patiently investigated, the prisoner being allowed four days to bring up witnesses for the defence. I consider that it was amply proved, it being shown that the words used, which were of a coarse and offensive character, were addressed by the prisoner in a loud voice to a crowd of 20 or 30 persons outside the police barracks, and the only real defence being that the prisoner was partially intoxicated. The proceedings were not conducted in secret, but in the usual way in open Court; and the evidence was not, in my opinion, of a contradictory character upon any material point. Under these circumstances, the Court sentenced the prisoner to be imprisoned with hard labour for 672 days, and to be discharged with ignominy from Her Majesty's Service. The sentence was undoubtedly legal, and the matter, therefore, has passed from my jurisdiction to that of the military authorities. I am, however, instructed to say that there is no present intention of interfering with the sentence of the Court, but that the sentence may come under review on the prisoner's petition, when it will be considered whether any remission should be made.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Prime Minister, Whether, in view of his statement the previous night that Ireland was in a peaceable condition, it was his intention to introduce a Bill to repeal the Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act passed this Session; and also whether it was his intention to direct that the parties who were imprisoned under that Act would be forthwith released?

[No reply was given to the Question.]

NOTICE OF RESOLUTIONS.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) BILL.

MR. BRODRICK (for Lord ELCHO) gave Notice that the noble Earl would move the following Resolution on the Motion for the second reading of the Bill:—

> "That this House, while willing to consider favourably any just measure, founded upon sound principles, that will benefit tenants of land in Ireland, is of opinion that the Land Law (Ireland) Bill is, in its main provisions, economically unsound, unjust, and impolitic."

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: I beg to give Notice that on an early day after Easter I shall move the following Resolution:—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, the course pursued by Her Majesty's Government with respect to the rising in the Transvaal, so far as it has yet been explained to Parliament, has resulted in the loss of valuable lives without vindicating the authority of the Crown, is fraught with danger to the future tranquillity and safety of Her Majesty's dominions in South Africa, and fails to provide for the fulfilment of the obligations contracted by this Country towards the European settlers and native population of the Transvaal."

On the first day after Easter on which the House meets I shall ask the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government what facilities he can afford for the discussion of that Motion.

MR. GLADSTONE: In the present state of Public Business, without at all declining to take some measures for affording facilities, I certainly feel quite justified in asking the right hon. Gentleman to consult those among whom he sits in order to see whether it would be possible for him, as an independent Member, to find some facilities for himself.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: I would beg to remind the right hon. Gentleman that all discussion has been postponed twice on the distinct understanding that an opportunity would be provided.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON: With reference to the Notice which has just been given, I beg to give Notice that I will move the following Amendment:—

> "That this House, believing that a prolongation of the struggle with the Boers would have promoted neither the honour nor the interest of this Country, views with satisfaction the peaceful arrangement of the Transvaal difficulty which has been arrived at by Her Majesty's Government."

MOTION.

PARLIAMENT—THE EASTER RECESS.

MR. GLADSTONE, I have to move that the House, at its rising, adjourn to Monday, the 25th of April. I do so in the belief that it will be the wish of the House to adjourn at the close of the Morning Sitting; and I take the opportunity of saying that the late Secretary of State for the Colonies (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) was perfectly correct in his reference to what I stated on a former occasion in connection with a discussion on the subject of the Transvaal. I shall have great pleasure if, as an independent Member, he may be able to find an early day for his Motion after the re-assembling of the House; but I do not recede from what I previously said; and if he is not able to do so in that way, I shall give him the first opportunity I can find for the discussion.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House, at its rising, do adjourn until Monday 25th April."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I think, Sir, I may venture to say, on behalf of my right hon. Friend the Member for East Gloucestershire, that he will readily comply with the suggestion of the Prime Minister, and endeavour in the ballot which is presently to be taken to obtain a day on which to bring forward the important Motion of which he has given Notice. But in case he is not successful, he hopes, and we hope, that an opportunity will be given to him by the Government at no distant day for the discussion of that question. It is one of the very greatest and most pressing importance; it is one that we have abstained from raising during the last few days or few weeks, because we were under the impression that information would probably be given to us, which it now appears we are not likely to receive before we separate. We have abstained until it became impossible to be silent any longer in case of misconstruction, and, consequently, my right hon. Friend has given his Notice. I am sure the feeling of the House will be one of entire accordance with the Motion which has just been made by the Prime Minister. I think the House will be satisfied that the time has come when we may take a little repose after the lengthened and exhausting period which Members have spent in this House; and I could only have wished that our holidays might not have been embittered by such severe holiday tasks as they are likely to be. I can assure the Prime Minister and the House that when I made the appeal to the right hon. Gentleman a few minutes ago to put off the discussion on the second reading of the Land Law (Ireland) Bill to a somewhat later day than the first Monday after Easter, I did so without the slightest intention of interfering with or postponing the real discussion of that measure, or of impeding the progress of Business. It has been throughout the Session my desire—and the desire of those with whom I have the honour to act—to facilitate, as far as possible, the progress of Business; and I think that the House will do us the justice to admit that, even when we have occasionally found it necessary to oppose the proposals made by the Government, which seemed, perhaps, to be an opposition intended to retard the progress of Business, we were really acting in the best sense in its favour. I undertake to say that if we, the Conservative Party, had not had the courage to stand up some weeks ago to resist the proposal made by the Government for the declaration of "urgency" on Supply, we should at the present time have been in less good temper, and should have done less good work than has been done. I do not wish to go back on that time, or to throw blame on the Government for the proposal; but I am satisfied that it was the duty—and that it will be the duty—of the Conservative Members of this House, while they abstain carefully from anything in the nature of obstruction to the Business of the Government, to insist on their rights as an Opposition to discharge their functions in fully criticizing all the measures which the Government may introduce, and in demanding full time and opportunity for their discussion. We look on the last three months which we have spent within these walls with no feeling of dissatisfaction, as far as we are concerned. We cannot but feel that there have been many important questions raised, and many important statements made, which to us, at all events, have had what I might call rather a refreshing effect. We have seen many charges that were made against us practically disproved and practically abandoned by those who a year or so ago were so free in their language of censure against us. I myself will confess to the House that I have spent some considerable part of this Session—as, indeed, I did of last Session also—in great anxiety of mind, because I understood that one of the principal functions which the present Government were to discharge was that of setting to rights the disordered condition of the finances of the country, and altogether upsetting and reversing the very unbusinesslike and unstatesmanlike character of all the proposals of the late Administration. When I heard the magnificent heralding with which the friends of the Government came forward just before the introduction of the Budget, I thought I was to receive a tremendous castigation; but when the event happened, I was pleased to find that, after all, though the Prime Minister made an eloquent speech, and one of great length and great interest, it resulted in almost next to nothing, and certainly very little indeed that we, or I personally can complain of, as a reversal of my own policy, a policy for which I can be held to be responsible. Indeed, I have sometimes almost felt as I could imagine King Richard III. to have felt in his tomb when he found he was to be rehabilitated. For after observations have been made upon one measure and another—and observations have been made which I have received with something more than equanimity—it has been not a little remarkable that in the course of these three months we have had occasion to see the very serious results of the conduct which Her Majesty's Government had promised before they took Office, and the difficulties which they have created for themselves. I do not wish to enter upon such personal questions to which I have alluded; but I think there are questions upon which the country has had serious reason to regret the difference between the course pursued by Ministers before and after they took Office. I cannot exaggerate the importance which I attach to that particular subject to which my right hon. Friend (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) is about to draw attention. Certainly, there are many questions in relation to the policy which has been pursued by both Governments in South Africa which are open to fair discussion; but when we are lectured, as we have been, by the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Grant Duff), who is such a master of the "tone" that ought to be taken in putting Questions, or in giving Answers, I must say that the tone which has been taken by the right hon. Gentleman himself, as the representative of the Government in this important Department, is a tone which I think ought to be very greatly deprecated. During this Session we have not forgotten some of that fine language, and those quotations from Virgil about *debellare superbos*, &c., which produced a wholly different effect on the minds of the people of this country from that which now, unfortunately for the Government, prevails. I should be entirely unjustified, however, if I were to enter at length into questions of this sort. I am satisfied with pointing generally to the peculiar character of the pre-Easter Session, and assuring the House that we have endeavoured, as they may have seen, to promote, as far as we possibly could, the proper conduct of Business—and that similarly we shall persevere during the remainder of the Session in the discharge of that duty. I am bound to say, with regard to the particular question as to the time of taking the second reading of the Land Law (Ireland) Bill, I do not think it would cause loss, but would rather save time, if we were allowed ample opportunity of considering that measure before we commit ourselves on the second reading. With regard to the Motion of the noble Lord the Member for Haddingtonshire (Lord Elcho), of which Notice has been given, that is a Motion made entirely on his own responsibility. It is not to be taken as implying that we have been able to make up our minds on the grave questions which have been submitted to us. The statement made by the Prime Minister yesterday was one which involved large considerations of policy of every kind, and which demands the most serious consideration. Demands were made or indicated which the country ought to have a full opportunity of considering, and which we ought to have an opportunity of considering in consultation among ourselves while we are able to freely meet and consult. We are denied that. We shall think it our duty to discuss this matter fully; and if the result of taking the second reading of the Bill immediately upon the House re-assembling causes a longer time to be occupied in its discussion, that will not be our fault—we shall not be responsible for the delay that may take place. But it is not our intention at all to interpose anything in the nature of needless delay in the discussion of a measure of such immense importance and of such great difficulty—a measure which, if we may trust report, has run through no less than 22 editions in the Cabinet, and cost the Government the loss of the services of one of their most eminent Colleagues. We are rejoiced to have so lengthened a holiday, and my right hon. Friend (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) will take his chance of finding an independent day on which he may bring forward his Motion relating to the Transvaal; but if he does not succeed in obtaining one, we will trust to the redemption of the pledge given by the Government for facilitating that important discussion.

Mr. TOTTENHAM said, when the right hon. Gentleman spoke about the second reading of the Land Law (Ireland) Bill, he gave as one of the practical reasons why the discussion should not be delayed, that no appeal had been made by the Irish Members, and he glanced towards the seats below the Gangway, as if they were the only Irish Members who sat there. He would remind the House that there were Irish Members and Irish Members. He would suggest that the discussion on the second reading should be postponed until, at least, one or two days after re-assembling. And in making this appeal, he felt he was only repeating the sentiments of every Irish Member who sat above the Gangway, the majority of whom came from the North; as otherwise, those who wished to come to Parliament on the Monday would have to start on Saturday, as there were no trains in the North of Ireland on Sunday.

Mr. A. M. SULLIVAN ventured to appeal to the Prime Minister that, while giving all necessary opportunities for consideration, he should not allow any unnecessary delay to interpose, for one reason out of many—namely, the peculiar reason that in the Bill there would be a merciful protection for the unfortunate and wretched people who were now spilling their blood in a struggle with the officers of the law in Ireland, who were carrying out the ejectments which were commenced. If the Bill was passed within a reasonable time, all the ejectment processes now initiated would be brought within the beneficent protection of one of the clauses of the Bill. Therefore, he appealed to the Prime Minister, that while affording to the House all reasonable opportunities for discussion, he would not allow the Bill to be unnecessarily delayed. The late Chancellor of the Exchequer, in the little fusillade he had let off, which might be indulged in on occasions like the present, took credit to himself that the House was just now in better humour than it would have been if it had allowed the Government to vote "urgency" as to Supply. But he hoped he might be allowed to point out that if "urgency" in Supply had been found unnecessary, it was because of the unusual forbearance of the Irish Members during the past three weeks. ["Oh!"] He fearlessly placed himself on the recollection of the House as to whether it was not true that from the day that the Bill over which they had such protracted contention passed, whether they did not almost absolutely neglect their duties to their constituents in the extent to which they abstained from discussing the various items in Supply? The Home Rule Members could have played a part which would have rendered the finishing of the Government Business impossible; but they did not want to put the Government in that position. On the other hand, if they had interposed, they could have knocked the right hon. Gentleman's (Sir Stafford Northcote's) minute calculations against the adoption of "urgency" in Committee of Supply to the winds; but his Friends had exercised this reticence for certain reasons. And although he did not wish to parade them as benefactors of the House in any exaggerated degree, he thought it right to say what he had on their behalf. He would now take this opportunity of saying a few words in reference to recent arrests in Ireland under the Act passed a short time ago, and he would ask the attention, more especially, of the Chief Secretary for Ireland. A young friend of his, a Mr. Higgins, of Westmeath, who was arrested the other day, was a young man whom he knew to be well-conducted, respectable, intelligent, kindly, and, he believed, virtuous.

Message to attend the Lords Commissioners;—

The House went;—and being returned;—

Mr. Speaker *reported* the *Royal Assent to* several Bills.

Question again proposed, "That this House, at its rising, do adjourn until Monday 25th April."

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY was glad to find that the Government intended to take the discussion upon the Land Law

(Ireland) Bill immediately after the Recess; but, in the meantime, he ventured to make an appeal to the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant in reference to the present condition of the country. In the Question he put to the right hon. Gentleman earlier in the day, he called his attention to the fact that in one of the Irish counties—as, indeed, in most of them—ejectment notices were being served with lavish hand, and the appeal he ventured to make to him was that he should endeavour, as far as possible, by advice or otherwise, to stay the execution of these decrees, and interpose between certain harsh landlords and an unhappy population. The right hon. Gentleman stated that he knew nothing of these decrees until they reached a stage when they had to be put into execution with the assistance of the law; but it did not appear to him to be difficult for the right hon. Gentleman to ascertain, as a matter of private information, that these notices were being scattered in showers over the country, and that the minds of the people were disturbed at the prospect before them. He would appeal to the right hon. Gentleman to say whether he would not, as far as possible, hold back the armed assistance of the police and the soldiers in the enforcement of harsh decrees, which would shortly, he trusted, be against the letter of the law, as they were at present against the spirit of all civilized law and equity. He strongly appealed to him to discourage the carrying out of these decrees so far as to withhold where he could the armed assistance of the military in enabling the landlords to recover their exorbitant rents. The right hon. Gentleman favoured him that afternoon with a somewhat benignant lecture as to the kind of advice he ought to give the people of Ireland. He could only say neither he nor his Colleagues, so far as he was aware, had ever advised the Irish people to withhold any payment of just rents; but as the right hon. Gentleman gave some advice to him, he should in return advise the right hon. Gentleman to do his best to discontinue the assistance of the police and military in enforcing the harsh and unjust decrees of the landlords, which he hoped before long would go against the very letter of the law. He appealed to the right hon. Gentleman, before they entered upon the beginning of this great discussion, to do everything he could to prevent a recurrence of those discouraging, ominous, and terrible warnings which within the last few days had given the Government another proof of the necessity of making the strongest effort to interfere between the Irish tenant population and the enforcement of cruel and unjust evictions.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: To prevent misconception, Sir, I think I ought at once to state, in reference to an impression which appears to prevail that I and and those with whom I act can say whether the law should be carried out or not, that that is altogether a mistake. The general administration of the law is independent of our control. The magistrates and the police are bound to give assistance to the Sheriff if he calls for it. It is not in the power of the Irish Government to refuse it. If we did refuse it, we would be doing what is unconstitutional, encouraging a breach of the law, and interfering with the enforcement of debts between man and man; and many of the processes referred to are not for rent, but for ordinary debt. It is our duty to see that whatever is done in the way of assisting the Sheriff is done with as much forbearance as possible, and with every precaution to prevent loss of life. No one can more regret than I do what has occurred within the last few days in Ireland; but I must again repeat that if advice were given to the tenants not to oppose the law, it would certainly be advice which would lead to their good, and to the preservation of law and order. I do not wish to make remarks upon what might have happened; but I cannot help saying that it is a notorious fact that Irish tenants have been recommended, and very strongly recommended, not to pay their rents, even if they were able to pay them. This I must say—that, in consequence of what has happened, I have given the strongest possible recommendation, and, as far as it has been in my power, the strongest possible order, that where it is necessary to give protection to persons who have to enforce legal rights, such protection should not be given unless the constabulary and magistracy are able to give it in such force as to prevent the possibility of resistance. That, I think, is the best way to preserve order. But may I not hope, after the measure which was brought in last night, that the Irish people, as well as the people of the United Kingdom, will be convinced that the Government are anxious to do all in their power to promote the interest of the people of Ireland? May I not hope, too, that there will be an effort made on all sides, and by all persons who desire to see the condition of Ireland improved, to have as much quietness and as little disorder and resistance to the law as are possible?

MR. CHAPLIN: No one doubts, Sir, that the Government have gone to the very limits of concession in the Bill they brought in last night; and I only hope, after what has fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, that he will not weaken the authority of the law by the instructions he has given to such an extent as that it will be difficult to vindicate the law and preserve the peace. I rise to renew the appeal I made just now, which was of a character exactly the opposite of that made by the two hon. Members who spoke on this side. I was under the impression, Sir, that we were about to start for our holidays; but if we are, during the Recess, to be called upon to master the provisions of undoubtedly the most difficult and complex measure I ever remember to have been submitted to this House, in a manner adequate for its proper discussion—then, so far from passing a holiday, we will be engaged in the hardest work of the whole Session. I fully admit the difficulty of the situation. There is, no doubt, the present condition of Ireland to consider; and there is the time which has been consumed by measures of coercion which have been passed this Session to remember; and also the arrears and delay of Business which were thus brought about. But I cannot help pointing out that both for the present state of Ireland, for delay, and for the necessity for coercion, it is the Government, and the Government chiefly, if not entirely, who are responsible. And, no doubt, the Government are responsible for the condition of Ireland to-day. They were warned 10 years ago, at the time of passing their land legislation in 1870, that, in all probability, that legislation would produce a condition and state of affairs such as we have unhappily witnessed. But with regard to delay and arrears of Business, what is our position to-day? Why, the Government undertook in the most solemn manner during last Session—and it is right that this fact should be pointed out—they most solemnly pledged themselves to call Parliament together in the autumn if it was found that the existing laws were not sufficient to maintain order in Ireland. It is acknowledged by the Government that the law was not sufficient. If the law had been sufficient the Government would have maintained order. The question was put to them this Session why they did not fulfil the pledge they had given; and the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant said—"I will make no further allusion to that question, because I have already answered it." I deny that the question has ever been answered by the right hon. Gentleman, or that he has ever justified himself for breaking the pledge he gave. The right hon. Gentleman forfeited his pledge, and the result has been three months' waste, and that measures of the utmost stringency became necessary for Ireland. With reference to some other Business of the Session, my right hon. Friend the Leader of the Opposition referred to the Budget, and I hope it will not be out of place if I refer to that subject. I heard with some surprise and regret the observations which fell from the Prime Minister with regard to the effect of the repeal of the Malt Tax. The right hon. Gentleman seems to me to speak with two voices on this subject. Last year the repeal of the tax was announced as an immense boon for the benefit of the farmers; and now the right hon. Gentleman says it was introduced as a measure for the liberation of trade. I must say that I was astonished when I heard the right hon. Gentleman, apparently in terms of exultation, tell the House how the repeal had already reduced the price of barley by 10*s.* a-quarter, and had caused the use of rice and maize, both of which facts must inflict great damage on the farmers. We on this side of the House may have been wrong in our views on the question of the Malt Tax; but I do think the right hon. Gentleman ought to have refrained from using terms of exultation, when he knew that a Bill introduced solely for the interest of the farmers had turned out to be most injurious to their interests. I need hardly remind the House of the recent votes given by the Government and those who sit on their side of the House on two other subjects. I do not think the farmers will thank them for their votes, either on the question of the outbreak of the foot-and-mouth disease, or their more recent vote on the question of the highways. They were accompanied into the Lobby by those who by the name of their organization might be supposed to represent the farmers. I allude to the members of the Farmers' Alliance. Their action confirms a suspicion I have long entertained that the Farmers' Alliance is a political and partizan clique, and that it was not formed by the farmers, but by the hon. Member for Bedfordshire (Mr. James Howard); and when the world at large becomes acquainted with the fact, it will not be surprised at the fact that the votes of the hon. Members to whom I allude are directly against the agricultural interest. There are some other matters for our reflection of a less agreeable character than those which I have mentioned. I will not allude to the latest performance of the Government—the Land Law (Ireland) Bill; but I do trust that never again will an English Parliament separate for an Easter or any other Recess under the sense of shame and humiliation with which we shall separate to-night, when we come to consider the depth of degradation to which we have been brought by the conduct of the Government in relation to South Africa at the bidding of that party of peace at any price, whose false and utterly un-English views have been the cause of more wars and more misfortunes to this country than I believe any Member of this House will care to think of or remember. I do not hesitate to say, in his presence and hearing, that there is no man in this country so responsible for the war in the Transvaal as the present Prime Minister. I say deliberately that by his reckless and inflammatory speeches during the General Election—and, for aught I know, for the purposes of the Election—he directly incited, and was largely instrumental in bringing about, the rising in South Africa, which has been so fatal to the character, prestige, and reputation of this country. Having succeeded in his attempt to grasp at power, the right hon. Gentleman next commenced a war which it is now as clear as day was an unnecessary and wholly unjustifiable war, which has been concluded by a dishonourable peace. I remember that at the close of the General Election, when he had won a fight the sole object of which was the political destruction of his great opponent—whose illness is cause of grief in all circles—the right hon. Gentleman said—"We are now going to open a new and happier chapter in the history of our country." I commend that sentence to the careful attention of hon. Members on both sides of the House and of the country during the Recess. For my part, I have not yet discovered in what part of Her Majesty's Dominions that "new and happier chapter" has begun. Whether it is on the Continent of Europe, where we have already been once led by the Prime Minister to the very verge of war, and where, at this moment, the great issues of peace or war are still trembling in the balance; whether it is in India, where many who are more competent to express an opinion believe the policy of the Government has dealt a fatal blow, not only at the prestige, but at the safety, of our Empire there; whether it is in South Africa; whether it is in Ireland, where we are even now witnessing the scenes to which the hon. Member for Longford (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) has called our attention; or, coming nearer home, whether it is in this House, where, under his guidance we have witnessed scenes absolutely unparalleled in this Assembly; whether it is in any of these places I cannot tell; but this I do know—that if the last 12 months' experience under the auspices of the right hon. Gentleman constitutes "a new and happier chapter" in the history of England, then I pray God that, so long as the name of England is maintained among the nations of the world, we shall never again enter upon the opening of another new and happy chapter in our history. Unless I utterly mistake the feelings of the people of this country, they will, when they contrast the policy of the present Prime Minister with that of his Predecessors—whose courage, patience, and patriotic generosity when in Opposition, cannot be forgotten—they will be smitten with a feeling of deep remorse, and will hasten to repair the error which they committed in a moment of unequalled political excitement, by pronouncing on the Ministry of the day a just and righteous condemnation, and describing them as the worst and most incapable Administration that ever encumbered the Treasury Bench or mismanaged the whole Business and dishonoured the name of the Empire of the Queen.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I am a great deal too much accustomed to the orations of the hon. Member to feel the smallest surprise, disappointment, or displeasure at that which he has just delivered. It has been an oration entirely in character, and I cannot wish him to depart from himself. It would be an abuse of the time and patience of the House if I were to follow him through all the details of the speech which has drawn forth such marked approbation and audible applause from the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton). I will leave the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire under the influence of that shame and humiliation which, in common with the hon. and learned Member for Bridport, he has been endeavouring to heap upon us. I have some consolation in thinking that these are not the sentiments shared by the majority of the Members of this House. I yielded to the desire of the hon. Member who addressed the House at this juncture because I expected to hear from him some original observations of a practical kind as to the proposal I had to make for the date of the second reading of this Bill. I am sorry to say that on that subject, on which my expectations had been highly raised when I knew the hon. Member was about to speak, he has added nothing whatever to the materials for forming a judgment upon the question, and he has not shown the slightest shred or tittle of a reason why I should depart from the decision at which we, as a Government, have arrived. The hon. Member for Leitrim (Mr. Tottenham) says that I was not justified in appealing to the judgment of the Irish Members; "for," says he, "there are Irish Members and Irish Members." I am not quite sure of that; but what I admit is that there are Irish Members and an Irish Member. An Irish Member has made an appeal that I believe to be in complete contravention of the sentiments of nine-tenths of those other Members who come from Ireland, and who know that on all grounds, and not the least of all on the ground which has reference to current proceedings for ejectments, it is of the utmost consequence that we should lose no time that we can properly spare in proceeding to the consideration of the Land Law (Ireland) Bill, and says that if we do that he shall be obliged—I can hardly command any muscle of my body in repeating his words—that he will have to leave his home on the Saturday preceding the Monday on which Parliament will re-assemble. When I consider what is involved in that statement —the anxiety, the premature action which it will bring about—and when I recollect that on the other side I have nothing to allege but the interests of the Empire and the state of Public Business, I am overwhelmed; but I am bound to say that those considerations which I have last named ought to induce us from their real weight to expect of the hon. Gentleman that he shall rise to the height of this great occasion and leave his home on the Saturday evening. Then, with regard to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition, I may say that the right hon. Baronet has introduced an innovation—innovations are generally in favour on the Opposition side of the House—on the present occasion by making the humble occasion of a Motion for the adjournment of the House the opportunity of pronouncing, in the first place, a glowing eulogy upon the proceedings of the Conservative Party. I do not in the least begrudge him the satisfaction of pronouncing that eulogy, and his hearers on that side of the House the pardonable pleasure of hearing it. Indeed, I am almost tempted to follow his example, and to pronounce a corresponding eulogy, which I could with a perfect good conscience, and with equal warmth of tone, on the proceedings during the last three months of the majority of this House. I will, however, exercise self-denial in the matter, and will pass on, refusing to myself the pleasure of speaking such a panegyric, and of giving those who hear me any satisfaction that they would have derived from hearing it. But I must say that when I pass on to the other portion of the speech of the right hon. Baronet, I again find something of a novel character in his choosing the humble occasion of a Motion for the adjournment of the House for making a general attack on, and a denunciation of, the conduct of the Members of Her Majesty's Government, and for asserting that it had inflicted grave mischief on the country. He says that he is astonished at the abandonment of the charges which, before the late General Election, were so loudly pronounced, and which were aimed at those who constituted the late Administration. Sir, I have no desire to intrude into the sanctuary of the right hon. Gentleman's mind, nor to examine into what, in his opinion, are those charges, or what, in his opinion, constitutes their abandonment. For my own part, I think it no part of my duty to go back to a repetition of those charges, though it would be a great satisfaction to me if I could find and feel—which I have not yet found and felt—that there were any of those charges which I could abandon. I am obliged to say so much. It would be invidious to go further. Then my right hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies is blamed for the answer he gave to a Question that was put to him. I must say that I am always sorry when personal matters of this kind are introduced into a debate; but I must say I vindicate that tone. I think it was thoroughly justified by the occasion which called it forth, and that the opinion which I now express was in the most unequivocal manner at the moment the tone was assumed declared to be the opinion of a large portion of this House; so that I do not think my right hon. Friend need too severely wince under the chastisement he has received. For my part, whether it be upon the Malt Tax, upon the Budget, on South Africa, or on Afghanistan—upon which I must say that I thought that the appetite even of the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire would have been tolerably well satiated by what he and his Friends got the other night in the speech of my noble Friend the Secretary of State for India, not less than even in the remarkable division which followed it—with respect to all these things, on the proper occasion when they come forward in the regular course, we shall be able to meet, and I think to confute, charges such as those of the hon. Member; but I decline to confute them, to deal with them, or to acknowledge them at all upon this Motion for the adjournment of the House to the 25th of April.

Earl PERCY said, he was surprised that the right hon. Gentleman, in his position of Leader of that House, had thought it consistent with his duty to make a personal attack upon the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton), and also upon the hon. Member for Leitrim (Mr. Tottenham), who had said nothing but what he was entitled to say. In his (Earl Percy's) opinion, the latter attack was most unjustifiable and was most uncourteous. The hon. Member for Leitrim had merely stated that the arrangement proposed to be made by the right hon. Gentleman was personally inconvenient to himself, and the right hon. Gentleman had thereupon held the hon. Member up to ridicule as preferring his own personal convenience to the interests of the people of Ireland. That was the first time he (Earl Percy) had heard the Leader of the House hold a Member up to ridicule, not only for the amusement of the House, but in a manner which was scarcely courteous. The right hon. Gentleman had said that the attitude which had been taken by Her Majesty's Government in making these personal attacks upon hon. Members was supported by the majority of hon. Members opposite. In that case, all he (Earl Percy) could say was, the more the pity for hon. Members opposite, and the more the pity for the House of Commons. There were those who were of opinion that the tone of the House of Commons during the present Session was in strong contrast with that of former Houses of Commons. He should have thought that the Prime Minister, who, he believed, had a sincere desire to uphold the dignity of that House, would, with his long experience, have asserted his privilege as Leader of Her Majesty's Government, by moderating the zeal of his Followers, and by inducing them to show to hon. Members on the Opposition Benches the fair play and courtesy which one gentleman usually showed to another.

Sir JOHN LUBBOCK appealed to hon. Members opposite to allow the discussion to close, in order that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade might make his statement with regard to the Bankruptcy Bill—an important measure, with reference to which the whole mercantile community was extremely anxious. It was very desirable that the Bill should be published before the Recess.

Mr. O'DONNELL said, he had heard with great pleasure the announcement of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief

Secretary for Ireland that more care would be exercised in the regulation of the proceedings of the Constabulary shooting parties in Ireland. He understood from the right hon. Gentleman's remarks that, for the future, the Governmental proceedings for carrying out an unjust and a condemned law would be conducted on such a scale as to render the resistance of the unarmed people to the forces of the Crown still more hopeless than at present. The right hon. Gentleman justified the action of the Government by saying it was the absolute duty of the Executive, in all cases, to carry out any law, however bad, which might be in the Statute Book. There were, however, many laws in the Statute Book which were not carried out. While admitting the difficulty of the right hon. Gentleman's position, he ventured to think that, at any rate, when the shooting party was called into requisition, it should be a recognized thing that they should be accompanied by a magistrate, upon whom might fall the duty and glory of ordering the shooting down of the most miserable sections of Her Majesty's subjects in Ireland. It was quite clear that the people of Ireland, knowing the Government were bound to redress their grievances, felt all the more keenly the hardship of being now deprived of the rights of property which in a few weeks were to be considered their own. So surely as the Constabulary went forth to hunt the people out of their homes, so surely would the most disastrous occurrences be the result. They had seen several instances of that lately, and he trusted the Government might not consider it derogatory to their authority, or in contravention of any existing laws, to provide that on every occasion a collision might be expected a magistrate should be present to go through the formality of reading the Riot Act, if necessary. He must take that opportunity of protesting against the action of Her Majesty's Government in Afghanistan, which amounted to little more than a mere Party manœuvre. If Her Majesty's Government wished to show that they really desired to consult the feelings of the Afghan people, let them withdraw support from the usurper Abdurrahman. He could not, however, think they did, because they were supplying arms and ammunition to a foreign usurper for the purpose of shooting down the loyal adherents of the rightful Ruler of the country. It was very probable that his opinions might not square with the opinions of the large majority of hon. Members in condemning the policy of Her Majesty's Government in Afghanistan; but he had before in that House had to stand alone, as much against the Liberal Party as against the Tory Party, in condemning the annexation of the Transvaal; and while he was still unshaken in his conviction as to the policy of that annexation, he could not admit that the manner in which the Liberal Party had acted lately was creditable. In fact, it was equally discreditable to the Liberal Party, and injurious and disgraceful to the country at large.

MR. TOTTENHAM desired to say a word of personal explanation in reference to the attack which had been made upon him by the Prime Minister. He should not have thought of interposing such a trivial argument as personal inconvenience in the way of a great measure of the Government, had not that line of argument been started by the Prime Minister himself, who distinctly stated that the convenience of Irish Members sitting below the Gangway would be an element in the consideration of Her Majesty's Government in fixing the day for the second reading of the Irish Land Bill, and he thought the convenience of those Members sitting above the Gangway was entitled to as full consideration as those below it.

MR. HEALY hoped, if the Chief Secretary for Ireland went over to Ireland during the Recess, he would insist on more care being taken in the arrests that were made. In every case of arrest, where the person arrested was a farmer, he had the sympathy of the whole population, who sent their horses and gave all the help in their power; and if the person arrested happened to be a shopkeeper, he had equal sympathy from the townspeople; yet the right hon, Gentleman said these persons were the terror of the population of their districts.

MR. BIGGAR thought the Prime Minister was quite justified in the tone which he adopted in regard to some of the Tory Members. The Tory Party, during the present Session, had succeeded to a wonderful extent in dragging the so-called Liberal Party through the mire. They had succeeded in getting them to abolish trial by jury in Ireland, at the very time that the Prime Minister was giving credit to the Emperor of Russia for introducing trial by jury into Russia. Thus, while Russia was going forward, and being praised for it by the Liberal Party in England, that Party was going in the very opposite direction as regarded Ireland. Then, the so-called Liberal Party had succeeded in abolishing the rights of persons charged with offences in Ireland; and the so-called Liberal Government had succeeded in closing the mouths of Irish Members in that House, when they condemned the dishonest grounds upon which coercion was asked for by that so-called Liberal Government, and when, only last night, the Prime Minister acknowledged that Ireland was in a thoroughly peaceable state, and that coercion was uncalled for. He (Mr. Biggar) would lose no opportunity for showing to the people of Ireland the hypocrisy of this self-willed Government, carried out as it was by a tyrannical and mechanical majority.

Mr. WARTON said, he would not have risen but for the fact that he had been twice honoured by the Premier's notice. If the right hon. Gentleman wished to shorten debates, the best way to do so was to treat hon. Gentlemen on that (the Opposition) side with ordinary civility and courtesy. If he wished to lengthen debates, the best way of doing it was by making rude and personal attacks. He (Mr. Warton) rose to enter a protest, not so much against the personal rudeness of the Premier—he could not help being rude, as he was great in everything but temper—but against the nauseating way in which the right hon. Gentleman talked boastfully about his majority, and would take the liberty of warning him that, as had been the case before, that majority might disappear. He had referred to the division on the Afghan question, on which the Government had a majority once, and once only. On many occasions the Government had only had one-half or one-third of their nominal majority. Moreover, it was well to have a giant's strength, but tyrannous to use it as a giant.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolved, That this House, at its rising, do adjourn until Monday 25th April.

Mr. Biggar

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

BANKRUPTCY BILL.

MOTION FOR LEAVE.

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [7th April], "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the Law of Bankruptcy."—(*Mr. Hibbert.*)

Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN said, that in asking the House to assent to the introduction of a Bill to amend the Law of Bankruptcy, he must confess that the history of past attempts to deal with that subject was such as to discourage anything like exaggerated or over-sanguine expectations. It was a history of continual, and he might say periodical changes, involving very considerable vacillations on the part of Parliament, following the current of public opinion in this country, each in turn the subject of great expectations, and each in turn also doomed, after a few years' experience, to disappointment and failure. He supposed he might say that, of all that legislative work, the Act of 1869 had been the most unsatisfactory and the most unfortunate. It was the object of the almost unanimous condemnation of all classes. At the present time, Committees of the House of Commons; Chambers of Commerce, representing the commercial interests of the country; the Judges, who had to administer the law; the officials, who had to supervise its execution; bankers; lawyers; accountants; all the representatives of the commercial classes, joined in swelling the universal chorus of dissatisfaction and disapprobation. In those circumstances it was not surprising that since 1869 there had been no fewer than 13 proposals before the House for amending that Act. Six of those proposals had been Government Bills; but, owing to circumstances into which he need not enter, none of them had gone beyond the preliminary stages. He did not think, however, that the delay which had occurred had been altogether without some compensating advantage. In coming to his task he found that the road had, in a large degree, been cleared for him. He would avail himself, without hesitation, to a very considerable extent, of the labours of his Predecessors; and it would be seen by the provisions of the Bill which he was about to explain that he had largely taken advantage both of the suggestions which he had gathered from the Bills of the late Government, and also from those introduced from time to time by private Members. He had thought it desirable to make himself acquainted with the opinions, sometimes inconsistent, of the different organizations dealing with the subject, and of persons who, from their representative character or from special study, were entitled to be considered as authorities; and he had, as far as he possibly could, to satisfy the desires which their experience had led them to express. He had accordingly had the advantage of communicating with numerous persons who were greatly interested in the subject, and he desired at once to acknowledge the services which many of them had rendered him. He had especially to thank his hon. Friend the Member for Bristol (Mr. S. Morley), who had put into his hands a Bill which he had drafted and had intended to introduce, and which contained many useful suggestions. He had likewise had the opportunity of consulting with the experienced County Court Judge of Birmingham, where, perhaps, more bankruptcy cases came up for decision than at any other local Court in the Kingdom; and he was, moreover, indebted to the experience and advice of the President of the Incorporated Law Society; to Mr. John Smith, who was a high authority on that particular subject; to the President of the Institute of Accountants; whilst he had likewise to acknowledge suggestions received from an influential deputation which waited upon him from the Institute of Bankers. On one point there was a concurrence of opinion among the authorities on this subject—all agreed in condemning the Act of 1869. That Act had only been in operation two or three years when discontent began to manifest itself with its working. In consequence of that, the late Lord Chancellor (Earl Cairns) appointed a Committee, experienced in the subject, to consider the matter, who, in 1875, made a Report, in which they said—

> "We find a general concurrence of opinion that the Act of 1869 has not, in its working, satisfied the expectations of the public, inasmuch as it affords great facilities for a debtor to relieve himself of his liabilities, while there is great extravagance in administering and long delay in winding-up estates."

No legislation followed; but the objections continued to grow; and, in 1879, a Memorial from bankers and merchants of the City of London, one of the most influential ever presented to any Government, was presented to the late Prime Minister. In that Memorial it was said that the defects of the Bankruptcy Law might be stated as follows:—

> "First, it affords new and vicious facilities to insolvent persons to escape from the reasonabl control and supervision of their creditors by private arrangements wholly beyond the jurisdiction of any public Court or Judge. And by reason of these facilities it is the fact that every year there is an increasing number of cases in which the grievous and dangerous scandal is exhibited of men failing for vast liabilities, and finding it easy, in consequence of the defects of the present law, to get their speedy discharge by the payment of no dividend, or a dividend of some small fraction of a pound, or even shilling, and without being subjected to any efficient investigation of their affairs, or of the conduct and proceedings which have led to their insolvency- Second, that the present law is rendered practi. cally nugatory by leaving to those who have already incurred losses the investigation of the bankrupt's affairs, and has laid upon them the obligation of exposing the misconduct of bankrupts, which, in the plain interests of public morality and commercial policy, should be dealt with, not as a private matter, but by a public Court and Judge. Experience has amply proved that reliance on creditors to perform these onerous and costly functions is entirely futile. The Bankruptcy Act of 1861 did contain, in Clause 159, provisions for the interference and action of the Court in all cases of misconduct on the part of the bankrupt, with a view to his exposure and punishment; but, in consequence of the failure of legislation to provide an efficient Court and Judge, these most salutary provisions were never enforced."

These statements were the strongest possible condemnation of the operation of the Act, and they were fully justified by the Reports which had been published from time to time by the Controller General in Bankruptcy, to whom he thought the thanks of the commercial classes were justly due, inasmuch as he was, if not the first, at all events the most prominent person to call attention, not merely to scandals under the Act, but also to the direction in which remedies might be found. From these Reports it appeared that the total bankruptcies and arrangements under insolvency proceedings had increased from 5,002 in 1870, to 13,132 in 1879. The liabilities, during the same period, had increased from £17,456,429 to £29,678,193. The estimated assets had increased from £5,381,533 to £10,193,617, from which it resulted that the loss during the same period had increased from £12,074,896 to £19,484,576. When he said the loss, he called the attention of the House to the fact that the deficiency was between the estimated assets and liabilities; and inasmuch as the realized assets never came up to anything more than a proportion of the estimated assets, it was probably not too much to say that the loss at the present time under bankruptcy insolvencies was not less than £25,000,000 a-year, and that did not include the losses caused by the failure of Companies, which were administered under a different system. He understood that there was some reduction in the figures for the present year; but he quoted only the published figures coming down to 1879. He found from these same Reports that the bankruptcies proper had diminished from 1,351 to 1,156, while during the same time the liquidations and compositions outside bankruptcy, and which did not come under the control of any judicial authority whatever, had increased from 3,651 to 11,976. A few figures would show what was the character of these arrangements, and why it was that they were so frequently resorted to. He would take the case of compositions, because they had no information on which reliance could be placed as to liquidations. The compositions between 2*s*. 6*d*. and 5*s*. in the pound, in the period he had named, had remained nearly the same in proportion to the total number of compositions; in fact, they had fallen from 30 per cent to 28 per cent of the whole. But the compositions under 2*s*. 6*d*. in the pound had increased from 17½ per cent to 50 per cent of the whole; while the compositions above 5*s*. had decreased in almost equal proportion—namely, from 52½ per cent to 22 per cent of the whole. So it might be asserted that the compositions and liquidations under the Insolvency Acts had rapidly increased in number, and, at the same time, had rapidly deteriorated in quality; and the reason was not far to seek. Of the 1,156 bankruptcies 149 were annulled for some reason or other, and that left 1,007 bankruptcies that had been dealt with in open Court. Therefore, only 7 per cent of the whole of the cases of insolvency were subject, under the present system, to public control, while 93 per cent were left without supervision, and naturally presented the widest possible field for every kind of fraud and abuse. It was, of course, this absence of proper control which tempted and induced debtors who feared it, and professional agents whose gains would be diminished by it, to resort to liquidations and compositions in preference to bankruptcy. The question arose, under what provisions of the existing law this state of things had been permitted to exist? Under Section 125 of the Act, it was possible for a debtor who found himself unable, or who might be unwilling to pay his debts, to have a meeting of creditors summoned on his behalf, at a time and place convenient to himself, and certainly, in very many cases, inconvenient to the majority of the creditors. At that meeting, the creditors present, either by themselves or by proxies, creditors, in some cases, in friendly collusion with the bankrupt, in other cases fictitious, in not a few cases fraudulent, might, by the requisite majority in number and three-fourths in value, elect a trustee, agree to a liquidation, dispense with the security which the Act required the trustee to give, get rid of all investigation of the previous conduct and affairs of the bankrupt, and discharge the debtor, even although he might be guilty of fraud or scandalous negligence, and even although the assets showed no dividend whatever; and this arrangement they were competent to impose upon a dissenting minority of *bonâ fide* creditors. Under this system there was absolutely no public inquiry whatever, no examination on oath, and no security for the protection of the public interests which were involved in every insolvency. The position of a trustee elected under these circumstances was an exceedingly enviable one, provided he was not troubled with any moral scruples whatever. He was practically uncontrolled as to his disposition of the estate and its administration. He could, and very often did, appoint his own committee of inspection, from whom he was bound to take his instructions. The accounts of the trustee had been in more than one instance audited by persons who could not write their own names. The trustee could make any arrangement for the discharge of the debtor; he could dispose of the funds, he could vote his own remuneration, he could tax his solicitor's bill or not, as he thought proper; he could audit the bills of the other professional persons he employed or not, as he preferred; he could audit his own accounts, and finally grant himself a release, and retire to the bosom of his family, satisfied that he had complied with all the legal requirements of the statute. He might, if he liked, declare a dividend, or he might delay doing so. He might keep the creditors' money in his own hands, and use it for his own purposes; he might appropriate undivided balances and unclaimed dividends; he might assist in the creation of fictitious claims, certain that in such circumstances dividends could not be claimed; and in 50 different ways he might rob the creditors to his own personal advantage. A trustee, fitly named H. J. Sharpe, was tried at the Central Criminal Court on the 3rd of February; and the report of the case was so suggestive that he would read a part of it to the House. The facts of the case were stated by counsel for the prosecution as follows:—

> "Prisoner had formerly been clerk in a solicitor's office, and was well acquainted with the details of the Bankruptcy Law, especially in matters of liquidation. He appeared to have been in the habit of searching *The London Gazette* for notices of liquidations, and then communicating with solicitors engaged in such cases, representing himself as being interested in the proceedings. By that means he obtained a list of the creditors in several instances. Having noted the names of some of the largest creditors, he informed them that he was a member of a firm of accountants, that he had obtained the proxies of a number of the principal creditors, and was in a position to secure a dividend of 10*s*. if the parties to whom he applied would entrust him with their proxy, and allow him to act on their behalf. The prisoner, by those means, armed with the proxies in question, had no difficulty in getting himself appointed trustee by the creditors, and acting for them in recovering the debts of the liquidating debtor. Having succeeded in collecting the debts, he appeared to have kept every farthing of the money, and, by way of delaying the creditors, he caused advertisements to be inserted in the country newspapers to the effect that a first and final dividend of 2*s*. 6*d*. in the pound on the petitioner's estate would be payable by a firm of accountants at Peterborough. It was ascertained that no such firm was in existence, and the creditors were unable to get their dividend. The learned counsel stated that the prisoner had been engaged in this system of fraud for several years, and that creditors were perfectly helpless to protect themselves. In his opinion, some amendment in the Bankruptcy Law was required to provide against such proceedings."

He agreed with the statement of the learned counsel for the prosecution; and although Mr. Sharpe appeared to be in the position of the pitcher that went too often to the well, and though he was finally convicted and sentenced to 12 months' imprisonment, yet, if he came out of prison and found the law the same, he would be able to secure the same pecuniary benefits to himself without incurring the danger which by a slight imprudence he incurred on the last occasion. That the law, the operation of which was illustrated by this case, might be declared, and truly so, to be a direct incentive to fraud was apparent from the number of estates that were now wound up with no assets at all, and in which the expenses of liquidation swallowed everything up. Such a state of things fully justified the conclusion the Controller General arrived at in the Report, in which he said—

> "Having regard to the state of trade during the last 10 years, and its apparent effect on bankruptcy proper, on Scotch sequestrations, and on the better class of compositions, there should have been in the year 1873 about 2,700 arrangements and compositions, instead of 6,574; and about 5,000 instead of nearly 12,000 in the year 1879. I am unable to suggest any reasonable causes for the excessive numbers attained, except the tendency of easy liquidation to encourage at all times the growth of a too-rapidly growing opinion that it is unnecessary, or even foolish, to pay debts in full, and, in times of commercial prosperity, a large amount of hazardous speculation and consequent insolvency; whatever the cause, the financial result may be represented as a continually increasing tax on English commerce, averaging during the last five years about £20,000,000 per annum from losses by bad debts, exclusively in the class of insolvencies which are at present dealt with under the English Bankruptcy Act."

There was another clause of the Act of 1869 which was also the source of much abuse; that was the 126th section, which dealt with compositions. In compositions, the stimulus to fraud on the part of professional persons was not so great as in liquidations; because when the composition was accepted the matter was at an end, and there was not the same opportunity of making costs and charges. The increase in the number of compositions, although very large, had accordingly not been so large as in liquidations. The compositions increased from 1,616 in 1870, to 4,809 in 1879;

the increase being 3,193, or over 200 per cent. The liquidations increased in the same period from 2,035 to 7,167, an increase of 5,132, or 256 per cent. Under the composition system many abuses prevailed, because there was no public examination of the bankrupt, no security was taken against collusion or fraud, and there was no proper security for the composition that might be promised. He did not wonder that, in these circumstances, it had become customary amongst a certain class of people to say that it was not necessary, and it was foolish, to pay debts. It was not surprising that a learned Judge should have sarcastically observed that no man who was properly conscious of his duty to his family would ever think, under the existing law, of paying 20*s.* in the pound. This scandalous state of things had arisen entirely from the assumption underlying the Act of 1869 that insolvency was a matter which solely concerned the creditors in each particular case, and that they could, and would, not only look after their own interests, but could, and would, also protect the interests of the public, which were sometimes quite different from, and inconsistent with, their own. He could show that that assumption was not justified by the facts. In the first place, in a great number of bankruptcies, the interests of creditors were too divided and too minute for them to take anything like complete and organized care of their own interests. They were generally too ready to write off their bad debts at once; and they were not inclined to throw good money after bad, especially under a system which gave them no practical assistance. The Controller General, in his supplemental Report to the Lord Chancellor for 1875, said—

"Again, the theory that creditors desire to take any active part, either in managing the debtor's affairs, or in choosing a fit and proper person to manage them, is distinctly contradicted by their own evidence, almost daily recorded during the last 14 years in the minutes of proceedings at meetings, which show that, generally speaking, they will do no more than prove their debts and give their proxies to persons whom it is impossible they could have spontaneously chosen. As a rule, to which there are comparatively few exceptions, every creditor considers his own pecuniary interest, and finds it better to write off the amount of his debt to loss; to hand his proof and proxy to a solicitor, or accountant—who sends him forms and instructions, and whom he commonly supposes to be connected with the Court or 'acting in the matter'—and to consider any dividends he may receive as profit. The pecuniary question for a creditor is whether the amount he would gain by such reduction of expenses as he could hope to bring about by close supervision of proceedings during their three or four years' average continuance would remunerate him for his trouble and loss of time. If by the action of creditors present expenses could be reduced one-sixth of their amount, the average advantage to each creditor would be about £1 more to a few, and less to the large majority in number.

"All experience under the present and former Acts proves that whatever is left to the creditors is, as a rule, left undone, even in bankruptcy proper; for example, nothing could be more important under the present system of electing trustees than that they should give security, and Section 14 of the Act provides that the creditors, 'when they appoint a trustee, shall by resolution declare what security is to be given, and to whom, by the person so appointed before he enters on the office of trustee;' but general Rule 106 explains that, 'where no security is specified to be given by the trustee he shall be deemed to be personally responsible,' &c.; and in the last 2,500 bankruptcies security was required to be given by six trustees in one County Court, twice by one person in another Court, and in only six other cases in all the rest of England and Wales."

A still more important consideration was that the interests of creditors were sometimes inconsistent with the public interests, which it was the duty of Parliament to protect. For instance, it was quite possible that the friends of a debtor might offer a larger composition than the estate would justify in order to avoid exposure; and although he would admit that the estate of a debtor was the property and concern of the creditors, and that they would be benefited by entering into such an arrangement, yet he did not admit that they had the right to compound with felony in order to increase the amount they might receive. There were a great number of cases in which a creditor desired the continuance of business relations with the bankrupt, and was, therefore, disposed to take a favourable view of his proceedings and to avoid inquiry. Even if they could suppose that the creditors were in every case willing to protect their own interests, and patriotic and spirited enough to protect the interests of the public, he would say still that the law as it stood gave them no assistance in the task they would undertake sufficient to enable them to do so successfully. A creditor with the best intentions might find himself powerless. He might be outvoted at meetings by proxies in the hands of the debtor's solicitor, or held by persons interested in the concealment of fraud, or the waste of the estate. Among other abuses of the proxy system, it appeared to be a common custom for certain professional trustees to seek for proxies, and to buy and sell them in order to obtain the control of estates; and the Controller General said that the practice prevailed of holding "knock-outs," as they were called, or auctions of proxies, in which they would buy from each other the numbers they required to give them the control of certain estates. The result was that if a *bonâ fide* creditor attempted to interfere, with the object of securing a thorough investigation, he found himself outvoted and discomfited; and after one or two such experiences he was discouraged and resolved to take no trouble in the future. Having described what were the chief objections and defects of the present system, he would call the attention of the House to the provisions of the Bill by which they hoped to remedy those defects. But before doing so he must say the Bill would apply to England and Wales only. It did not apply to Ireland, for in that country it was doubtful whether the necessity existed for reform to anything like the same extent. He had received an application from the Chamber of Commerce of Dublin that Ireland might be included in the Bill; and, in reply, he had suggested that the Chamber should wait and see its provisions. If they then wished that the Bill should extend to Ireland, the Government would be glad to consider, and, as far as possible, to comply with their wishes. The Bill did not apply to Scotland, because the Scotch had a system with which they appeared to be generally satisfied, and upon which, indeed, the Act of 1869 was professedly based; but the Scotch system differed from the Act of 1869 in many important particulars, and it accordingly had not given rise to anything like the scandals which prevailed under the English system. It was suggestive to consider the main distinctions between the English and the Scotch systems. He did not consider that the Scotch system was theoretically a perfect one, though it was far better than their own. He believed it was much more costly than it was generally supposed to be, on the faith of certain evidence given before the Select Committee of 1869. The idea that the costs of bankruptcy in Scotland were less than in England was chiefly due to the fact that the method of calculating the proportion of the costs to the estates was different from what it was in England. In Scotland, they excluded several charges included in the English calculations, and they took account of the payments to secured creditors in reckoning the percentage of expenses to assets divided, which was not the case in England. There was very little difference between the legitimate cost of bankruptcy in Scotland and in England taken on the same basis; what difference remained arose from the fact that the average of Scotch estates was larger than the average of English estates. The main differences were these:—In the first place, under the Scotch system, a debtor was allowed to petition in bankruptcy; but in England the debtor was compelled to petition for liquidation or composition. Next, the first meeting of creditors under the Scotch system must be held not later than 12 days after the notice of adjudication, and the creditors were put in possession and control of the estate at a much earlier period than was usual in England. At the first meeting in Scotland, the creditors were at liberty either to entertain a deed of arrangement by a majority in number and four-fifths in value, in which case the deed had subsequently to receive the approval of the Court, after hearing any objection that might be made against it on the part of the creditors, or the creditors might entertain a composition. As a matter of fact, the advantages of a deed of arrangement under this system appeared so trifling that only 6 per cent of the Scotch bankruptcies were dealt with in this manner. If they entertained a composition it was to be by a majority in number and nine-tenths in value. The composition had to be confirmed at a second meeting of the creditors, which was held after the public examination of the bankrupt in every case, and after a report which was presented to the Court and to the creditors by the trustees, as to the general character of the composition. The composition had to be approved by the Court, and the Court was authorized to grant or withhold the discharge of the bankrupt, and could only grant it after hearing the objections which creditors took to it, and also the report of the trustee. The general effect of these provisions, as contrasted with the provisions of the English law, was that the Scotch creditors had the fullest information as to the position of the estate, and the conduct of the debtor previous to the insolvency; and, further, the Court had full and efficient control over both the arrangements for the winding up of the insolvency and the discharge of the bankrupt. On consideration of the facts both of the English and Scotch systems, he ventured to ask the assent of the House to three principles, which appeared to him to be essential to a good Bankruptcy Law. In the first place, he said that the assets of the debtor in each insolvency belonged to the creditors, and they should therefore have the promptest and fullest control over those assets, subject to the least possible interference. In the second place, he said that, as it was clear that in many cases the creditors could not give sufficient personal attention to the administration of the estate, and as they must, of necessity, appoint to represent them some person in the position of trustee, it had been proved to be desirable and necessary that this trustee should be subject to official supervision and control as regards his pecuniary administration, and that his accounts should in every case be audited by authority; and, lastly, it appeared to him that, in the interests of the public generally—in the interests of the creditors, not of each separate bankruptcy, but as a class—and in the interest of public morality, which had suffered by these bankruptcy scandals, it had been proved to be necessary that there should be some independent examination into the conduct of the debtor and the circumstances attending his insolvency, and some proper provision for the punishment of fraud and negligence, and of rash and unjustifiable speculation and extravagance. It should be recollected that the public had a direct interest in the great losses which were suffered under the existing system. The £25,000,000 a-year now lost on the profits of business were paid for in the long run by increase of prices, and thus the public paid for the frauds of trustees and bankrupts. Turning from these topics, he would now state the main provisions of the Bill. In the first place, he proposed that Sections 125 and 126 of the Act of 1869, with regard to composition and liquidation, should be repealed, as they had been the source of the greatest evils. That was recommended by the Committee of the House of Commons which sat last year; it was supported by the opinion of the Incorporated Law Society, by the Bankers' Institute, by the Chambers of Commerce, and, indeed, by all who took an interest in the subject. The Bill proposed next that all proceedings should be commenced by bankruptcy petition, and that the petition should be presented either by the debtor or by a creditor. Some objection had been taken to the debtor being allowed to petition; but it was felt to be very desirable to offer some inducement to the debtor to come at the earliest possible moment to his creditors, and not to postpone his coming until he had little or no assets left. That provision was also approved by the Committee of the House of Commons, and was recommended by the Incorporated Law Society and the Bankers' Institute, and it was a provision existing in the Scotch Act. Then, immediately on adjudication, they proposed that the property should vest in an official receiver, who would be an officer attached to each Bankruptcy Court; and who would be appointed by, and responsible to, the Board of Trade Department of the State. It was provided that this official should not incur any expenses without express authority, and was to consult the creditors as to the administration of the estate. He had also a Proviso in the Bill to meet a case which was brought to his knowledge on behalf of the Association for the Protection of Wholesale Traders, who said it was of the utmost importance that the control of the creditors should begin at the earliest possible moment after the adjudication, so that the free assets or goodwill of the business should not evaporate. It was therefore provided that on the application of the creditors, or any one of their number, the Court might, if it saw fit, appoint a special receiver, who should act as the manager of the estate under the direction of the creditors, in cases where special knowledge was required to preserve the interests of the estate. It was next provided that the bankrupt should make out a full statement of his affairs and a list of his creditors within three days, but without throwing costs on the estate by the employment of professional assistance. This would provide against a bankrupt being thrown into the hands of a professional person before coming to Court at all. The Court, however, might authorize professional assistance, if it was shown to be necessary; but without the authority of the Court the bankrupt was not to incur any such expense. If he did so, the payment of the cost incurred would be in the discretion of the creditors. It was further provided—and he believed the provision would meet with the approbation of the commercial classes—that the first meeting of creditors should be held within seven days after the adjudication. At that meeting proxies might be used, as it would be a great hardship to creditors living at a distance to be forced to attend in person. But the proxies must be on official forms, and be available only for the meeting specified on the form, and must not be given to the solicitor for the bankrupt, or to any of his partners; nor were they to be used by any person for the purpose of voting for the appointment of himself as trustee, unless it were so stated on the face of the proxy. At that meeting the creditors would have two alternatives—either to entertain a composition, or a scheme of arrangement, by resolution passed by a majority in number and three-fourths in value. If a composition was taken, it must not be less than 5*s.* in the pound, and the composition or liquidation arrangement must be confirmed at a second meeting of creditors to be specially called with due notice, and at this special meeting there would have to be presented a report by the official receiver as to any proposition that was made. Then the Court would have to approve the composition or liquidation after hearing objections, as in the case of the Scotch law; and if the Court was of opinion that the proposal for liquidation or composition was not in the interest of the creditors generally, or if it was of opinion that the bankrupt had been guilty of fraud, or such misconduct as would justify the Court in withholding his discharge, it might accordingly withhold it. If, however, the first meeting of creditors did not decide to entertain the proposal for a composition or arrangement, they must then, as a second alternative, appoint a trustee who must give security, and might be objected to, and, if necessary, removed by the Board of Trade, on the ground of unfitness or probability of collusion with the bankrupt; and he might also be subsequently removed by the creditors by an ordinary resolution, or he might be removed by the Board of Trade for misconduct; but if he was rejected in the first instance, or dismissed afterwards at the instance of the Board of Trade, he might appeal, or any person interested might appeal, against that decision to the Court. The remuneration of a trustee would be in accordance with a Schedule to the Act in all cases under £3,000. It might be increased in special cases, and in all cases above £3,000 it would be fixed by special resolution, subject to approval by the Board of Trade. The trustee would not be allowed any additional remuneration for the performance by others of services which he ought to perform by himself. In addition to this, all bills—solicitors', auctioneers', accountants', brokers', and others—were to be taxed, and all monies over £50 must be paid into the Bank of England, and the accounts of the trustee were to be audited half-yearly by the Controller General. The effect of these proposals would, he believed, be very beneficial. The Controller reported that in liquidation proceedings only a small proportion of these bills were now taxed; and he estimated that, with the bills of receivers, auctioneers, and other agents, about £100,000 would probably be saved to the creditors by direct taxation alone, besides the probability that many charges were now made and paid which would never be attempted if taxation were the rule. He (Mr. Chamberlain) was also sanguine as to the good results that would follow from the payment into the Bank of England of monies in the hands of trustees. It was estimated that, at the present moment, there were no less than £5,000,000 in the hands of professional trustees, in many cases wrongfully, and in some fraudulently, withheld by trustees from the estates to which they belonged. It had been stated, and he had no doubt upon the matter, that if they were all called upon to produce the money, many of them would find it to their advantage to leave the country if the Bill became law. The next provision of importance to which he called attention was that every bankrupt was to be publicly examined in Court as to his conduct and affairs.

On the close of the bankruptcy, or before with the assent of the trustee and a majority of the creditors, the bankrupt might apply for discharge, and the Court would have power to grant, refuse, or suspend such discharge, or to qualify it by any conditions as to after-acquired property—a provision which ran on all fours with one of the proposals contained in the Bill of the late Attorney General (Sir John Holker). The Court might also order a prosecution, if it thought fit, and commit the bankrupt for trial, without applying to a magistrate. These were clauses which, in his opinion, were vital to the Bill. Nothing else would secure the punishment of misconduct or provide a sufficient inducement to honest dealing, and to a full disclosure of his affairs by the debtor. The only objection which he thought could be suggested was that this enforced publicity would press hardly upon the man whose insolvency was entirely the result of misfortune. Let them consider, however, for a moment, what was the position of an insolvent. He was a man who sought relief from obligations which he had voluntarily contracted, and who asked the Courts to impose on a minority of his creditors the acceptance of terms less than their just and legal rights. Surely a person in this position was one from whom explanation and information might be most properly demanded. It was right that he should be compelled to show how he had got into a position which compelled him to ask for this exceptional relief. He (Mr. Chamberlain) had always thought that the position of a bankrupt might in some respects be compared to that of a man who had lost his ship. In all such cases a public inquiry was held, and if the loss were due to misconduct or negligence the captain was properly punished. If it was shown that the calamity was the result of unavoidable misfortune, his sword was returned to him if he were in the Navy, or his certificate if he were in the Merchant Service, and he left the Court acquitted and absolved in the face of all men. It was, no doubt, desirable that the bankrupt who had been unfortunate, or who had suffered, without any fault of his own, from the fraud of others, should not carry with him in after life anything in the nature of a stigma on his character. But surely the honest debtor would be the first to rejoice at the opportunity of showing in the most open manner that he was not to blame; the more public the inquiry the more complete would be his exoneration, and the only man who had cause to fear such an inquiry was the man whom it would show to have been guilty of misconduct, in which case a stigma would properly attach to him. Under existing arrangements, where there was no sufficient investigation, there would always be a suspicion of improper conduct; and he (Mr. Chamberlain) believed that the provisions of the Bill would be hailed with satisfaction by all who were in a position to prove their innocence as making a distinction between them and the fraudulent or speculative trader. But, as a further provision, and as a premium on good conduct, it was provided that the Court might also, if it was proved that the debts of the bankrupt were fully paid, or when the Court was satisfied that the bankruptcy had been caused by misfortune and not by misconduct, annul the adjudication, and thereby rehabilitate the bankrupt, and relieve him from the stigma and effects of bankruptcy as regarded civil disabilities. In cases where this was not done, bankruptcy would involve civil disabilities. In the case of a Peer, he would be disqualified from sitting in the House of Lords until his bankruptcy was ended. In the case of a Member of the House of Commons, a mayor, an alderman, a member of a local corporation or school board, a town clerk, or clerk of the peace, or any other person holding an official or municipal office, he would at once have to vacate his office, and he would not be re-eligible for the term of seven years afterwards. Magistrates were dealt with by the Crown. He must now draw the special attention of the House to the duties and position of the official receivers created by the Bill, whose functions were somewhat novel and most important. They were to be officers of the Court, but would be appointed by, and subject to, the authority of the Board of Trade. Where possible, the existing Registrars might be utilized for this office; and their duties would be, firstly, to protect the interests of the public by inquiring into and exposing and providing for the punishment of fraud, recklessness, and extravagance; secondly, to protect the interests of the creditors at an early stage by obtaining and giving information which experience showed that the creditors were often unable to obtain for themselves; and, lastly, to act as interim receivers until a trustee was appointed. As the Bill provided for the first meeting to be held in seven days, it would be obvious that the shortest possible time would elapse before the creditors had full control through their own trustee of the property and estate. Where, however, the creditors did not desire to appoint a trustee of their own, they might elect the receiver to continue the winding-up and to act as trustee. These were the ordinary duties of the official receiver in all those cases in which it might be hoped that the assets would be sufficient to induce the creditors to take some interest in the matter, and to be willing to look after their own affairs. In such circumstances, the official receiver might be compared to the Queen's Proctor in divorce cases, intervening only when necessary to protect public interests. But the statistics of insolvency showed that there was a large number of estates with no assets, or with assets so small as not to induce the least trouble on the part of any creditor. It was here that the greatest scandals arose, for those estates fell an easy prey to the professional wreckers, who took everything in costs and expenses. It seemed desirable to deal with them separately; and accordingly it was proposed that in the case of small estates, under £300, where the interests of individual creditors were necessarily exceedingly small, the receivers should act as trustees, and wind up the estates as quickly as possible, unless the creditors, by resolution, decided to elect a trustee of their own. The position, then, was this—that in the case of ordinary estates the creditors were to elect their own trustee, unless they specially desired to have the receiver; while in small estates the receiver was to act as a matter of course, unless the creditors specially desired to appoint someone else. The recommendations of the Committee of the House of Commons and of the trading community in favour of the allocation of a special commercial Judge to bankruptcy business would be provided for by the Bill. The London Court was to be merged in the High Court of Justice, and the Registrars would act as chief clerks. The appeal in London cases would be from the Bankruptcy Judge to the Court of Appeal, and in country cases from the County Courts to the Court of Appeal, with the Judge in Bankruptcy sitting as one of its members, so that his special experience might be available for all cases. There were some further incidental provisions in the Bill limiting the rights of bill holders, providing for the administration in bankruptcy of the estates of deceased persons, amending the law with regard to onerous property, and others to which he need not on that occasion more specifically refer. He feared that he had dwelt at too great length upon this Bill, the details of which, however, he hoped he had made sufficiently clear to the House. Perhaps, in conclusion, the House would permit him to estimate the results of the changes which this Bill, if it became law, would bring about in the future. In the first place, with regard to economical administration, it would be seen that it threw upon the bankrupt estate a new charge —namely, the cost of the official receiver, and the increased charge of the Controller's audit department. They provided for that, in the first place, by the interest which would accrue upon the balance which, under existing circumstances, was detained by the trustees; but under the new system would be lodged in the Bank of England. They expected dividends would be more quickly paid, so that the unpaid balances would not be so large as at present; but, on a moderate estimate, the payments by trustees into the bank on that account would always amount to something like £800,000 or £1,000,000, and the interest on that would be at least £25,000 a-year, which they could always rely upon. The remainder of the amount necessary would be provided for by a fixed fee charge in the case of small estates, and by a small percentage in the case of large estates, varying from 5 per cent on estates under £300, but gradually decreasing until it amounted to only ½ per cent on estates of £3,000 and over. When it was remembered that the actual cost of administering bankrupts' estates, which varied according to their amount, was, on an average, in 1871 31½ per cent, and in 1879 44·9 per cent, it would be seen that the small percentage in question would be merely nominal, for the sum was so small that it would not increase in any appreciable way the burden upon estates. Against this small increase they had to set the following—that the bankrupt would not be allowed to incur unnecessary charges before he brought his estate before the Court, the trustees would have to do their own work, and not pay others; and the charges would be on a fixed scale, and would not be left to their own discretion. Every bill would be taxed by the Court, and not left to the discretion of a trustee. They would be able to save considerably by consolidating the advertisements, and the expenses under that head. They would do away with certain proceedings, and save fees which were at present leviable in Bankruptcy Courts; and altogether he was confident they would reduce the legitimate expenses by 10 to 15 per cent. This would be the saving on legitimate expenses; but the gain would be much larger by putting an end to the illegitimate expenses, which, under the present system, swallowed up so large a percentage of the estates. To show the evil of the present system, he might inform the House that, whereas in 1871 the number of estates where there was no dividend was 34 per cent of the whole number of bankruptcies, that number had risen to 46 per cent in 1878, and that the number of estates where the dividend was under 1*s.* in the pound had risen from 45 per cent in 1872 to 61 per cent in 1879. It was impossible to doubt that the amount of the dividend would have been very much larger in a vast number of cases had it not been for the illegitimate expenses incurred by the trustee. He was afraid that it was not possible to make bankruptcy a satisfactory proceeding under any circumstances; but, by a judicious amendment of the law, fraudulent trading might be largely checked and the tone of commercial morality might be greatly raised, while honest traders would be induced to look after their own interests. He claimed for this Bill that it was at least an honest and a practical attempt to deal with a great and increasing evil. He put it to the House that the matter was not in any sense a Party question, for the interests of commerce affected all of them, and were too great to be subordinated to Party interests. This was not a Party Bill, as he had shown in acknowledging the assistance which he had derived with regard to it from the labours of the late Administration. He trusted, therefore, that the proposals this Bill contained would obtain not merely a fair, but even a favourable consideration at the hands of the House. On behalf of Her Majesty's Government, he should adhere to the main principles of the Bill as he had explained them; but he should welcome suggestions from all sides of the House that the experience of hon. Members might enable them to suggest as in any way tending to amend the details of the measure. He ventured to hope that even that Session, crowded as it was with other and important and urgent Business, would not be suffered to pass without something being done to meet the convenience and the pressing claims of the commercial classes in respect of this subject. They boasted, not without reason, that they were the greatest commercial nation in the world; but they had the worst commercial legislation of any civilized country. He appealed to the House, therefore, to make a beginning of reform on this important subject, so that this Parliament might do something to remove a just cause of national discredit and a fruitful source of unnecessary loss and suffering.

Sir JOHN HOLKER, as one who had taken considerable interest in the question, said, it was with great pleasure he rose to acknowledge the ability with which the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain) had stated the evils of the present system, and for the excellent explanation he had given of the proposals contained in the Bill before the House; and he quite agreed with him that the question should not be treated in any way as a Party one. It was an unfortunate fact that all the attempts that had hitherto been made to improve their Bankruptcy Law had more or less failed; but, certainly, the Act of 1869 had been generally regarded as having effected a considerable advance in the reform of the law by abolishing officialism in connection with bankruptcy proceedings, and by placing the management of the bankrupt's estate in the hands of his creditors. He was afraid that this Bill would be a retrograde step in that respect, inasmuch as it proposed to take the management of such estates out of the hands of the creditors, and to revive officialism. He was glad to see that the opinions and labours of the late Government upon the subject had been to a considerable extent made use of by the right hon. Gentleman, and that the suggestions of the Committee last year, of which he (Sir John Holker) was a Member, had also been adopted. Having listened to the statement of the provisions of the Bill as far as he could follow them, it seemed to him they would, on the whole, be found satisfactory. It would be a satisfactory Bill if it did nothing beyond repealing the two clauses referred to of the present Act; but he begged to point out that it was desirable to make the provisions of the measure as simple as possible. He could not see that if a man was not able to pay his debts there should be more than two alternatives—namely, that he should become bankrupt and pass through the Court, or else give a composition to his creditors.

Mr. JOHN BRIGHT appealed to the House to permit at once the introduction of the Bill, so as to allow of its being considered during the Recess, and that would ultimately facilitate the discussion of it. He could assure the hon. Member for East Sussex (Mr. Gregory) that every opportunity would be given for canvassing the measure.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Ordered, That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the Law of Bankruptcy, and that Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Solicitor General, and Mr. Ashley do prepare and bring it in.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 137.]

CHURCHWARDENS (ADMISSION) BILL.

(*Mr. Monk, Sir Gabriel Goldney.*)

[BILL 47.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Monk.*)

Debate arising;

And it being ten minutes before Seven of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till *Monday* 25th April.

House adjourned at five minutes before Seven o'clock till Monday 25th April.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 25th April, 1881.

MINUTES]—New Members Sworn—Charles Campbell Ross, esquire, *for* Saint Ives; Henry James Tollemache, esquire, *for* Chester County (Western Division).

Private Bills (*by Order*)—*Considered as amended*—Lancashire County Justices*; Swansea Corporation Loans*.

Public Bills—*Resolution in Committee*—India Office Auditor [Superannuation]*.

Second Reading—Land Law (Ireland) [135]—[*First Night*]—*debate adjourned;* Bridges (South Wales)* [129].

Committee—Alkali, &c. Works Regulation [119]—r.p.

Committee—Report—Inland Revenue Buildings* [125].

Considered as amended—Married Women's Property (Scotland) [128].

Third Reading—Inclosure Provisional Order (Thurstaston Common)* [122]; Tramways (Ireland) Acts Amendment* [133], and *passed.*

QUESTIONS.

—∽o∽—

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—THE MIDLETON UNION—ELECTION OF GUARDIANS.

Mr. LITTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it be true that the clerk of the Midleton Union, on the occasion of the late annual election of guardians, completed his scrutiny on the 24th March, issued notices to the elected guardians on the 25th, and held the election of chairman, vice-chairman, and deputy vice-chairman, on the 26th, without having issued notices of such election to the ex-officio guardians, and having stated at the Board meeting on the previous Saturday that such election would not take place till Saturday the 2nd April; and, if true, whether the election of chairman, vice-chairman, and deputy vice-chairman, is legal; and, if not, whether the Local Government Board will have the same set aside or direct an inquiry into the circumstances under which the election took place?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I have made inquiry, and I find that the facts of the matter are very much as stated; but I cannot say that the clerk to the Guardians has acted illegally. I fear nothing can now be done. The Local Government Board are advised that the omission of the clerk to send the notices to the *ex-officio* Guardians does not invalidate the election, and it is, therefore, valid.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—PROCESSES OF EJECTMENT.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he could state what number of ejectment processes have been entered in county courts, Ireland, at Spring Sessions this year, up till the 22nd instant, and how many were entered at the Spring Sessions of 1880; and, how many decrees for possession were granted at each of said terms?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I have already given a Return showing the number of ejectment decrees entered down to Michaelmas Term, 1880, to which I would refer the hon. Member. I shall present further Returns down to the end of last Hilary Term; but in some counties the Quarter Sessions have not been long concluded, and in others they are only just concluded, so that it cannot be presented just yet. I shall also present a Return of the civil bills in each county in Ireland during the last four years, and I hope that will be ready in a short time.

CRIME (IRELAND)—THE POLICE AT KNOCKNAGREE, CO. KERRY.

The O'DONOGHUE asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What reply has been given to the Memorial of the inhabitants of Knocknagree, county Kerry, praying for the removal of the police hut lately erected there, on the grounds that the structure is unnecessary owing to the absence of crime, and that it places a heavy tax on an impoverished locality?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I have seen the Memorial to which the hon. Member refers, and I think the memorialists are under a misapprehension on the subject. There is no ground for the assertion that the placing of the hut at Knocknagree imposes a heavy tax on an impoverished locality. The fact is that the police in the hut belong to the Parliamentary quota for the East Riding of Cork, and consequently no tax of the kind referred to will be levied.

STATE OF IRELAND—COUNTY LIMERICK.

Mr. LEWIS asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been called to the following statement in the "Dublin Evening Mail" of the 6th instant:—

> "A few nights since nine men with blackened faces went on the property of Captain Newenham, in the vicinity of Croom, county Limerick, visited the houses of the tenantry, and made a raid for firearms, securing eight guns, which had to be peaceably given up to them in the name of the 'Irish Republic.' They also cautioned the inmates, on pain of death, not to pay their rents due on the 25th March;"

and, if any persons have been made amenable for the offence, if actually committed?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I have seen the statement to which the hon. Member refers, and find it is in one or two trifling particulars inaccurate. The number of guns taken was seven, and not eight; it is not true that the inmates were cautioned on pain of death not to pay their rent. I am sorry to say that, notwithstanding the exertions of the police, no persons have yet been made amenable. We have found in this instance, as in many others, the greatest difficulty in arresting persons in consequence of the impossibility of getting information and assistance from the injured parties.

THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS ACT, 1868, THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS AND CORRUPT PRACTICES ACT, 1879, AND THE PARLIAMENTARY AND CORRUPT PRACTICES ACT, 1880 — SCHEDULED SOLICITORS.

Mr. RYLANDS asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether he has called the attention of the Lord Chancellor and of the Incorporated Law Society to the numerous instances of Solicitors of the High Court of Justice who have been scheduled by the Commissioners appointed to inquire into Corrupt Practices at Elections in 1880; and, whether any steps will be taken to remove their names from the Rolls?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James): Sir, in cases where a solicitor has been guilty of misconduct it is usual for the Council of the Incorporated Law Society to take action and bring the misconduct complained of before the Supreme Court. Upon reading the evidence given before the Election Commissioners I thought it my duty to call the attention of the Law Society to the fact that several solicitors were shown to have been guilty of bribery. A special Council was called to consider the subject; and, after full consideration by the members of the Council, it was resolved that the certificate of indemnity ought, under the present state of the law, to be regarded as a protection against proceedings which might result in the solicitor being struck off the Roll, although the statute does not technically afford this protection. Inasmuch as the evidence against the solicitors referred to had been obtained by their own statements, and as they had all received certificates of indemnity, I presume no proceedings will be taken against them.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—THE DUBLIN JURY LIST.

Mr. M. BROOKS asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether he has from time to time observed the reports published in the Dublin newspaper press, of complaints by the leading Irish Judges of interruption in legal business in the Criminal and Civil Law Courts in Dublin, in consequence of the non-attendance of jurors owing to the names of the dead and non-est persons appearing on the jury list after the annual revision; whether he has also observed a report in the Dublin newspaper press of the 5th instant, of an application by the Dublin Jurors' Association to the Honourable the Recorder of Dublin, to revise the lists, and on which application the lists for 1881 which came into operation in January last, were freed of nearly 200 worthless entries; and, whether, in view of preventing future interruptions in the administration of the large legal business carried on in the Irish metropolis, it is the intention of the Government to adopt the suggestion then made by the Recorder, which strongly recommended as most needful the institution by the Legislature of regularly quarterly sittings being held in the City of Dublin by the officially appointed Revising Barristers, so as to maintain the correctness of such jury lists?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Law): The Judges have, I believe, complained of inconveniences caused by the imperfect revision of the Jury Lists of the City of Dublin. I have seen a newspaper report of the proceedings before the Recorder, to which the hon. Member refers, and can only say that the suggestion of quarterly revisions of the Jury Lists being provided for shall receive our consideration.

LICENSING ACT—THE RADICAL CLUB, KING'S CROSS.

Mr. J. COWEN asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department a Question of which he had given him private Notice. There was a society called the Radical Club, which met in some house near King's Cross, and a lecture was now announced by Mr. James Beale—a gentleman well known to Liberal Members in that House—and another by the hon. Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar); while a third one was to be delivered on the political state of Europe. He understood that those lectures had been stopped, and that the owner of the house had been threatened that his licence would be withheld from him if these lectures were continued. He wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman, If it was true that such an intimation had been sent to the owner of the house; and, if it was not true, would he state the reason why such an intimation had been made?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, that the hon. Gentleman's Question was the first he had heard of the matter, he having been out of town; but he would make inquiry on the subject. He doubted very much whether the hon. Gentleman's information was correct.

SOUTH AFRICA — THE TRANSVAAL— THE NATIVE INHABITANTS.

Mr. GORST asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether any Petitions had been received at the Colonial Office from native inhabitants of the Transvaal relating to the surrender of the Queen's sovereignty over the Boers; whether any replies to those Petitions had been made by Sir Evelyn Wood or any other officer of the Government; and, if so, whether copies of such replies will be laid on the Table of the House?

Mr. GRANT DUFF: Sir, I have only received the hon. and learned Member's private Notice since I came down to the House, and cannot, of course, speak positively; but I am not aware than any such Petitions have been received at the Colonial Office.

Mr. GORST said, he would repeat his Question to-morrow.

METROPOLITAN WATER SUPPLY.

Mr. RITCHIE asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, When there was a likelihood of a measure dealing with the Metropolitan water supply being introduced?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: Sir, when the Bill relating to land in Ireland is passed I shall be in a better position to answer the Question of the hon. Gentleman.

THE IRISH LAND ACT, 1870—COMPENSATION FOR DISTURBANCE—THE RETURN.

Mr. A. M. SULLIVAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it would be practicable to lay upon the Table of the House a Return in continuation of that obtained in 1874 by the late Mr. M'Carthy Downing, showing the number of cases heard, the amount claimed for compensation for disturbance and improvements, and the amount granted in each case under the Land Act of 1870?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, he would be very glad to give the Return if it were practicable; but he found upon inquiry that it would take so long to prepare that it could not be presented in time to be of any use in the discussions upon the Land Bill now before the House.

COMMERCIAL TREATY WITH FRANCE —THE NEGOTIATIONS.

Mr. MAC IVER asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he could give the House any further information with regard to the negotiations on the Commercial Treaty with France?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE said, the hon. Member had not given him even private Notice of this Question; but Mr. Kennedy, of the Foreign Office, was now in Paris, and was in communication with representatives of the French Foreign Office and the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce. There had been preliminary inquiries respecting the wool trade; but no formal Treaty negotiations had been begun.

Mr. MAC IVER wished to know whether the House would have an opportunity of discussing the proposals before the Treaty was concluded?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE said, he had already stated that Her Majesty's Government intended to keep the trades of this country thoroughly informed of what was going on.

Mr. MITCHELL HENRY trusted the hon. Baronet was aware that in the great centres of commerce, such as Manchester and Bradford, there was an opinion that it would be better that there should be no Treaty than one in a retrograde direction.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS — OUTBREAK OF FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE AT CARLISLE.

In reply to Mr. W. Lowther,

Mr. MUNDELLA said, he regretted to say that foot-and-mouth disease had broken out in the city of Carlisle, and that morning the whole of the limits of that city had been declared an infected area.

NOTICES OF MOTION.

MONUMENT TO THE RIGHT HON. THE LATE EARL OF BEACONSFIELD.

Lord RICHARD GROSVENOR: On behalf of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury, I beg to give Notice that, on this day fortnight, he will move that the House resolve itself into a Committee to consider that an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty praying that Her Majesty will give directions that a monument be erected at the public charge in the Collegiate Church of St. Peter's, Westminster, to the memory of the Right Hon. the Earl of Beaconsfield.

ADJOURNMENT.

Lord RICHARD GROSVENOR: On behalf of the right hon. Gentleman I beg to give Notice that he will move that the House at its rising this evening do adjourn till 8 o'clock to-morrow evening.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) BILL.—[Bill 135.]
(*Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Forster, Mr. Bright, Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland.*)

SECOND READING. [FIRST NIGHT.]

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Lord Richard Grosvenor.*)

Mr. GIBSON: Sir, the Prime Minister, in introducing this measure, described it as the most difficult and complex that he had ever had to submit to his Colleagues or to Parliament. I can well understand why he used those terms. The task of the Government is, indeed, one of the utmost gravity and of extreme responsibility. It is impossible to overrate or overstate the importance of a measure which proposes to deal with 600,000 holdings, and to do that at a time not particularly happy in its circumstances, and when the country has not recovered from the disturbance of last year and the distress of previous years. The question is one which must have taxed the ability of the ablest draughtsman that ever sat down to draw a Bill, and the ability of the most accomplished Minister that ever unfolded a statement to the House. We were prepared, from the statement of the Prime Minister, to read the Bill with attention, with earnestness, and with a certain amount of curiosity, for we were told that the Bill had been re-printed and re-edited 22 times, and that it had led the Colleagues of the Prime Minister to such an honest difference of opinion that the Duke of Argyll, who was an old Friend and Colleague of the right hon. Gentleman, was unable to remain longer responsible for the measure. Independently of what may be the merits of the proposals contained in the Bill, and what may be the judgment passed upon its important legislative proposals, I must say, at the outset, that a more confusing and confused Bill never was presented to the British Parliament. It is obscure, involved, vague, uncertain, and often unintelligible. Read for the first time, even by the light of the speech which illuminated its introduction, it is very hard to realize its meaning; but, on more frequent perusal, some kind of a glimmer of meaning commences to dawn upon the earnest student, and he becomes aware that there are numerous and important rights clearly conferred upon the tenant, and that conclusion deepens by further perusals, and he finds that those rights are more numerous and more clear. But on the other side, at the outset, one sees that the landlord's rights left—there are none conferred—are few and obscure, and a closer and deeper study shows that they are more few and more obscure still. Part V. stands out in comparative relief, for it is, at all events, comparatively simple and intelligible. It proposes to encourage the growth of a peasant proprietary; and I venture to think that in this House, as in Ireland, there will be little difference of opinion as to the desirability of giving every fair, reasonable, and legitimate encouragement to the growth of a peasant proprietary, always bearing in mind that we only stimulate and do not force the growth. The subject of the reclamation of waste lands deserves, and will, I am sure, receive favourable consideration, provided that the Legislature is satisfied, not only that there are numerous waste lands which may be reclaimed, but that the process will be attended with utility, and not entirely divested of profit. There is a difference of opinion expressed on the great question of emigration; but I believe that in the hearts of men there is unanimity upon it. I believe that emigration, applied with proper safeguards, not only for the physical, but for the moral and religious well-being of those who voluntarily offered to leave Ireland, may be a process accompanied with great advantage as well to themselves as to their country. I will leave the financial proposals of the Bill to those whose abilities and habits of mind qualify them to deal with such subjects, and will discuss and invite the earliest possible explanation upon the parts which deal with the occupation and tenure of land in Ireland. These are the parts of the Bill as to which the confusion became appalling. This is a strong and drastic measure. It is the strongest ever submitted to Parliament on this subject. It is far stronger than the Land Act of 1870, and in some of its proposals it goes beyond those made by the late Mr. Butt. The Prime Minister proclaimed and disclaimed certain reasons for bringing forward the measure. It is conceded that the Irish Land Laws are more favourable to the tenants than are the Land Laws of the United Kingdom; but this avails not, for some defects have been noticed in the Irish Land Act of 1870, which I may say, in passing, did not confer, and was not intended to confer, any proprietary right, joint or otherwise, on the tenant. What is the second class of reasons with which we have to deal in reference to this Bill? There are schemes of public plunder afloat in Ireland which, it is said, are so gross that no responsible Minister will have any act or part in them; but it is urged that the land hunger must be satisfied, and that, therefore, we must pass this Bill. And what is the third class of reasons we are asked to consider? It is not contended that there is general misconduct on the part of the constantly maligned Irish landlords, or that it is their habit as a class to exact unfair and exorbitant rents, or that it is their practice to exact the fair commercial rents. Indeed, it has been shown with pride by the Prime Minister that the average annual number of evictions has diminished by one-half since 1870, and the number of evictions as compared with the number of holdings during the last 10 years, other than for non-payment of rent, was only one in 5,000. But, notwithstanding the limited number of Irish landlords who have acted differently from the predominating number of their great class, it is contended that the whole body of them must, to use the words of the Prime Minister himself, be subjected to "searching and comprehensive legislation"—in other words, that the Irish landlords must go through the furnace of legislation and litigation. It might have been thought from the speech of the Prime Minister, in introducing this Bill, that his observations were the prelude to the introduction of a limited and moderate Land Bill. I thought, however, at the time that the illustrations used by the Prime Minister, who, nevertheless, innocently protested all the time that he did not mean that any undue inference should be drawn from them, were very ominous. It was certainly strange that the only illustrations which occurred to a man so rich, so affluent in the power of illustration as the Prime Minister of the position of the Irish landlord, were those of the Jamaica slaveholder, who required to be restrained from a return to vicious habits, and of the stalwart ruffian who would, as a rule, commit an outrage upon an infirm man if the latter were not protected by the police. I think that those illustrations were very unfortunate and very unhappy, and that they were illustrations which should not have been used in reference to this question, seeing how difficult it is at the present time for Irish landlords, not only to get any kind of rent, but to save themselves from outrage. But the arguments of the Prime Minister in favour of this Bill did not stop there. He contended that this measure must not be read by the ordinary light of political economy, or the science of observation and experience. Poor Mr. Bonamy Price, and almost all the able writers of the Cobden Club, must wander off if they know the way to those interesting places, Saturn and Jupiter, which have been described by the Prime Minister. But not only is political economy put aside by this measure, but also the whole tendency, spirit, and progress of English law, which is ever striving towards freedom, and which even this Session has expressed its desire, with the assent of the Government, to free itself from the shackle of copyholds; but these are to be no guides, but beacons to be avoided, in the retrograde course of Irish legislation. Neither are the rules of logic to be relied upon in a criticism of the Bill, because when a man suggests any well-worn theories about logic and reason, he is told that he was discussing a grave, political problem on entirely abstract grounds. This proposed legislation, resting as it does upon exceptional and shifting political reasons, naturally gives rise to much curiosity and criticism on the part of the earnest and honest student. It must be remembered that this Bill is opposed to some of the most deliberate judgments pronounced by Parliament in 1870, and to some of the most weighty and conclusive reasons ever addressed to this House by the Prime Minister. The Bill, therefore, comes before us unsupported by principle, unaccredited by political economy and law, and opposed to the last legislative proposals on the subject, and to the former reasoning of the Government. But let us look at this strange and peculiar piece of proposed legislation from the standpoint of the Government themselves. I have ever striven in public life not to be unfair or unreasonable in criticizing the proposals of my political opponents, and I have no desire to misrepresent them on the present occasion. I understand that the way in which the Government ask us to look at this measure is this—that we are to regard it as a great practical proposal, consistent with expediency and not inconsistent with justice. I will, therefore, endeavour to look at the Bill from the standpoint of the Government, and, having regard for common sense, I shall look upon this measure as a practical endeavour to deal with what I admit is a most grave, difficult, and important social and political problem. I will endeavour, therefore, to see whether this Bill is consistent with the dictates of common sense and ordinary prudence, and whether it is consistent with justice. As the Bill at present stands it concedes to the tenant what are called fair or valued rents, free sale, and fixity of tenure, while it gives no compensation to the landlords for what has been taken from them, and no security for what is left, though it does offer them a guarantee for universal litigation renewable for ever. I venture to think that, notwithstanding the remarkable and powerful statement of the Prime Minister in introducing this Bill, that the measure is at present understood by very few indeed. Having the respect I have for the Members of the present Cabinet, I hardly like to say what is passing in my mind; but I do venture to say, with hesitation, that I have a suspicion that some right hon. Gentlemen in the Cabinet have a very hazy idea indeed of what is the real meaning and effect of this Bill. And I may at once frankly admit that, notwithstanding the closest study of this measure on my own part, with the most earnest desire to ascertain the effect of this proposal, my mind still fluctuates as to what the meaning of some parts of the Bill really is. I need scarcely say that I have always the most profound sympathy with the Law Officers of the Crown; and I am bound to say that when the Prime Minister, coming in the course of his statements to the thin ice of his Bill, turned round blandly to my two hon. and learned Friends opposite, and undertook on their behalf that they would explain the legal bearing of the measure, I felt for them the most acute sympathy. I never saw in my life two men looking more intensely wretched than did the hon. and learned Gentlemen opposite on that occasion. It is not my intention at this stage of the Bill to criticize its details. With the indulgence of the House, however, I propose to draw attention to a few of its more important principles, and then to ask Her Majesty's Government to give us some explanation with regard to them. I trust that the Government may find it consistent with their duty to give as early as possible clear and definite answers to the questions I shall venture to submit to them. The first topic I shall touch upon—I do not say that it is the most important topic in the Bill, although it is certainly one of vast importance—is that which relates to the question of fair rent. The rent is the most serious impost upon the tenant, and it frequently constitutes the greater portion of the income of the landlord. Every reasonable and proper man is in favour of fair rents, and every reasonable and proper man is strongly opposed to extreme or rack rents. How, then, does the Government propose to deal with the question of fair rents? They propose to apply to rents a standard from which is removed permanently the application of the test of the ordinary commercial law of demand and supply. The Court, in fixing what is to be the fair rent, is not bound to confer upon the landlord what he could get in the open market by legitimate competition. On this point, Judge Longfield, whose authority on the subject is fully recognized by the Cobden Club, has stated his opinion that any tenant right measure dealing with rents must have the effect of reducing the rents one-half. But if it is not the intention of the Government that rents should be reduced in Ireland to such an extent, what rules have the Government laid down in this measure for the guidance of the Court in fixing the amount of the fair rent? A fair rent is defined by the Bill to be such a rent as a solvent tenant would be willing to pay. I do not criticize that definition, and up to the present it has not been criticized adversely, as far as I know. But the difficulty that strikes my mind, as it has obviously struck public opinion, is to be found in the remarkable proviso which follows. Before I read that proviso, I have to ask the House to bear in mind the difference that exists in the customs relating to the land which prevail in Ulster, as compared with the other three Provinces of the Island. Now, the position of Ulster in reference to this question is clear, and I think it is logical. Ulster is proud of its tenant right; it is jealous of its tenant right. The tenants of Ulster desire that their right should not be partially destroyed by frequent and unjust raisings of the rent, and that their right of sale should not be hampered by office rules, no matter how worthy the motives of their authors. They do not demand, they repudiate the assertion that they desire that landlords should be deprived of legitimate rents. Well, that being the position of Ulster, what is meant in reference to the proviso which is put down for the guidance of the Court in reference to Ulster? That Court has to consider first what a solvent tenant could fairly pay. It has then to consider it in reference to his Ulster tenant right. Now, the tenant right of Ulster often sells for 20 years', for 30 years', it has been known to be sold for as high as 40 years' purchase, whilst the fee simple of the landlord seldom realizes more than from 25 to 30 years' purchase. I will take a moderate case to test the phraseology of this sub-section. Take a 20-acre farm at £1 per acre; £20 would be a year's rent. The tenant applies to the Court to fix a fair rent, and the County Court Judge, after consideration, arrives at the conclusion that £24 is a fair rent on the whole, and the first element to be considered in his judgment would be that £24 would be a fair rent that under ordinary circumstances, without considering anything else in the Bill, would be paid. Then comes in the second element, that he is to have regard to the tenant right. Now, the tenant right I put at a moderate figure—at 20 times the rent. That would bring £400. Allowing moderate interest on that, and less than £18 could not, I think, be paid, and then having regard to the rent which a solvent tenant would pay, he deducts the interest from the fair rent—that is to say, £18 from £24—which would leave to the landlord £6 rent. In other words, two-thirds of the rent which has been paid for years without a grumble are taken away from the landlord. Now, whatever may be the intention of the Government, I assert, as a matter of law, and I do not think it will be questioned, that it would be competent for the tribunal which is to be created for the purpose of working this Bill to give a decision exactly as I have stated. But, again, what is the guidance of this section with regard to the rest of Ireland? In the rest of Ireland there is, speaking broadly, really no tenant right. There the Court is to have regard to the scale for disturbance in fixing a fair rent—a scale fixed, as stated from the Ministerial Bench, not with the view of creating tenant right, but solely as a penalty to check disturbance. Now, applying this guidance to a case similar to the one just stated—namely, a farm at a rental of £20 per annum, the tenant may, on disturbance, be entitled at once to seven times his rent—£140; so that here, where there is no tenant right, or similarity to tenant right, the Court can tax one-third off the fairest rent. Why, the late Mr. Butt, in his numerous Bills, which were always opposed by the Members of the present Government, never submitted to the House, speaking with all the weight of the Home Rule Party, a proposal so absurd as that. I, like other persons, have read a good deal of correspondence upon this question; and in that correspondence, and also in conversation, I have learnt that another construction is suggested—that the section is an intimation to the Court, not that it is at once to subtract the maximum for disturbance, but that it is to fix the rent so as to leave to the tenant the interest, which he could sell in the market at a rate equal to the scale for disturbance. I do not know whether that is the intention of the Government—possibly they have not made up their minds—but, assuming that that is the argument for the Bill, I at once test it. What is the difference between deducting from the fair rent the value of the disturbance scale, and fixing the rent so much below the fair rent as to enable the tenant at once to go into the market and sell the farm at the rate of the scale? Is not that exactly the same thing? In either case you carve out of the landlord's property, and millions are taken from the landlords without any compensation. Where does the property come from? It does not come from the tenant, because the presumption is that there is no tenant right or the similarity of tenant right. If it was not taken from the landlord, nothing comes from nothing. Where are the millions to come from? Like manna, from Heaven? What is your construction of this clause? But that is not all; for if, even at his own election, the tenant is, after a couple or three years, evicted, the landlord will still have to pay him the scale for disturbance. In other words, the candle of the unfortunate landlord is to be burned at both ends. What is your construction of this clause? Government intentions will not avail. We call to mind that the Prime Minister now relies upon a state of facts alleged to exist, but the intention to create which was disclaimed in 1870. The Prime Minister took great credit to himself for excluding from this Bill what he called English tenancies—tenancies where the improvements had been made by the landlord. I do not criticize that now. I am glad to hear of the intention to remove from litigation a very substantial number of tenancies. But why should landlords, who for 20 years have not raised the rent, be left to be worried by most litigious tenants for the purpose of fixing the rent? I do not think that is wise on the part of the framers of this Bill, but certainly it is not just. If what I say now were done, they would exclude from litigation 4,700,000 acres, because upon that amount of acreage in Ireland the rent has not been raised during the last 20 years. How would all this fixing of a fair rent work? Fair rents are all very well to talk about and as a phrase; but under the very same Bill as it stands you provide machinery to kill fair rents under free sale. Rent is not all composed of the rent that is payable to the landlords. Rent is to be measured by what the tenant has to pay for possession of the holding, whether in rent to the landlord or in interest on the money paid to the outgoing tenant. You provide that the landlord, the owner, shall have no power to raise the rent, but you absolutely leave free the other item of the account; so that you may have the tenant who comes in under a fair rent absolutely swamped by his obligation, not to the landlord, but for interest on the purchase money, either to the outgoing tenant or to the usurer who lends the money. The Prime Minister saw the force of this, and, in his statement, he said—

> "In vain do you cut down the landlord's judicial rent . . . . if . . . . you still leave it open to anyone to pay an extravagant sum for tenant right. . . . . We have framed the Bill on that principle that to recognize duly the power of the landlord or of the Court to raise the rent is the due and just means of preventing the tenant right, which we think to be the just right of the tenant, from passing into extravagance, and from trespassing upon what is the just right of others."

No one could have presented the case with greater clearness than the right hon. Gentleman; but, when I turn from his statement to the Bill which he was supposed to be expounding, I find nothing whatever to carry out that object. The words "raising the rent" are used again and again; but if you read the clauses, you will find that the position of the landlord is penalyzed—that he cannot appear in the Court which is to be created in this Bill except when he is brought in by the tenant with a rope round his neck in the invidious position of a defendant. I have a right to demand a reply to this question—Why, if your Court is to be a court of justice, is its portal to be shut to the landlord? The Prime Minister said he did not mean one-sided justice to be administered in this Court; but he took care, in the drafting of his Bill, that the door was only open to one willing litigant. I ask, not only in the name of British law, but in the name of impartial justice, how can you defend the shutting of the door of your Court, which is to be a court of justice, to an Irish landlord who desires to enter? What is the machinery for raising rents left to the landlord in this Bill? I take one or two of the clauses which refer to permitting the landlord to raise the rent, and you will see how he is handicapped and made to walk in irons every step that he takes. He may not have raised his rent for years. He may, on consideration, arrive at the conclusion that the time has come when, having regard to the interest of the tenant and to every ground of justice, he may make a moderate rise. He cannot appeal to the Court to help him, he must sit down to consider the question as best he can; and when he has come to his conclusion, suppose he fixes on a rise so moderate and so fair, that if he were permitted by the Bill to enter the portals of what you call a court of justice, any man who was ever called a Judge would say it was fair, the tenant is not, by your Bill, compelled to pay that fair rent. If he disputes it he is not compelled to bring the landlord into Court, but he can entirely refuse to pay that fair and reasonable rise, and then he can compel his landlord to serve a notice to quit, which service of a notice to quit exposes the landlord to payment of the increased scale for disturbance; and all this although the rise is fair and the conduct of the landlord is throughout absolutely moderate and reasonable. And yet we are told by the Prime Minister that this is a due recognition of the just right of the landlord to raise the rent. What is the other clause in which this right of the landlord is recognized? The landlord considers with himself what would be a fair rise to put on a farm which is let too low. He makes a mistake in his calculation. He is not allowed in this tribunal to correct the mistake. He has put the rent a few pounds above what is decided by the Court to be a fair rent. What is the position of the tenant in that case? The tenant can compel the landlord to pay at once a penalty of ten times the amount of his mistake; he can sell at the full rate in the open market; and I ask what is then the position of the purchaser in the open market? The landlord, under your Bill, has not advanced an inch towards a rise of rent, the greater part of which was fair, and for which, to the extent to which it was a mistake, he has already paid a penalty ten times the amount. The purchaser is not bound by the demand to raise the rent; he is as free as air; he can proceed exactly as the original tenant can proceed. The landlord must again make the demand; and under the Bill there is no machinery by which he may effect the rise of rent. He may demand; it will be like "summoning spirits from the vasty deep," but with this difference, that by the act of making summons the unfortunate landlord is treated as if he were a criminal to be punished by a fine. Again, as to the question of free sale, without going into it, I ask the House to remember the great difference between Ulster and the rest of Ireland; and I ask the House to confine its attention here to the case where there is no tenant right. There is no restriction on the price; every tenant may, if he likes, give the *pretium affectionis,* and there is nothing to prevent him if he has a good landlord from putting up the amenity of a good landlord to auction at the village fair. He may put up to auction the easiness of the landlord under non-payment of rent, the fact that he pays the taxes regularly, or any other circumstance which is likely to enhance the value of the tenant's interest. There is, again, no distinction made in the Bill between the worst tenant and the best. Every tenant in Ireland the morning after the Bill passes, whether he be good, bad, or indifferent, whether he be improving or the reverse, whether he bought the tenant right or not, can put up his tenancy to auction and can get the best price which the market will yield. What, I ask, is the effect of a sale pending a notice to quit? That is a plain question, about which there ought not to be left the shadow of a doubt. Now, either the sale is absolutely illusory to the purchaser, or else the notice to quit is a farce to the landlord. What do you sell when you allow a sale to take place pending an eviction? Is the purchaser only to hold until the eviction, and then bring his action against the landlord? Or does it on the sale create a new tenancy? You say that the tenant, at any time before he is evicted for non-payment of rent, or on service of notice to quit, may sell his tenancy. If these words stand alone, without qualification or expansion, all he can sell, in law, would be the occupation until he is evicted, for that is all that is legally in him. In that case, the purchaser would make an illusory and worthless purchase. If, on the other hand, you mean that by the act of purchase he acquires a right to stay in possession after the eviction, then the notice to quit and the eviction are illusory to the landlord. Then you put in a clause about the right of pre-emption; but you give the landlord this right in a mocking manner, as if its exercise were a thing to be discouraged and made penal. You hamper his power to make a new letting, or a free letting. There is one question I wish to put here. If a tenant sells, disregarding the provision of section 1—that is, if a tenant sells, giving no notice to the landlord that he is about to sell—if the landlord is given no opportunity of recovering for improvements or arrears of rent or to object, what is the position of the purchaser then? Is he in possession under the ordinary law as a legal assignee, and can he laugh at the landlord? And is it intended to annul an assignment not made with statutory formalities? Are the safeguards which are so elaborately provided for the landlords against the abuse of the right of free sale really worthless and unavailing? I think my questions are so plain that I might be given an answer affirmative or dissentient. Is it intended that the tenant may, notwithstanding and against your Bill, come in under the provisions of the ordinary law? Now, your own provision on the subject is this—that the landlord need not accept a tenant. But surely a tenant need not care whether he is accepted by the landlord or not. The only question is whether the landlord will accept the rent or not. The Bill does not create the power to sell. It creates only a special power to sell in respect of the property which it transfers from the landlord; but it does not purport to annul a sale not made in conformity with the prescribed regulations. Now, I do not like to ask too many questions; but there is one clause which stands out, I may say, in noble relief. It is very hard to give any section priority for obscurity and unintelligibility in this Bill; but, after much heart-searching, I am inclined to think that almost the queerest section in the Bill is the 45th; and I would suggest to persons of an ingenious mind to apply themselves to this clause, not in the slightest hope that they will ever find out the meaning of it, but as an intellectual exercise. I do not propose to go through the section, and I dismiss it with this question—if a tenancy is determined when it is sold, what does the purchaser get? I am sure I do not know, but that is the first proposition in the section; and my strong suspicion is that when the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant comes to speak, if he speaks before the Law Officers, he will leave that matter as a legacy to the Law Officers. Now, I come to make a few observations upon fixity of tenure, because it is idle to suggest that fixity of tenure is not given here. We have the words of the Prime Minister, and we know that valuation of rents is perpetuity of tenure in disguise. The valuation of rents is here, and, taken in connection with the rest of the Bill, there cannot be a shadow of doubt that fixity of tenure is also here. But I may be told that fixity of tenure never can exist—it can never be where the power is left to the landlord of serving ejectments and notices to quit. Then ejectments and notices to quit can all be arrested by the tenant if he pleases to exercise the option of sale—that is, unless the sale is intended to be illusory. There is nothing here to prevent the full and free operation of fixity of tenure. [*Government cheers.*] Yes; but if fixity of tenure is to be given, would it not be fair and frank to have done it in three lines, and not disguised it under a mask, as the authors of this Bill have done? There is one question I would put on this point, and I think it will serve to bring into strong relief some of the startling consequences of this Bill. A tenant in Ireland may have entered into the clearest and most binding contract—it may have been for a low rent or a high rent; the tenancy may be, as is common in certain cases in Ireland, for "a year certain." It is not like a tenancy from year to year, which suggests duration. Under this Bill the tenancy for a year certain may, the morning after this Bill passes, be turned into 15 years certain, and the rent which was measured with certainty may be reduced to what the Court would call a fair rent. I do not propose to discuss that, but it does not strike one as ostentatiously just. The way this matter has been put by Lord Dufferin shows the injustice of applying what exists in one part of Ireland to all parts of Ireland. Lord Dufferin says—

> "Is a 50-acre farmer in Down, who took up the land five years ago, to be credited with an historical claim to fixity of tenure because the grandfather of a cottier in Galway turned 10 acres of bog into a potato garden at the beginning of the century?"

I have referred to, but not discussed, the statutory conditions. Under the Bill the landlord's right, very much valued by some, of game would be absolutely destroyed in every tenancy from year to year. If that is intended, it is a very serious element. That was never contemplated at the inception of the tenancy from year to year, and it is opposed to the entire usage of Irish country life. The practice of Irish country life is for the landlord to have the sporting over tenancies from year to year. It is not a right of strict law; we know that. Well, but the tenancy was made of short duration, easily capable of termination, and, therefore, the tenant who chose to be disagreeable and disobliging, without doing anything for himself, had a certain check, a certain control. [Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: Hear, hear!] We know that since the right hon. Gentleman passed the Hares and Rabbits Bill, he is one of the greatest authorities as to game. But this Bill is remarkable, not only for the statutory conditions which it contains, but for the statutory conditions which it omits. It would be permissible for a tenant without notice to destroy the offices, level the fences upon the place and on the farm, use the mines and minerals that it contained, and he would not come under this Bill. There is nothing in it that would prevent him doing any of the things I have mentioned; and there is nothing which would condemn him as a bad or unfair tenant. What power do you give the landlord—do you leave him—to enforce statutory conditions? You leave him the power of serving notices to quit—a power which would expose him to pay on the maximum scale for trying to save his farm from ruin. Is that reasonable? Can any defence be given of that? There is no limit. Why should there be no limit? It is suggested that much that is now proposed was in the Land Bill of 1870, and "another place" is blamed severely in connection with this matter. But what is the history of the limit? It was proposed from the Liberal side of the House, and the Prime Minister said he accepted it willingly and ungrudgingly, because he thought it a decided improvement; and yet now limit is dropped out of the Bill without question or explanation. The position of a head lord towards a sub-tenant, whose immediate middleman landlord has been evicted, is startling. If a piece of land is let for 10 years, and the tenant is evicted for non-payment of rent, the tenant may let a portion of it to a sublessee for 100 years, at a very small rent, in consideration of a large fine; and under this Bill you provide that on the eviction of the middleman the landlord is not entitled to get possession—that the landlord, in fact, is bound to the under tenant, who holds at a merely nominal rent. I do not dwell on the moral effect of the legislation you are proposing. The Prime Minister said that any concession of the "three F's" would amount to a moral and political revolution. If this Bill passes, will it be for the real good of the Irish people? Are the landlords now, as a rule, not the centres of enlightenment, civilization, and charity? If you pass this Bill you will render them mere rent-chargers—bailiffs for the recovery of rent, and nothing more. What motives will the best Irish landlords have to continue to act as they have acted? What motive will there be for the resident rather than the absentee to carry on a career of improvement, good management, prudent control, and philanthropy? He will be really powerless to do good. Under this Bill the Land Commission is made a great universal land agency business for the management and control of all landed property in Ireland, owners only being left the invidious privilege of collecting rents in the best way they can. The Prime Minister recognized the demoralizing effects of this legislation in 1870, when he said—

> "If I could conceive a plan more calculated than anything else . . . . for . . . . carrying widespread demoralization throughout the whole mass of the Irish people . . . . it is this plan and this demand, that we should embody in our Bill as a part of permanent legislation a provision by which men shall be told that there shall be an authority always existing ready to release them from the contracts they have deliberately entered into."—[3 *Hansard*, cxcix. 1845.]

In the past, in Ireland, there have been several confiscations; but never before has there been in that country a confiscation directly levelled at the loyal, against those who support law and order, and who are the firmest friends of that country's connection with England. You cannot be surprised if it is widely thought and if it is openly said from one end of Ireland to the other that the genius of this legislation has been the Land League. The legislation in this Bill is all for one class — the labourers are ignored. The slender right given to the landlord of resuming possession at his own expense of part of his holding for the benefit of the labourers is postponed for 15 years. Future tenants and their claims are forgotten or postponed; the landlords, of course, are not to be thought of. I ask where, in this legislation, is your guarantee for present contentment, and where is your guarantee for future peace? The Prime Minister, in introducing the Bill, said that the Court was the core of the measure; it was its salient point, its cardinal principle. This Court will have a stupendous work to do. It will have to consider the most numerous transactions between man and man in Ireland. Every little circumstance connected with the assignment and tenure or the rent of 600,000 holdings in Ireland may all come at once under its purview, and all this is to be done by 21 County Court Judges and three appellate individuals. With a quick-witted, sharp, and litigious people like the Irish, is not this just the condition of things to develope litigation? Will there not be an immediate rush for reduced rents? Will not a man who may be in debt be compelled by his creditors to make a rush for a fixed term which can be immediately laid hold of as security? The litigation under this Bill will be incessant, universal, angry. Calculations have been made by statisticians of the extent, duration, and cost of this litigation. I believe that the most moderate estimate of the duration of this litigation is 100 years. The most moderate figure put down for the cost is between £4,000,000 and £6,000,000. I do not guarantee these figures, for I have no particular taste for statistics. Under this Bill you have no guarantee for uniformity of decision; the decisions under it may vary as rapidly as the sands of the sea move. As to the County Court Judges, I know a number of them; they are able and honourable gentlemen. I believe, if they were consulted on this question, not one of them would desire the labour the Bill proposes to impose upon them. But suppose the County Courts are made tribunals under the Bill, it is obvious the number of Judges must be increased; and it is plain, unless the Judges are to be treated as the landlords are, their salaries must be increased. I am of opinion that any kind of Judge with judicial training and independent tenure of office is better than casual functionaries, it may be, with no training and no guarantee of independence; and therefore I am disposed to think that it will be difficult to get better tribunals than County Court Judges, with a firm tenure, which makes the Judges independent of both the Government and the populace. The Land Commission is put at the head of the County Court Judges, and is supposed to give them guidance, advice, correction, and strength. I never in my life read of a queerer tribunal than this Land Commission is to be. I do not know who A B, C D, E F, are to be; but they need to be angels from Heaven to fulfil with satisfaction the extraordinary functions given them. There may be a quorum of one, and that quorum of one is free to appoint an unknown delegate with arbitrary powers of giving decisions and doing everything else suggested in the Bill. The delegate of a month may order Judges of the Landed Estates Court about like lackeys; he may hear the appeals of an entire county; he may revise the rents of an entire province; and all this without having one particle of independence, and while being the mere creature of whatever people may appoint him. You have in this tribunal conflict and confusion of jurisdiction. The Lord Chancellor of Ireland has the control of a vast amount of landed property in Ireland in his judicial capacity of guardian of the lunatics of that country. This case may arise. Some of the properties under his control may be let at low rents, as they generally are; he may direct a moderate increase of rent; and this direction of the Lord Chancellor is not to bind the chairman, or the quorum, or the delegate; and the casual itinerant Solon may overrule the Lord Chancellor of Ireland upon this question. A Judge of the High Court, having the control of receivers who are holding property for creditors, may, in the exercise of his judicial discretion, direct rents to be raised; and these unnamed gentlemen, it may be without legal training, and certainly without any fixed status, may overrule him without giving any reasons. The poor County Court Judges are liable to be confused by three sets of rules made by three independent authorities; while their decisions may be taken by way of appeal, partly to the Assizes, and partly to the Land Commission. Is this Commission to be represented in Parliament in any way? Or is it intended that its operations are to be submitted at any time, and, if so, in what way, to public criticism and review? One word upon compensation. If the Bill is open to any of the criticisms I have suggested, I ask, Have not the Irish landlords a right to either of two things—either a fair compensation for the legislation the State thinks necessary, or else that they should be given the option of selling their properties to the State on fair and reasonable but not exorbitant terms? Can any man conscientiously or fairly say that the property of the Irish landlord is not damaged in the market to the extent of thousands and millions by this legislation? With certainty of reduction of rent, with a penalty for raising it, with the practical certainty of never resuming possession, I ask is there not a clear mutilation of property—is there not a distinct expropriation? What did the Prime Minister say in 1870, when dealing with a proposition which was somewhat like some of those contained in this Bill? He said—

> "I own that I do not myself see any advantage in our rejecting the plan of Mr. Mill, which told out plainly and distinctly and at once the whole of its purposes and results, and amounted, in so many words, to an expropriation of the proprietors, with full compensation. I do not see any advantage in our rejecting that plan, if we are to adopt some other, which, although couched in other language, and, perhaps, contemplating certain stages in the process with something like an agony of procrastination, is, notwithstanding, certainly and inevitably to end in the same conclusion."—[3 *Hansard*, cxcix. 1849.]

Now, I venture to think that the landlords are entitled to one or other of the alternatives I have suggested, and I would put this to the Government. If landlordism is to be done away with, why should not the transaction be done openly and in the light of day? Do not filch their property without confession, or mutilate it without acknowledgment. Let the transaction be English and above-board. What you take, take openly, and pay for what you take. If no compensation is to be given, I ask what thinker, what statesman, what man of common honesty, can approve of some of the proposals in this Bill which I have indicated? Would it not be better at once to drop all disguise and recognize plainly the naked features of avowed confiscation? If an Act of Attainder, if a Bill of Pains and Penalties against Irish landlords is intended, it would be better for all parties—for the landlords, for the tenants, for the whole community—to drop the farce of pretending that this is an honest Bill. Let the tenants know in plain English what they get; tell the landlords in equally plain English what they lose. Do not involve all parties in a sea of angry litigation, in which the landlords must swim for their lives, and in which all parties must lose all memories of past kindliness and all hopes of future amity. To put the matter plainly, it would be better, it would be franker, it would be more considerate, to enact boldly and at once what you intend the Courts to decide. As it stands, unexplained and unamended, the Government Bill is neither direct nor intelligible. It has, to my mind, neither the frankness of fearless justice nor the candour of open confiscation.

Mr. J. N. RICHARDSON said, that, although he could not help admiring the splendid speech to which they had just listened, he was not able to agree entirely with the views which his able fellow-countryman had expressed. He certainly could not think the right hon. and learned Gentleman was so confused in his apprehensions of this Bill as he professed to be. He had made the discovery that this was a strong and a drastic Bill; and that a British Ministry had at last, after centuries, determined to bring in a measure which was more in the interests of the tenant than of the landlord. There was no doubt that there was a widespread feeling of discontent and insecurity in Ireland, which required a great and drastic remedy. Even in Ulster the state of things was far from satisfactory; free sale there, in spite of what was said to the contrary, being practically non-existent. One point in the right hon. and learned Gentleman's speech struck him with great satisfaction, and that was the cordiality with which he dealt with the clauses relating to the question of a peasant proprietary. Those clauses he regarded as affording the only final solution of the Irish difficulty, and he could not help being struck by the fact that a few years ago *Blackwood's Magazine* denounced the scheme which the right hon. and learned Gentleman now approved of in language similar to that which he employed in regard to the Bill at large. Abundant proof of the unsatisfactory condition of things in Ireland was to be found in the evidence taken by the Royal Commissioners. In one case a certain landlord, it was shown, increased his rent at every change of tenant, and ruthlessly evicted those who were unable to pay; and since that evidence was given, some 20 more families had been evicted on the same man's estate, most of them in a state of the most abject misery. There was also another case in which rents had been very considerably raised over the whole of an estate, the landlord at the same time giving an entertainment at which he announced his intention of doing so, a circumstance which made many persons regard their landlord's hospitality with some degree of suspicion. Thus, in 1878, one of the tenants of this landlord paid £5 2*s*., but his new rent was £12 5*s*.; another paid £16, instead of £7 4*s*.; a third, £11 9*s*., instead of £6 13*s*.; and a fourth, £13, instead of £8 14*s*., and there were many others whose rents had been raised in a similar, if less excessive, proportion. It was only fair to say that the agent of the property stated that during the last 30 years a very large sum of money, about £40,000, had been spent by the landlord in making allowances to the tenants, and that the figures given by some of the tenants, which certainly seemed outrageous, were disputed. However, on the agent's own showing, the new rents were, on an average, 20 per cent higher than the old ones. After that transaction, it was amusing to hear that same agent complain of professional agitators and their effect on the minds of the tenants. Landlords and agents of that kind naturally spread terror among the tenants, especially when their exactions were made not in any remote district West of the Shannon, but, so to speak, in broad daylight and in Ulster. As a further illustration of the sense of insecurity that pervaded the country, it might be mentioned that a very common expression of the people in his own neighbourhood was—"Our souls are not our own;" and that was said, not by ignorant cottiers, but by respectable yeoman farmers in the North, meaning that at election time if they did not vote as their landlords wished it would be the worse for them. Before the Act of 1870 they had to dread eviction; but now what they had to fear was a spiteful rise of their rents. The ballot might be secret in its operation; but it might be possible to order a man not to go to the poll at all. Again, office rules were a fertile cause of ill-feeling and insecurity, and, as one or two instances would show, were often capricious and unreasonable. In one office it was the rule that "money might not marry off the estate," which meant that a tenant, if he was able to portion his daughter handsomely, should not marry her to a stranger at the risk of displeasing the landlord. On another estate it was the rule that a tenant, if a widower with a family, should not marry again, one family being considered enough for each farm. Such rules might be economically sound; but, at any rate, they interfered greatly with freedom of contract. He trusted that these and other fears of the tenants would be dissipated when they received the fixity of tenure that the Bill would give them. Without unduly entering into detail, he wished to call attention to two important points, one of which was the constitution of the Land Courts. He had personally a high opinion of the County Court Judges; but the Courts, as proposed by the Bill, would hardly command the confidence of the farmers, and he should therefore support any well-considered Amendment that would tend to popularize them. A word might also be said as to the question of titles. If a man bought land under the Commission his title would be guaranteed; but if, as was likely enough, he sold it again, the benefit conferred by the Bill would be very much reduced, as he would have to comply with the existing process of transfer, which, besides being very cumbrous, constantly afforded opportunities of unjust dealing and dishonesty to local attorneys. For instance, he knew of one case in which a widow buying a piece of land for £96, borrowed £40 at 50 per cent from the local attorney, who was also good enough to charge her £20 for making out her title. However economically unsound the Bill might be considered by hon. Gentlemen opposite, he, speaking neither as a tenant nor a landlord, but as one engaged in commercial pursuits, must say that there could not be anything more economically unsound than the state of things now existing in Ireland. Whether this measure would cure the evils of Ireland or not, the thanks of the people of that country would be due to a Government which had taken up their cause. The woes of Ireland might not come to an end in a day; but when the tenant farmer had security of tenure, fair rents, and free sale, that would go far to heal them.

After a pause,

MR. WARTON rose, and said, that he fully endorsed the estimate of the Bill which had been given by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson). Having striven to understand the Bill as well as he could, he must say that, in his judgment, every argument used by the right hon. and learned Gentleman against that most unreasonable Bill was perfectly true and correct. He did not give that opinion merely upon his own judgment; the close attention given to the examination of the subject by the right hon. and learned Gentleman was in itself a strong ground upon which to base opposition to the Bill; but a still stronger and a far better guide was to be found in the countenances and demeanour of right hon. Gentlemen opposite. Every time the right hon. and learned Gentleman tried to elicit an opinion from them, they were mute; like the dying Cardinal, they made no sign. They were overwhelmed by the crushing exposition of the right hon. and learned Gentleman; and he (Mr. Warton) very much doubted whether the Law Officers of the Crown could really explain what the measure meant, for they had no answer to make to the strong objections which had been taken to the Bill. There they sat perplexed, not knowing their own minds, and certainly no two of them of the same mind. They might be waiting with the hope of being able to snatch a hasty division—which was quite in keeping with the policy they had been pursuing — by bringing on the second reading of the Bill at a time most inconvenient to a large body of the Members of the House, and to which they were prompted by a most unworthy motive. That was worthy of the Ministry. The House had been told by the Prime Minister that the landlords of Ireland had been tried and acquitted. That was the reason, he supposed, why the hon. Member for Armagh (Mr. J. N. Richardson), with his splendid eloquence, had given so many instances of harshness on the part of Irish landlords; but then the hon. Gentleman qualified his statement by such words as "lately" and "formerly," and alleged some trivialities in one or two cases. The hon. Gentleman dissented, it appeared, from the Prime Minister. But what was the Prime Minister's own notion of justice? They were told in the Book, which all were believed to revere, until the election of Northampton taught them otherwise, that if a guilty city held 10 righteous men it would be spared. But the Premier's notion of justice was exactly the opposite of the Divine notion. Because, according to the right hon. Gentleman, on account of a few guilty men, a whole class would be punished. If, instead of his present Office, the right hon. Gentleman was in charge of the education of youths, for which his learning so admirably suited him, if some boys misbehaved themselves he would give a flogging all round. But, what was worse, the right hon. Gentleman would not only give the boys a flogging all round, but would pick out the best boys and flog them them the hardest; at least, that was the principle of the Bill, because it appeared that where a landlord had done the best, he was to be punished the most. Where a landlord's rents were low, and he had spent nearly all his income on improving his estate, he was to be deprived of nearly all his property, and all his efforts to do good were to go for nothing. For his own part, he (Mr. Warton) always distrusted those who made extraordinary professions of liberality and were always talking of justice. Ten years ago, in introducing another Land Bill, the Prime Minister said that there was an old Irish notion that some property in the soil remained to the tenant even after the contract between him and his landlord had expired. That notion, which was scouted by the right hon. Gentleman in 1870, was accepted by him now. Last year, when the Compensation for Disturbance Bill was before them, the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands), in his usual fussy and flatulent style, said that he rejoiced that the tenant's right of property had been conceded; but that statement was not accepted by Her Majesty's Government. Now, however, they would be told that something had happened, and that the landlord's share in his property was less. The reason why he distrusted and disliked this Bill was that they had no security in the character of the Premier that they should not have another Bill in a few years entirely destroying what little value might yet remain in the landlord's hands of their property. He asserted that that, in fact, was the ultimate aim of the Government. This Bill, which consisted of many parts, might have another part tacked on, and that was a confiscation part. In a few years, when the landlord's property was reduced to five or six years' purchase, those five or six years' purchase might be taken away. What was the principle laid down by the Premier? It was this—that a question should be dealt with when it entered the region of practical politics. Constitutional agitation was nothing to the Premier; the expressed opinion of the people, given at the polling booths, was also nothing to the right hon. Gentleman; but the blowing up of a prison, or the shooting of a policeman, that was the Premier's notion of practical politics. He did not scruple to say that the Government, by their guilty silence last year, encouraged Irish discontent and rowdyism in breaking out into open rebellion. They knew very well at that time that it was intended to diminish the value of landlords' property in Ireland. They were diminishing it now. He contended that it would take some 30 or 40 years of litigation to get the Bill into proper working order. If the questions put to the Government were not answered, the Bill would remain wrapped up in endless obscurity. Everything depended upon that, and he hoped the Government would be able to throw some light upon the Bill, and answer the criticisms which had been passed upon its principle and details. Why, he should like to know, had the period of 15 years been fixed for the revision of rents, if not to allow time for the litigation which must inevitably arise in the Courts to expire. The real fact of the case was that the Government had yielded to unworthy clamour and agitation, instead of telling Ireland at once that we intended to govern her, and that we should never consent to her becoming a Republic; that we were determined to hold her—if possible, as a friend; if not, otherwise. But instead of a course of that kind being adopted, the Government, yielding to agitation, asked the House to send a message of peace to Ireland, forgetting that the history of the past proved that any such would only lead to fresh demands and new schemes of plunder and confiscation. He had only, in conclusion, to say, as no one on the Treasury Bench had risen to answer the questions which had been put to the Government, that he begged to move the adjournment of the debate, in order to give them time to make up their minds.

After a pause,

MR. SPEAKER rose, and put the Question, "That the Bill be now read a second time"—["Divide divide!"]—whereupon—

MR. WARTON again rose, and said he moved the adjournment of the debate.

MR. LEWIS seconded the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned." —(*Mr. Warton.*)

MR. GORST said, he wished to say a few words on the subject. Members of the Government should be allowed time to collect their thoughts and address themselves upon the subject to the House. He, perhaps, might be allowed to assist the Government in remembering what had taken place. A powerful speech was made by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson). [MR. MUNDELLA: Hear, hear!] He saw no reason why he should be interrupted by the sarcastic cheer of the right hon. Gentleman. A powerful speech, he repeated, was made by the right hon. and learned Gentleman, in the absence of the leading Members of the Government, containing certain questions, some of policy and some of mere law, which the right hon. and hon. and learned Gentlemen the Attorney General for Ireland and the Solicitor General, who sat opposite to him when he made his speech, were obviously unable to answer. They, indeed, sat with perfectly wooden faces, making no signs of either assent or dissent to the question propounded. [MR. GLADSTONE and other right hon. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!] The explanation of such a proceeding was very simple, and was that there were no Members of the Government present who dared to give an explanation in the absence of the Prime Minister. No Member of the Government could, under those circumstances, answer either "Yes" or "No." The present position, therefore, in which the House stood at that moment was that until some answer was given to the questions of the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin, the House was left in ignorance as to the meaning of several important parts of the Bill, and that if the debate went on, hon. Members would not really know what it was they were engaged in discussing. The debate, in the circumstances, ought, he thought, to be adjourned until some answer was given to the important questions of his right hon. and learned Friend.

Mr. CHAPLIN thought that the conduct of the Government in the matter was most remarkable; in fact, almost unexampled. The House had been informed by the Prime Minister himself that the Bill was the most important measure of his time in Parliament; but notwithstanding the protest of some hon. Members, and greatly against the desire of a large section of those on the Opposition side of the House, the Government had determined to take the second reading on the first night of the reassembling of the House after the Recess. That was a very inconvenient course to pursue, for no sufficient time had thus been allowed to hon. Members to consider the course which they should take with regard to the Bill, of which from its very nature he believed not a single Member of the House, except the Prime Minister, understood the precise meaning. What had happened? The right hon. and learned Gentleman the late Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Gibson) made a most able, temperate, and moderate speech, and put to the Government a number of pointed questions, which he asked to have answered, on the ground that until they had been answered it would be impossible to understand many points of the measure. The Treasury Bench, when the right hon. and learned Gentleman spoke was full, and instead of some Member of the Government rising, as always had happened in the course of his (Mr. Chaplin's) experience, there had been a general clearing of the House, and no answer was given, and no notice had been taken of the right hon. and learned Gentleman's speech by the Government. It was left to an independent Member on the Back Benches opposite to reply to that speech, and he was followed by another independent Member. He (Mr. Chaplin) hoped, in the circumstances, the Government would see the propriety of returning some answer to the questions which had been put to them.

Mr. Gorst

Mr. GLADSTONE: The hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) has animadverted on the conduct of some of the Members of the Government in terms which are, I think, scarcely becoming a Member of this House. He says that while the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) was speaking, my right hon. and hon. and learned Friends the Attorney General and the Solicitor General for Ireland sat listening opposite to him with wooden faces. That is not the way in which Members of this House are accustomed to be addressed; and if the hon. and learned Member for Chatham has not been able to learn the proper mode of approaching his Colleagues in this House, which is to be regretted, it is quite time indeed that those who disapprove of his methods of speech should take notice of it. I came into the House after the Motion for the adjournment had been made. I heard of it with very much surprise. I was informed that when the hon. Member for Armagh (Mr. J. N. Richardson) sat down, there did not appear to be a disposition on the other side of the House to continue the debate; but now I find that the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) has kindly undertaken to determine for the Government in what order speeches are to be delivered, and when it is necessary, in his judgment, that Members of the Government should rise, or when the House should be punished by having the debate interrupted altogether by a Motion for adjournment. But I must protest against the hon. Gentleman's mode of dealing with the subject. What I believe happened was this—There were a number of questions put categorically to the Government, many of which I heard myself, though, unfortunately, I could not myself be in the House at the early part of the speech, in reference to the construction of the Bill, and which called for an answer. I say it is altogether a new doctrine that on the instant these answers should be given, "Aye" or "No." Yet we are told the Attorney and Solicitor General for Ireland sat with "wooden faces," and would not give an answer. It does not appear to me to require a man to be a lawyer to know — even many laymen might be aware—that there are a great number of questions which may be put which cannot possibly be answered off-hand by "Aye" or "No"—indeed, I should like to hear whether the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Chatham is prepared to answer "Aye" or "No" any question which a Member of this House might put to him. In abstaining from answering at the moment the questions raised by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Dublin University, we thought we were offering the greatest mark of respect the Government could show him if we conversed together on the several points which had been raised, and made ourselves quite certain that when we came to reply we might not in respect to them be misleading the House. ["Hear, hear!"] I am not at all surprised to hear that mark of assent from experienced Gentlemen opposite; but that is precisely the thing that was done. But there is nothing to be ashamed of in saying that my right hon. Friend near me (Mr. Forster), intending to address the House to-night, and not being a lawyer, was in conversation with my right hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General for Ireland upon several points raised when this singular episode arose. Now, I want to know whether, in so doing, the Government were not taking the best means for pressing forward the debate in the most convenient manner? As a matter of fact, my right hon. Friend will have to address the House for a considerable time. It has been asserted by the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire that he never knew a case of an important speech by a prominent Member of the Opposition that was not instantly followed by an answer from a Member of the Government; but, with great deference to the enormous Parliamentary experience of the hon. Gentleman, I may say that my limited knowledge of the proceedings of this House supplies me with many instances, and I know there are hon. Members of this House who rather make a point of delivering important speeches between 6 and 8 o'clock, in order that they might not be followed immediately by a Member of the Government. The hon. Member is not aware of what takes place in this House, when, with his limited knowledge, he undertakes to lay down what the order of debate shall be. I am anxious that the House should not suppose that there has been any disrespect shown on the part of the Government to the right hon. and learned Gentleman, or to the House itself; for whatever we may think of the moderation or justice of his opinions, he always speaks them out with great force and frankness, and it is just in the case of those speeches where the points are most sharply put that Members on the opposite side of the House should give their answers not less clearly and explicitly. The Government will, by the mouths of its Members, endeavour to answer the various points raised by the right hon. and learned Gentleman; but surely they may exercise their own discretion as to the precise hours of the evening, and as to the precise conjuncture in the debate, when their answers shall be given. I hope the debate will now be allowed to proceed.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I must say that the last words which fell from the Prime Minister have surprised me exceedingly, for the whole argument in his speech appeared to me to be an argument in favour of adjourning this debate in order to give the Government time to consider what answers they should make to the questions that have been put to them by my right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Dublin University (Mr. Gibson). I am far from wishing to impute to the Government any disrespect or want of attention, either to the House or to my right hon. and learned Friend, in their taking time to consider what answers they ought to give to the extremely powerful speech of my right hon. and learned Friend. But the position in which we are placed is this. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Gladstone) says he hopes the House will be allowed to go on with the debate. Well, we were the last to object to go on with it; but as the House did not seem inclined to go on, and as the argument of my right hon. and learned Friend was unanswered, I found that we were actually going to be called upon to vote upon the second reading of the Bill in entire ignorance whether there was an answer to that argument or not. The right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government says, and he appeals to us to confirm him, that it is a very common practice for a Minister to defer his answer to an important speech made from the Opposition Bench for some little time, and until there is a reasonably full

House in which to carry on the discussion; and he said very truly that it was often the case that a Member spoke up to 8 o'clock or thereabouts in order that time might be given for the consideration of the answer that should be made to the speech. But my right hon. and learned Friend did not speak till 8 o'clock. He only spoke till a quarter past 6; and it did certainly seem true to me, even if it were not possible to answer off-hand all the questions that were put, that there were many of them which related to points which had been before the public for weeks, which have been under discussion in the Press and elsewhere, and to which the attention of the Government must have been called. Now, I will go so far as to say that if the Government, after all the pains which they must have bestowed on a Bill of such enormous importance, are so little prepared to explain and defend the principles of their own measure, and to reply, not to isolated and bye questions, but to questions which relate to cardinal principles, and which involve the whole machinery of the Bill and the meaning of this not insignificant measure—if they are in that position, they were guilty of a great insult to the House in calling upon us to discuss this question, or to vote upon it without discussion. I can quite understand that the Government may have expected that it would be a convenient arrangement to wait, and anticipated that after the speech made from this Bench other hon. Members from other parts of the House, and representing different sections of it, might have desired to carry on the discussion. Had such a desire been evinced, the Government might have thought that it would be well to answer the separate speeches altogether. But when they saw there was no such desire; when they saw that not one of the Representatives of the Third Party (the Irish Party) rose to say a word; when they saw that none of their own independent supporters, except the hon. Member for Armagh (Mr. J. N. Richardson), got up to say anything; and when they found that we on this side of the House were waiting to hear what sort of an answer could be made to any part of the speech of my right hon. and learned Friend, they ought to have attempted to answer as much as they could of that speech, and to have explained generally their position, and the modifications, perhaps, which they may have thought right to introduce into the Bill after consideration during the Holidays; or they ought frankly to have assented to the proposal that the debate should be adjourned. Nobody can deny that the course which the Government has taken has been very inconvenient indeed to the House. They brought forward this measure the very day before the House rose. It was impossible to criticize it then, and no opportunity was given for putting questions or in any way eliciting information. When the Bill was laid before us we found that we were obliged to come here for the second reading on the first Monday after the Easter Recess, and we were twitted if we showed any kind of reluctance. In spite of all this, however, when we come here and ask for information, not only in a Parliamentary manner, but in a manner in which the country will have expected us to ask it, are we to comment upon questions of this magnitude in the dark — questions which affect, and even revolutionize, the whole social system of Ireland? Are we to be left without an answer, and to be told that it is an insult on our part to ask questions? The Government, I say, have no right to take that position. We are entitled to have an explanation of the points that have been raised; and if the Government are not prepared to give that explanation now, let us take the course that has been proposed and adjourn the debate until such a time as they shall be able to do so.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I think the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir Stafford Northcote) is hardly fair. In the first place, he takes upon himself to dictate to us at what time we should speak, and the arrangement we shall make for the debate. Indeed, he even goes so far as to say, because no one rose from this Bench immediately after the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), that we had no explanation to give. Well, I hope that before the evening closes we shall show that that is a mistake. But I have no objection to say that I and my right hon. Friends expected that I should know before I spoke what were the views and feelings of other hon. Gentlemen besides the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin. I cannot help thinking that this may still be the case. The hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) jumped to the conclusion that, because he was the only Gentleman who rose on that side of the House, no one wanted to go on with the debate. How did he know that half-a-dozen Gentlemen on this side of the House were not willing to continue it? I cannot pry into the motives and feelings of right hon. Members opposite; but they wanted to force an immediate answer to the questions of the right hon. and learned Gentleman. Well, I do not know that we are bound to obey their behests immediately, and I imagine that there are many hon. Members on this side of the House who are prepared to go on with the debate.

Lord JOHN MANNERS: The right hon. Gentleman who has just spoken was not in the House when the adjournment of the debate was moved. I admit that his absence was due to a justifiable and praiseworthy cause, and that he and his Colleagues were most properly discussing what answers should be given to the questions that have been put to them.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: We were not so much discussing what answers to give as what the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) had said.

Lord JOHN MANNERS: Anyhow, the right hon. Gentleman was not in the House when the incident occurred, and, consequently, he a little misunderstood and mis-stated it. What happened was this. Nobody, when my right hon. and learned Friend sat down, got up on the Treasury Bench, nor did anyone get up to speak on the Government side of the House except the hon. Member for Armagh (Mr. J. N. Richardson). That hon. Member made a very short speech; and, so far as I could understand it, it was not a speech which could materially assist or explain the principles of the measure. When he sat down, no one rose among the real Leaders of the Government on this occasion—I refer to hon. Members from Ireland below the Gangway — nor did any Gentleman connected with the independent Radicals in this House show any wish to speak. In fact, nobody rose, and Mr. Speaker proceeded to put the Question. Then my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) got up and made a speech full of effusions of vivacious humour, concluding by moving the adjournment of the debate. He was seconded by my hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin), and after that Mr. Speaker, not hearing the Motion of my hon. and learned Friend, waited until the usual period had elapsed, and then rose and proceeded to put the Question that the Bill be read a second time. What followed? I think hon. Gentlemen on the Ministerial Bench—or, if it were not they, at all events, hon. Gentlemen sitting immediately behind them—cried "Divide, divide!" The House, therefore, absolutely with the assent of those Members of the Government who were sitting on the Front Bench, was proceeding to a division on the Main Question, when my hon. and learned Friend called Mr. Speaker's attention to the fact that he had moved the adjournment of the debate. Then, and not till then, did Mr. Speaker put the Question of adjournment. During the putting of that Question the absent Ministers entered the House, and then came the lecture from the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister upon the demeanour and upon the propriety of the language of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst). I beg to express my opinion that that lecture was quite uncalled for and unnecessary; because, if my hon. and learned Friend had not observed the usual customs and received courtesies of this House, you, Mr. Speaker, would have called his attention to the fact. But as you, Sir, took no notice of the observations which he had made, the hon. and learned Gentleman may rest quite content with the severe censure of the right hon. Gentleman. I think it is right to state the facts as they occurred. It is quite out of the views of hon. Gentlemen who sit near me that this important debate should be concluded in the manner in which the Friends of the Ministry appeared to wish that it should conclude. They are of opinion that the debate should be continued; and I would venture to suggest to those who have the management of affairs in this House, if they wish the debate to be continued, they had better exercise that gentle pressure, which they know so well how to apply to their Friends sitting on the

Back Benches, in order to keep up the debate until Ministers have made up their own minds as to the course they intend to take, and the explanations they propose to offer.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I confess I was extremely interested in the speech of the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson); but there was one thing about it which a little surprised me. That was, considering the ability of the speech, and the firmness and decision with which it condemned the Bill in almost every part, considering that the right hon. and learned Gentleman ended by saying that it was not an honest Bill, but a Bill proposing confiscation, I was a little surprised, I say, that he, representing the Opposition in this House, did not say whether he was going to vote for the Bill, or propose an Amendment, or vote against the Bill. There are some people, no doubt, who have not made up their minds, though they have given up the Easter Recess to the study of the Bill, as to the course which they are going to take; but the only proper and natural Parliamentary conclusion to such a speech as that of the right hon. and learned Gentleman would have been a Motion for the rejection of the Bill. But, instead of that, what is the position which has been taken up? The Opposition, led by the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton), who was supported by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote), as I understand, has begun a tactic of judicious adjournments of the debate on this measure. If the matter had stopped there, I should have thought this was one of the humorous freaks to which we are accustomed, and which we enjoy with amusement sometimes, of the hon. and learned Member for Bridport, until some observations which we made ourselves led us to the conclusion that this is what is generally understood as an arranged movement. It was not until we observed the communications which passed with the hon. and learned Member for Bridport before the Motion was made, and when he himself, the light frigate, had opened fire, that then the heavy three-deckers from the Front Opposition Bench came forward to support the Motion to adjourn the debate on the Irish Land Bill, that we understood the position of affairs. Now, it seems to me that the worst thing we can do is to waste any more time in the discussion of a Motion for adjournment. It is a very fair issue, because the right hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Gibson), who has denounced this Bill as a Bill of confiscation, dare not take a direct issue against it. In spite of the language which he has employed to-night, he dare not say that the Opposition will oppose this Bill. And now let us, at least, know whether the majority of the House of Commons are in favour of the policy of obstruction proposed from the Front Opposition Bench.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS: The right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir William Harcourt) will, I hope, hereafter deplore—I am sure everyone else will deplore—that he should have allowed himself, even for one moment, to have been betrayed into the language which he has just used. I am quite sure the right hon. Gentleman will some time deeply regret it, for no man has ever set his face so much against obstruction as my right hon. Friend the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote). I agree that it is quite time to go on with the debate upon this Bill; but I hope we are not to have the Speaker putting the Question until some answer has been made to the questions which have been put to-night. But let me remind the Government that this debate has arisen from the very unusual course which they themselves have taken. Never in the recollection of any Member of this House, of whatever standing, was it ever known that a Bill of such importance as the present should be placed upon the Table, read a first time, and should then be read a second time without a single opportunity of placing an Amendment upon the Paper being allowed after the Bill has been in the hands of the House. That course I believe to be absolutely without precedent, and I hope it will never be followed again. I hope we shall now go on with the discussion.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. LEWIS said, that as he understood they were in the same position as before the last Motion, no one having risen to continue the debate, he would move that the House do now adjourn. It was all very well to criticize Members of the Opposition and charge them with obstruction; but the real obstructors were Her Majesty's Government. He might not be believed by the right hon. Gentleman opposite the Secretary of State for the Home Department; but he would state that when he came to the House he did not know whether he should support the Bill or not. He was waiting to hear what answer or explanation the Government had to give by way of answer to the speech of his right hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Gibson). Whether he voted for or against the second reading of the Bill would in some measure depend upon whether the provisions as to rent valuation mentioned in the Bill bore the construction put upon it by his right hon. and learned Friend. If it bore a different construction, he and others might, perhaps, vote for the second reading. But let the House understand the position of affairs. When the Motion recently made was withdrawn, had anyone risen to continue the debate? No; the House was, therefore, left to go to a division without any explanation from the Government of what the Bill really meant. He was not afraid that the country would misunderstand what had occurred. The country certainly would not throw upon the Opposition the charge of obstruction. He was most anxious that the Government should have as much time as they desired to make up their minds as to the answer they would give to the speech of his right hon. and learned Friend. He desired to see the Bill fairly and honestly discussed; but what would the public think of the proceedings of that evening? They would think that the Government, having long considered this Bill, did not themselves know what it meant, and that when the Party which was bound by its history and traditions thoroughly to investigate such a measure as that before the House asked for information as to its meaning, the Government sat quietly by and proposed to leave them in the dark.

Mr. CHAPLIN, in seconding the Motion, said, that he had no desire in any way to obstruct the Bill; but he did so because he was ashamed to confess that he honestly did not know whether he rightly understood the measure, and was waiting to hear what answer would be made to the speech of his right hon. and learned Friend the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson). He would remind the Government that as no one got up to continue the debate, the Government had no choice but to supply an immediate answer to that speech. He should like to hear what explanation the Government had to offer for refusing to reply to the able and moderate speech of his right hon. and learned Friend the Member for the University of Dublin; and he had no doubt an equal desire prevailed on the other side of the House to hear the answer of the Government to the questions which had been put. Until the Government had answered the speech of the right hon. and learned Member (Mr. Gibson), he, for one, did not know whether to vote for or against the Bill. There were at that moment eight or nine Members of the Government on the Front Bench, and unless they were prepared to meet the speech of his right hon. and learned Friend, the country and the House could come to only one conclusion — namely, that Her Majesty's Ministers were utterly unable to answer that speech, and did not at present understand their own Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. Lewis.*)

Mr. LITTON said, the tactics of the Opposition were perfectly manifest. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), whose speech partook rather too much of the character of an advocate's speech, sought to draw a statement from the Treasury Bench in regard to many important points of the Bill. He (Mr. Litton) thought, however, that the Government had shown their good sense and prudence in not returning an answer to the questions addressed to them, because the object was to precipitate the debate before it had developed itself, and to extract answers which might be made use of in the progress of the right hon. and learned Gentleman's speech, so as to make an unfavourable impression in the country in the morning papers. If these were the tactics to be pursued at the outset of that debate, there was very little chance that in the future progress of the Bill the subject would be considered with that amount of judicial quietness and spirit with which its consideration should be approached. He hoped the Motion for adjournment would be withdrawn.

Mr. A. M. SULLIVAN said, as an Irish Member, he felt bound to protest against dilatory Motions for adjournment being made on the threshold of the discussion of that momentous question. When hon. Members from Ireland moved such Motions they were charged with obstruction; but when hon. Gentlemen on the Opposition side of the House sought to adjourn the debate upon a measure which was of a remedial and not a coercive character they repudiated any idea of obstruction. Now, when they were called upon to discuss that great remedial measure, let them be consistent and not interpose adjournment Motions to delay the progress of so important a measure. He came down to hear what could be said by hon. Gentlemen on the opposite Benches in the way of criticism on the Bill; but no one arose, to his (Mr. A. M. Sullivan's) astonishment, except the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) after the hon. Member for Armagh (Mr. J. N. Richardson), and he only to move the adjournment. He (Mr. A. M. Sullivan) appealed to both sides of the House to proceed with the debate, for while time was being wasted in Party criticism tenants in Ireland had evictions hanging over them, so that what was sport to them was death to others. Let there be an end to this episode, and when the debate was resumed there would be no lack of speakers.

Mr. MITCHELL HENRY said, he thought it should in justice be stated that the points mentioned by the right hon. and learned Member for Dublin University (Mr. Gibson) were the very points on which explanations were required. The House must feel that this was something like the real situation of affairs—the Prime Minister might be said alone to understand this Bill. ["Hear, hear!" *from the Opposition Benches.*] He made that observation with no intention of raising a derisive cheer from the other side. He made it in perfect seriousness. The Bill had to do with the Act of 1870, and was the result of a most prolonged and difficult consideration of the whole Land Question by the Prime Minister. Under ordinary circumstances, the Prime Minister would have been present at the commencement of the debate; but he was unable to be present, and when the speech of the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin was concluded, he (Mr. Mitchell Henry) certainly expected that someone on the Treasury Bench would rise and give the explanations asked for. They ought to approach the discussion of this measure in the fairest and most judicial spirit. One great point was that there should be some tribunal to stand between the landlord and tenant. Another point was the right of free sale. On that the Prime Minister had laid great stress; but there were other points on which hon. Members could not commit themselves without knowing exactly the meaning of the Government. He was not going beyond the duty he owed to the Government; he was anxious to give them the fullest support in their heroic attitude towards this Bill; for he believed the Bill contained within it the elements of a radical settlement of the Land Question for all time; but its provisions must be made perfectly clear and distinct, although the questions of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin were, perhaps, somewhat exaggerated and rhetorical. For his own part, he was most anxious that there should be no recriminations about obstruction. He did not believe the conduct of hon. Members opposite had been actuated in the slightest degree by a desire to obstruct the Business of the House; but it was only reasonable that they should desire to obtain information on the points raised by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin. Questions such as those relating to the purchase of tenant right by the landlord, and the disability of the landlord to go into the same Court as the tenant, were very important, and ought to be answered. If they were not answered, the House was likely either to drift into an aimless and profitless discussion of the whole Land Question on general principles, or engender within itself a heat eminently ill-calculated to settle the question. Those points, he might observe, were not raised now for the first time, as they had been discussed at every meeting and in every newspaper in the Three Kingdoms during the Recess.

Mr. BRODRICK supported the appeal made to the Prime Minister by the hon. Member for Galway (Mr. Mitchell Henry). The question was whether hon. Members were to go on discussing the measure under what might possibly be a total misconception of the meaning of those points which had been referred to by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson). Hon. Members on that side were entitled to protest against the course which was being adopted with regard to the Bill. More than a fortnight ago, before the adjournment, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) prophesied that if such a course were adopted the House would enter into a discussion without having the power to continue it. In the circumstances, he hoped that a protest, not on the ground of obstruction, but merely that they might be allowed to properly understand the Bill, would have due weight with Her Majesty's Government.

Mr. O'SHAUGHNESSY trusted that, if the Motion for adjournment were persisted in, the House would divide upon it, defeat it, and then proceed with the debate. No hon. Gentleman followed the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) except for the purpose of moving the adjournment of the debate. It was well known that there were hon. Gentlemen on that side of the House who entertained objections to the Bill which were very different from those held by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin. The right hon. and learned Gentleman spoke of it as a lawyer; but there were others who, like the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin), regarded it from the country gentleman's point of view. The Prime Minister was now asked to stand up and reply to one Member of the Opposition. This was a course, however, which had never before been pursued; and he thought the Government were entitled to have the full case stated against the Bill from every point of view before they were called upon to reply to objections. If the Conservative Party, instead of stating their objections, would insist upon entering into a conspiracy of silence, and if they thus deprived the Government of the opportunity of hearing all the main objections to the Bill before answering them, he thought the country would blame the Conservative Party for the course they pursued. He might add that the Irish Representatives were also entitled to know adequately and completely the nature of the objections raised against the Bill by the Conservative Members.

Mr. PLUNKET remarked that this was a matter of the most grave importance to the country, and said it was extremely undesirable that the debate should degenerate into an unworthy wrangle on the question of adjournment. [Sir William Harcourt: Hear, hear!] The right hon. Gentleman said "Hear, hear!" in a very contemptuous manner; but he knew very well that he had endeavoured to fasten a charge of obstruction upon the Conservative Party which even his supporters had protested against. If the Government would undertake that at 10 o'clock, or some other convenient time, a reply should be given by some one on their behalf to the objections raised by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), he was certain the Motion for adjournment would be at once withdrawn. All that hon. Members on the Opposition side desired was that the debate should be conducted in a manner which was likely to advance the real elucidation of the grave issue which was at stake. The logical conclusion to be drawn from the speeches of hon. Members sitting on the Treasury Bench was that the House ought to have adjourned till 10 o'clock, or to such other time when the First Lord of the Treasury, or the Chief Secretary for Ireland, or whoever else might be selected to answer his right hon. and learned Friend, would be able to speak, and when the House could know what interpretation the Government gave of their own Bill in answer to the questions raised by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin. If the Government would undertake to conduct the debate in the ordinary way, either by one of their own body or one of their ordinary supporters answering the important speech of his right hon. and learned Colleague, he was certain that the Motion before the House would be withdrawn. The course, however, which had been pursued was certainly not fair to hon. Members on that side of the House, whose only and earnest wish was that the question should be fully considered with a view to a satisfactory conclusion being arrived at. The fact was, however, that by accident—if it was by accident—on the first day of a most important debate of a most important measure the discussion almost fell through. If it had not been that when the question was put an hon. and learned Member interposed there would have been a very grave and serious miscarriage in the collapse of the debate. He sincerely hoped that some satisfactory conclusion of the present incident would be arrived at.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, that his right hon. and learned Friend who had just sat down (Mr. Plunket) had spoken with great moderation on the question which had been raised. He (Mr. Forster) quite agreed with him that they ought to proceed with the debate, and he did not think there would be any difficulty in doing so. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross) had mistaken the position when he said that, as a natural consequence of fixing that night for the debate, no Amendment could be put on the Paper. The fact was that three Notices of Amendments already appeared on the Paper, and he confessed that he came down to the House expecting that they would be moved. He was rather surprised, however, to see the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) rise in his place when the second reading of the Bill had been moved, instead of the hon. Member for Waterford (Mr. Villiers-Stuart), the noble Lord (Lord Elcho), or the third hon. Member who had given Notice of Amendment. The hon. Member for Waterford was now in his place, and he hoped to have the opportunity of hearing the remarks of the hon. Member before he addressed the House. It had been said that there had been a conclave of Ministers to consider the speech of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin. Well, that speech was a most interesting one; but it did not require a conclave of Ministers to consider it. What really did happen was the most natural thing in the world. His right hon. Friend the Prime Minister did not reach the House until three-fourths of that speech had been delivered, and it was natural he should wish to hear from a Colleague the arguments that had been advanced. Then, again, two or three legal points had been raised, and as to these he desired to consult his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General before addressing the House. He could assure the House that the Government desired to give the fullest opportunity for discussion, and that they were perfectly able to give the explanations that had been asked for, but they would take their own time to do so; and, inasmuch as Amendments had been placed on the Order Book, it was but reasonable that they should hear what was to be said in support of them before they replied.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE said, they had on that side been charged with obstruction; but he begged to say that it had been made unnecessarily, and that there was no foundation whatever for that charge. Charges had been brought against them most recklessly, and without due consideration on the part of those who advanced them. What the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. E. Forster) had just pointed out was exactly what appeared to them to be the state of the case. The Bill was brought forward and distributed just before the Recess. It was introduced on the last day, and there was really no time, as his right hon. Friend the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross) had stated, for that consultation which was necessary after the Bill was in print; and, therefore, as his right hon. Friend had stated, no opportunity had occurred for considering Amendments. Nevertheless, Amendments were put down, among them one of considerable importance by the hon. Member for Waterford (Mr. Villiers-Stuart). When they came to consider what was likely to be the course of the debate, they had before them the warning of the Prime Minister, that it was not, in his opinion, possible that it could be concluded in one night—that that would, in fact, be only the beginning of the debate. And, looking at the enormous importance and the difficult and intricate character of the measure, everyone must feel that it was due to the country and to the House that there should be a full and satisfactory discussion of the question. Well, it was understood that the first place would be given to the hon. Member for Waterford; but they saw that there were points on which further information was required, and that it would be difficult to carry on the debate until these points were cleared up. The hon. Member for Waterford did not press his precedence, and questions as to which information was required were put by his right hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Gibson) in a speech, not of great length, but of a full character, and at a time when answers could have at once been given. If, subsequently, other questions were raised by other Members, there would still be plenty of time for their discussion. But what occurred? They found themselves really on the point of a division, and probably on the second reading being carried and affirmed, and that in absolute ignorance of the opinions of the Government on most important points, and without any opportunity being given to any hon. Member who had not been in his place to express his opinion. It might be said that every hon. Member ought to be there. But it was not their fault that the Government had fixed the first day after the Recess for the commencement of so important a discussion. He hoped the effect of what had been done would be not to stop debate, but to bring it about. If it had not been for the course taken by his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) they might not have had a debate at all. He trusted that the debate would now proceed, and that, though the present conversation had been somewhat animated—not more so, however, than was necessary—it would not prejudice the calm and full and adequate consideration of the most important measure before them. He was sure that if the Government desired to have the Bill discussed and weighed by the House, they would use their influence, if such should be necessary, to have the debate continued in the manner in which such discussions were usually carried on. The last speech had been made from that side of the House, and if it were answered the hon. Member for Waterford would have an opportunity of moving his Amendment, to which he trusted full consideration would be given. He thought that no blame could properly attach to hon. Members for the part they had taken in preventing a chance division being snapped upon the most important stage of the most important measure that he thought he ever remembered being brought before the House; for if they had taken any other course they would have stultified themselves.

Mr. VILLIERS-STUART rose to submit his Amendment, when——

Mr. SPEAKER reminded the hon. Member that the Question as to the adjournment of the House had not been disposed of.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Question again proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. VILLIERS-STUART: It is in no unfriendly spirit towards the Land Law Bill that I have given Notice of the Motion that stands in my name. On the contrary, it is in the hope that a grave omission may be supplied, and that it may be brought a step nearer to that which we all long for—a substantial settlement of the Land Question. Such a settlement must involve, if it is to be of any permanent benefit, the redress of grievances of the various classes connected with land, and depending upon agriculture for their subsistence; that cannot be considered a settlement of it which leaves out a class amounting to half the entire agricultural population of Ireland. The labourers, with their families, number not less than 2,000,000 of human beings. The condition in which a large number of these live is a disgrace to any civilized community, and a standing reproach to the Government of England. Nothing strikes a foreigner visiting Ireland with greater astonishment, I may say indignation, than the miserable hovels in which Irish farm labourers reside. Roofs of rotten thatch, floors of mud, with one single room doing duty at night as a dormitory for all ages and both sexes, while, in the daytime, it is shared by the pig and the poultry. Let me read a description from an official Return made last year for the information of the Members of this House. It is the Report of Dr. Nixon, Medical Inspector, relative to Swinford Union. He said—

> "I have the honour to report that I visited on yesterday, with Captain Spaight, the Faheens, a small village three miles from Swinford. It consists of 41 cabins, nearly all of which are single-roomed, accommodating 46 families, and has a population of 188. The condition of the people here is extremely wretched. In most of the cabins cattle and pigs are kept in the room that is occupied by the family. The sewage

matter is partly carried off by open drains which run through the centre of the floor, whilst stagnant pools, containing all sorts of offensive matter, lie in front of the cabins. In this village there is no sewage of any kind, and no road for cars within more than a mile's reach. The food of the people here consists almost exclusively of Indian meal without milk. Nothing could exceed the complete absence of sanitary arrangements in this village. There were fully eight inches of manure in one cabin in the room where seven persons lived, and the woman of the house explained that she could not clear it out, as then she would have no manure. A large pond filled with greenish water, and containing all kinds of sewage matter, was in front of the house, and the sewer in connection with it had its mouth closed by a large stone put against it; yet, although illness existed in three families in this village, for over two months, it was only on the preceding day that the medical officer of the district was sent for."

Of course, this must not be taken as a general description of the condition of Irish labourers' cottages; but it is true of only too many of them. What houses to return to after a hard day's work! What materials for discontent, for disaffection, for a fierce sense of wrong and injury, for an outburst of a more desperate agitation and revolt than any that Ireland has yet seen! For it will be by men who have nothing to lose, who cannot be worse off than they are. Do not tell me, then, that there can be a satisfactory settlement while such festering sores are left without the salve of healing measures. You may build a fine house over a putrid cesspool; you may thus bury out of sight the mass of corruption; your edifice may be goodly to view, but it contains within itself the elements of dissolution and death for those that trust in it. So you may rear the edifice of your Land Bill over the festering sore and the grievous wrongs of the Irish labourers, hiding them for the moment out of sight; but you will leave an element of corruption and decay in the very foundations of it which will be fatal to its permanence. What will be the feelings of these men when they see the wrongs of the class immediately above them redressed; when they see benefits, concessions, favours, piled upon them without stint, while they are left to their misery and wretchedness, put off with vague promises of something to be done for them in the future? Anger and disappointment, deep in proportion to the extent of the concessions in which they have neither part nor lot, are sure, sooner or later, to blaze forth into active disaffection. Yet the Irish labouring classes have earned a just claim to consideration by the touching patience with which they have borne a very hard lot. No class suffered more severely during the recent period of distress than they did; employment almost entirely ceased, and those that did get work had to accept greatly reduced wages. I know cases of men with a wife and five children receiving only 3*s.* 6*d.* per week during the distress of last year, and of this 6*d.* per week went in tobacco "to keep the heart in poor Tim," as one of the women explained; yet these poor fellows have not taken part in the fierce agitation of the last few months; they have suffered patiently and in silence. If they are now passed over, I cannot conceive a greater incentive to agitation than their fate will offer. Those who have agitated are about to achieve the redress of their grievances; while those who have been patient and law-abiding have been neglected, and a deaf ear turned to the friends who would advocate their cause. Last year I suggested that the question of the labourers should be included in the scope of the Bessborough Commission; and if a sub-Committee had been appointed to take evidence on this subject at the same times and places as the Commission we might now have had their Report before us. I regret that this suggestion was rejected, for the evidence so obtained would have been of the greatest use in guiding us to definite remedies for this much-neglected and long-suffering class of the agricultural population. We cannot, of course, raise the rate of wages by Act of Parliament; but we may improve their lot by securing for them better dwellings, a suitable garden allotment, so useful in eking out their scanty means of subsistence. In Committee I shall propose to add some clauses to the Bill, which, I hope, may be found practicable, and which would remedy their lot in two very important respects. I appeal to the distinguished author of this Bill. It is his noblest distinction that he is the friend of the poor, and the champion of the destitute and oppressed. I appeal to him not to allow this blot to remain on a measure which we hope is destined to become a lasting monument of his genius, and of his wonderful influence over the councils of men. I appeal to him not to leave out of the scope of his Bill that class which is least able to help itself, which is least able to make its voice heard in this House, feeling confident that the cause I plead will have their sympathy and support; and I beg to move the Resolution that stands in my name.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "no measure of Land Reform for Ireland, however ably advised, can be considered complete or perfectly satisfactory which does not deal with the condition of the farm labourers of Ireland, with a view to ameliorate it,"—(*Mr. Villiers Stuart,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. BLAKE said, that the hon. Member for Waterford (Mr. Villiers-Stuart) deserved very great credit for having brought the subject under the notice of the House and of Her Majesty's Government; but he (Mr. Blake) was sorry the hon. Member had not stated more specifically what he thought should be done in the matter. It was a question of much difficulty to determine how the position of the Irish farm labourer could be improved; but he would suggest as part of the remedy that tenant farmers having 100 acres of good land should be required to build at least two decent cottages for labourers, and should allot half an acre of land to each dwelling. He was not disposed to give the labourer more than half an acre, lest the old and objectionable system of squatting in Ireland should be revived. By the plan he proposed, the hard-working labouring population of Ireland might be induced to resist the temptation of emigrating to America; and he thought they should do all in their power to induce such men to remain in the country, especially as a vast scheme of reclamation was likely to be opened out under the operation of the Bill. It was his duty for 10 years to administer the Fishery Laws in different parts of Ireland, during which time he had been a close observer of the condition of the labouring classes in several districts; and he was very sorry to say that a great many farmers in Ireland did not show that consideration for the labourers which they ought to do—that the lodgings they gave to the labourers were often of the worst possible description. Doctors told him that such treatment produced a most injurious effect upon the labourers. No doubt this sometimes arose from not having adequate accommodation in their own houses. A sufficiency of good cottages would obviate this, and save the labourers from many hardships amongst them, having often to walk many miles to and from their work, in consequence of having sometimes to lodge in villages and towns at a distance from their employment. He thought the subject which the hon. Gentleman had brought forward was well worthy of, and deserved the attention of the Government as much as anything contained in the Land Bill, seeing that it was the most important suggestion which had been made since the measure had been brought forward.

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, he listened to the speech of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) with a conviction, which grew with every sentence he uttered, that he had lent to this measure a powerful but very indirect support. The speech of the right hon. and learned Gentleman would carry conviction to-morrow to the minds of everyone in the United Kingdom that this Bill was a strong and drastic measure. No one would doubt the reality of testimony such as that coming from such a quarter. He was pleased to hear the right hon. and learned Gentleman affirm in the strongest possible language, and with the authority which belonged to a distinguished lawyer, that there could not be a shadow of a doubt that this Bill contained fixity of tenure for the tenant farmers of Ireland. His first thought was one of regret that the Bill had not been introduced three months ago. Had that been possible the House might have been spared the shame and humiliation of suspending the Constitutional safeguards of the Irish people. He had heard that night of another terrible murder, and he could only say he would have been surprised to find that a complete suspension of crime had taken place as a result of the stringent action of the Coercion Bill. The Bill would secure the property of the largest class in Ireland. But some time must elapse before it could be passed. It was consequently felt to be a case of now or never by bad landlords in Ireland. They were hasten-ing to get rid of their tenants, whose only protection until this Bill passed lay in the menaces of the Land League. He should have been glad if, without waiting for the Royal Assent to be given to this Bill, the Government had inserted a provision making its action date from the time of its introduction by the Prime Minister. He believed that such a provision would have given his right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary a far better means than he at present possessed of maintaining peace and tranquillity in Ireland. The right hon. and learned Gentleman apologized for omitting the consideration of certain parts of the Bill, on the ground that he was not an authority in figures or finance. He (Mr. Arnold) would not follow the right hon. and learned Gentleman with reference to legal technicalities; but he ventured to assert he had a claim at least as high as that of the right hon. and learned Gentleman to deal with parts of the Bill with which the right hon. and learned Gentleman had dealt. He had some claim to rebut the charge that this Bill was a denial of all the laws of political economy. As they were likely to hear a good deal about the laws of political economy, he proposed to say a few words on that subject. Opponents of this Bill sometimes held up their hands in thankfulness that they did not observe the laws of political economy. But it was most important to observe those laws, because they were laws which regulated the promotion and distribution of national wealth. This Bill, so far from deviating in any way from the laws of political economy, was a Bill for the more strict observance of the laws of political economy in Ireland. It substituted for threatening letters and the blunderbuss in the protection of property in Ireland a beneficent law. The opponents of the Bill boasted that they had on their side Mr. Bonamy Price, who, he believed, was an accredited authority on political economy. He asserted that Mr. Bonamy Price had utterly mis-stated the problem that was submitted to his judgment. That Bill was not a Bill for the valuation of rent. It would be more correctly defined as a Bill for the apportionment of rent; and the apportionment of a rent where there were two claimants, as in this case, for that rent was a work strictly within the functions of Parliament. It was a fact that the rent which a solvent tenant would pay one year with another did not, in Ireland, belong to the landlord. Mr. Bonamy Price thought that the principles of political economy were outraged by the notion of fixity of tenure. Now, as Lord Sherbrooke had said, land was a species of property in which from its very nature the public must have a kind of dormant joint interest with the proprietor. And between the eviction of a single person and the eviction of a whole people there was a line at which it was the duty of the State to intervene and decree fixity of tenure. That was the position at which they had arrived in Ireland. Mr. Bonamy Price said that they could not value rent; but rent was valued every day in this country and in Ireland by a machinery far less efficacious than that proposed to be established by the Government. To justify the tenour of the first four parts of the Bill, it was necessary to establish the fact that, as a rule, Irish tenants had property in their holdings which was at present unprotected. He could not understand how anyone could look through the evidence lately given, or at the evidence given, many years ago, before the Devon Commission, and could deny the existence of that property. The rule in Ireland, in South as well as North, was and had been, as Lord Portsmouth's agent admitted with regard to the estates of that Nobleman, that—

> "All the improvements on the farm are the property of his tenantry, because neither he nor his predecessor ever expended a shilling on it."

The fair rent of such landlords was a charge for what Lord Portsmouth's agent very fairly called "the raw material." The just rise in rent which might take place would be a rise due to the increase in value of the raw material. Let them read the admission of injustice committed in expropriation after the Famine of 1847 of tenants given by Mr. Halliday, a land agent and inspector of land improvements under the Irish Board of Works. He said they were turned out because they were unable to pay the rent due; but if their property in buildings and improvements had been reckoned, there would instead have been something payable to them at the time. Let them take the case described by Professor Baldwin, which, it might be said, was one of thousands throughout Ireland, in which the tenant effected improvements by removing stones and otherwise improving the land to the value of £30 an acre. Would they hear an eulogy of that law by which the Connemara landlord who Mr. Baldwin told the Commission had not spent a penny, and yet had raised his rental from £62 10*s.* to £276 14*s.*? Then, in the same evidence, let them take note of the fact that on Lord Arran's estate an increment of 25 per cent was put on with each change of tenancy, and in that way that charge had been laid on three times in two years. Could any hon. Member doubt that that charge was an undue profit derived from the pocket of the tenants? If Irish agriculture was bad, if it exhibited, as they were told in the evidence it did exhibit, the three "D's"—namely, drink, dirt, and debt—could they wonder? Was not security the basis of success in every occupation? Then they heard that landlords had made much expenditure. He had no doubt they had; and that expenditure must have fair and full consideration. But it was sometimes misrepresented. He read in an article in *The Times* the other day—

> "That almost the whole of the revenues derived from Lord Ardilaun's 33,298 acres in Galway and Mayo have for 12 years past been spent upon estate works and improvements."

But what were those improvements? From the article one would suppose they were agricultural improvements. The Correspondent of *The Times* told them they were the building of a magnificent mansion, and the inclosing and planting of a park of 200 Irish acres, including the compensation for disturbance of tenants cleared off to make way for that magnificent park. Were they to be told that political economy—that was, that the laws regulating national wealth—demanded that a tenant's purchase or inheritance of improvements should be insecure? Were they to be told that in such cases a fair rent was to be what a solvent tenant would give one year with another? If so, then he had no hesitation in declaring that the laws of political economy would say of such a system that it was the way to national ruin rather than to national wealth. The owners of Irish land had generally elected for themselves, as in Lord Portsmouth's and thousands of other cases, to be the proprietors of the raw material only. They had not, therefore, full property in the manufactured article; and to allow them, or a few of them who would do so, to assert their claims to that property and to maintain it by law, was obviously to condemn Ireland to anarchy, to the reign of violence, and to bad agriculture. Last year, upon the Compensation for Disturbance Bill, he had quoted the significant words in which, by desire of the Royal Agricultural Society of England, Mr. Caird reported to that great body of landlords upon this subject in 1878. Mr. Caird put the matter very plainly. He said that the Irish tenant "had established for himself a claim to co-partnership in the soil itself." There could not be a doubt that the laws of political economy inculcated that to make agriculture good and the country wealthy, there must be absolute security for, and every encouragement of, agricultural improvement. There was a part of that Bill which, he fancied, was framed to meet the case of Lord Dufferin, who did, indeed, as he would show, know the value of security in agriculture, but was disposed to think it should be limited by the length of his leases, in which he excluded the operation of the Ulster Custom. Lord Dufferin had been eloquent upon the ills of insecurity. It was that noble Lord who, 10 years ago, looking to the condition of the vast majority of the tenantry of Ireland, exclaimed, in "another place"—

> "What is a yearly tenancy? Why it is an impossible tenure—a tenure which, if its terms were to be literally interpreted, no Christian man would offer, and none but a madman would accept."—[3 *Hansard*, ccii. 68.]

T[illegible] Duke of Argyll evidently supposed that what his Grace had named the commercial principles applicable to the hire of land were infringed by that Bill. With all respect, he joined direct issue with the Duke. He said that the true commercial and economic principles applicable to the hire of land were affirmed and maintained by that Bill. Let them take the known facts of the case. Lord Portsmouth, let them say of his grace and goodness, allowed free sale of the tenant right on his estate, and maintained, he would assume, a fair rent with reference to that tenant's claim. Was it sound commercial principle that that fair dealing should be dependent upon the grace and goodness of any man; say upon that of the next landowner, who might do nothing of the sort? The facts of Irish husbandry showed one thing clearly enough—that commercial and economic principles had been utterly excluded from the dealings of landlords and tenants. For his own part, he could not understand the apologetic tone adopted by some persons in accepting that Bill. He would accept neither that nor any other Bill which violated economic principles. That was a Bill to assert and maintain economic and commercial principles. Commercial principles were trampled upon when the landlord might confiscate the interest of the manufacturer of food in the soil. Economic laws were outraged, and the promotion of wealth was denied, when the tenant's interest was ignored. The proper light in which to regard that Bill was, it seemed to him, that of an award of arbitration by the only competent arbitrators in the matter of the disputed co-partnery rights and claims which existed over the greater part of the cultivated lands of Ireland. Referring to Part III., and to the matter of "judicial leases," it would seem that they ought to know something of the clauses of a judical lease, which, it appeared, was not only for its duration, but after its expiry, to exclude the tenant from the benefits of the Act. He could not help thinking that this remarkable provision had a closer connection in fact than it had in the Bill with Clause 47, which appeared to have been framed to suit the case of Lord Dufferin and of his leases. Lord Dufferin regarded Ulster tenant right and Ulster free sale as "the illegitimate child of an adulterous connection between landlord and tenant;" and he was bold enough to assert that Ulster would be more prosperous without the system of tenant right. He agreed with Lord Dufferin that Ulster tenant right was at present a very unsatisfactory arrangement. It would, however, be considerably improved and solidified by that Bill. He could not see why a tenant who resumed the status of a yearly tenant at the expiration of a judicial lease, or of any other lease, should not be permitted to resign his tenancy under statutory conditions, just as he could do so at the end of a statutory term of 15 years. When so much was given, and some things that were unnecessary, as, for example, the too close definition of the reasonable grounds on which a landlord might refuse a tenant as purchaser, would it be too much to ask that the outlines of a judicial lease should be included in a Schedule of the Bill? He did not believe that it would reduce rents on many of the great estates in Ireland. Not less absurd had been the suggestions that it would operate to the disadvantage of the most lenient landlords; because there was an express provision in sub-section 6 for adjusting the position of landlords who had charged less than or more than a fair rent. Part V. of the Bill was undoubtedly that which gave the greatest satisfaction and the highest hope. It had led to a proposition from Lord Lansdowne, Lord Leconfield, and others, that the State should be, upon the requirement of a landowner, compelled to purchase his estate at 22 years' purchase of a fair rent. Lord Lansdowne, it must be confessed, sometimes failed to see both sides of the relations of landlord and tenant. For instance, he evidently supposed that his proposal as to purchase was just to the State and to those who were represented in the State; and he appeared to be convinced that when he borrowed money from the State to be repaid by annual instalments of £3 8*s.* 6*d.* per cent it could be just to charge the whole of that to the tenant, and then, when the charge was liquidated, to claim the improvement as belonging to the estate and not to the tenant. When the Land League proposed the compulsory expropriation of landlords at 20 years' purchase of Griffith's valuation, he told his constituents that it was unjust that the buyers should in any transaction fix the terms of compulsory purchase from the sellers. The State could ordain without injustice the compulsory purchase of any lands. He was not an advocate of, or a believer in, State landlordism. But he failed to understand upon what ground of principle he was asked to accept Lord Lansdowne's proposal for compulsory purchase and to reject that of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell). In principle there was no difference between compelling the State to purchase and compulsion exercised by the State upon the owner as to sale. To justify one or the other the same and the all-sufficient plea must be put forward—that of the public welfare and advantage. If Lord Lansdowne would take his advice he would not press his proposal unless he was prepared to consider its correlative, the proposition of the Land League, though he did not think Lord Lansdowne's valuation was by any means unacceptable or other than moderate. Upon that part of the Bill he submitted that the House should be guided by the views of the Executive Government; and if the Government desired to obtain compulsory powers of purchase, to be exercised at the discretion of the Land Commission, and were willing to couple with such power an acceptance of Lord Lansdowne's proposition, he should not hesitate to give them his support. He thought the Government had done wisely in not themselves undertaking the reclamation of land included in the Schedule of the Bill. He had only a few words more to say. He was very glad that the Government had not taken the work of reclamation in hand. As to the proposals in the Bill with regard to emigration, he was sure they were well meant; but he was not quite certain that they were entirely judicious. The population of Ireland was not well distributed. If the Irish people had a wholesome land system—towards which he hoped that Bill was a great contribution—they might be well distributed on Irish soil. There was no doubt Ireland was capable of supporting a much larger population than she now possessed; and he looked forward with hope and expectation to the time when the population of Ireland would by immigration be increased by another 1,000,000 of Irish from the United States and this country. The late Lord Derby, when Ireland had a population of 8,500,000—in 1845—would not say that she was over-populated. If they had free land in this country their population might, beneficially to all, but especially to landlords, be increased by at least 5,000,000; and if any hon. Member wished to know what he meant by "free land," under the present pressure of time he would venture to refer him to the Library of that House. He confessed that he was not zealous to diminish the pressure for an adequate settlement of the Land Question by affording means for reducing a population which, in his sincere opinion, might be advantageously augmented. He had great confidence in the efficacy of the just provisions of the Bill to operate slowly, perhaps, but surely, in putting an end to the excessive sub-division which prevailed in some parts of Ireland. He should listen with respectful attention to the comments of others upon the proposals for the formation of the Land Court and of the Land Commission. But he should require from the Government very much stronger justification than was now apparent for the exemption from the provisions of the Act of pasture farms of not less than £50 of value. If discontent prevailed in that Kingdom at the present time it had, in his opinion, no justification so valid as that of the vast injury which the economic interests of that country were sustaining through the rapid conversion of arable land into pasture. The evil was alike in both countries, but it was of greater magnitude in Ireland; and if anyone would take the trouble to investigate the causes of that evil transition he would find that primarily it was due to the fact that of the land of the United Kingdom by far the greater portion was settled land. If any hon. Member wanted further information as to the disabilities of settled land, he had only to study the Settled Land Bill of the late Lord Chancellor, which was on the Paper for Wednesday next, in order to learn how very far and by what a maze of intricacies settled land was removed from the operation of economic laws. He should have ill-expressed the views which it was his intention to convey to the House, if his criticisms of certain portions of the measure before the House left any doubt as to his appreciation of its value and importance. It was a good Bill and a great Bill; and when it was grafted on, as he trusted it would be next year, to a general Land Bill dealing with those master evils of our land system—settlement and entail and the system of conveyancing by deed, which operated as a blight and a curse upon the agriculture and the general industry of that country—he was confident that its operation would bear good fruit in the happiness and tranquillity of the Irish people, and that its acceptance would do honour to the Government and the Parliament of that which he desired should be not in name only but in the hearts of the people—the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

VISCOUNT LYMINGTON: I should not have ventured to have intruded myself upon the attention or the time of the House during a debate of such great dimensions and of such importance if it was not that, without any merit on my own part, circumstances have enabled me to obtain some practical knowledge of the various points arising out of the Irish Land Question, so that I have been enabled to approach the consideration of this Bill in a spirit different from that either of mere political partizanship or of mere outside opinion. As far as I am able to gather, there are two kinds of objections that are likely to be urged against this Bill. The one appears to me will be urged against that part of the Bill which, relating to changes in the tenure of land, is regarded as an unjust invasion of the rights of the landlord. The other is based, partly on politico-economic, partly on purely economic grounds, which condemn the Land Court, as infringing free contract, and the proposal of the State to lend money upon certain conditions to tenants desirous of purchasing their holdings, or for purposes of the reclamation of waste land, as ruinous to the State and injurious to the individual. I think that, to some extent, these objections are not to be met by positive disregard or by any angry denial. It is true the landlords of Ireland are asked to surrender certain rights—rights which the wise landlords have exercised in a manner which I do not think need fear the arbitrament of any Land Commission or of any Land Court; but the abuse of which by extortionate or by less wise landlords rendered them, as was said by the Prime Minister, both odious and impracticable. On the other hand, I think there is some truth in the remark that the House is asked to support a proposal in the latter part of the Bill rather upon political than upon economic grounds. It would be well, I venture to say, if we could approach the subject in no spirit of carping criticism. It is a question which, above all others, requires generous treatment. I think it will be well and wise if the House will persuade itself, in dealing with a great Irish Question, to assume a point of view which is wiser, wider, and braver than that which looks through the spectacles either of Party or of class interest. I will ask the House to bear with me while I enter into the question of the extent and manner in which this Bill is presumed to make so terrible an invasion of the rights of the landlord. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) regards the Bill as a measure of confiscation. Well, that is a very serious charge to bring against a Government and a Party; and I venture to say it would be a very serious charge, if Members opposite had not used that word previously in regard to every measure that had been proposed by the Liberal Party for the amelioration of Ireland. If that language had not been used so consistently and so recklessly that it has lost half its significance and almost sunk into the mere language of Party invective, it would be a very serious charge indeed. Sir, speaking as one who is personally interested in Irish property, I fail to see any confiscation, although I do see restriction, in this measure; but in that restriction I do not see evil, but rather a benefit to good landlords. I see no hardship in the State stepping in to prevent a right such as the raising of rent, which may be legitimate and fair in itself, being made the vehicle of great injustice. Nor does it seem to me unjust that the miscreants of a class should be prevented from performing those acts of hardship or injustice which do not only affect those who inflict them, but in the ready, rough, and unfair generalization of public opinion bring discredit and odium upon the whole class of which they are members. We have plenty of evidence in Lord Bessborough's Commission of the demoralizing effect that follows an unjust Act, no less in the loss among the surrounding tenants of that confidence which is the secret of agricultural development in Ireland than in the bitter and mischievous feeling which it engenders. In regard to the question of right, it will be well for the House to bear in mind, in contemplating the interference of a Land Court in the settlement of rent, two special characteristics in regard to the Irish land. In the first place, with the exception of a few great estates conducted on English principles, the tenants make the improvements and put up the buildings. On the other hand, it seems to me that the argument of the "land hunger" is a very serious and real one. There are manufacturing interests in Ireland only in a limited and circumscribed area—

while taking there to be, upon the computation of the O'Conor Don, 500,000 tenants in Ireland, with an average of five individuals for each family, we find 2,500,000 persons, or nearly half the population, directly connected with land as occupiers of the soil. There is not only this unnatural competition, but the class of competitors is largely composed of those who are either too depressed by poverty or ignorance to know of any other means or any other avenues by which they may earn their livelihood. In consequence of the preponderance of the agricultural interest in Ireland, there are others than those who directly compose the agricultural class who are influenced by the prosperity or adversity of that industry. There is a large number of the commercial classes—notably the small shopkeeper and the merchant — who are very largely influenced by the stability of the agricultural interest. If I am asked what is the stability of the agricultural interest, I should say that if there is a point on which it depends it is upon the occupiers of the soil being able to meet their obligations to their landlords, and yet have sufficient left to enable them to do justice to the land. All the Reports agree in remarking upon the importance of a fair rent—that is to say, of allowing the tenant to have a margin between what he pays and the full commercial value of his holding—for the prosperity and peaceful progress of the agricultural interest in Ireland. I maintain that nothing can be more injurious to the cause of agriculture in Ireland, more disturbing to the trade of the country, or more demoralizing to the tenant, than the system which unfortunately in some parts exists, under which agents exact exorbitant rents from the tenants—rents which, under peculiarly favourable circumstances, they can pay; but which, immediately the tide of prosperity turns, leaves the landlord in this position—either to accept only portions of the rent, which is demoralizing to the tenant, or to resort to those acts of eviction which outrages public opinion and disorders the feeling of a whole country side. In the Report of the Commission I find for 31 holdings in the West of Ireland the rent paid is £1,182 17*s*., and Griffith's valuation is £605, or that the rent is nearly double the Government valuation. Of course, it would be ridiculous to suppose that land in Ireland, the raw material by the increased value of which the landlord has an unquestioned right to profit, have not increased since a valuation made 30 years ago on a standard of prices exceptionally low, and under circumstances in which it was the interest of both landlord and tenant to keep it as low as possible. On the other hand, one can form a rough and not an unreasonable estimate as to the condition of rent upon agricultural land in comparing the difference between the rent which is now demanded and the Government valuation —and it does appear to me to be unjust that land which has had no adventitious increase, no unearned increment, which is purely agricultural such as is that stated in the districts I have taken, which has been improved in all cases to a considerable extent, in most cases exclusively by the tenant, should be taxed with a rent nearly double that of Griffith's valuation. When I first saw these figures in the Report of the Commission, I am bound to say that I felt some surprise, when I remembered the rents that were received on the property with which I am connected. If it is fair that agricultural land should be let at 100 per cent over Griffith's valuation, I feel that it is preposterously unfair on the part of my father's agent that his tenants should only pay for his agricultural land an average of one-tenth over Griffith's valuation, and that it should be the custom on the expiration of a lease of 30 years to increase the tenant's rental to an extent varying only from a quarter to one-eighth of the Government valuation. These rents, however, have stood the strain of the excitement of last winter, and during the whole of that time they have been punctually and readily paid. The Land League have been declared to be largely responsible for the non-payment of rent, and I have no doubt that these arguments will be urged to explain the statement that I find in the evidence that the arears of rent in the district to which I have alluded amount to over £25,000. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin criticized the Land Court as likely to convert the landlord into a mere rent-charger, and that it will encourage absenteeism. I fail to appreciate the reality of these dangers, though I quite admit the value of a resident gentry. No one can deny that the admixture of classes which is thus engendered, the location in several parts of the country of men of means and education, is a contribution—a large contribution—to the political prosperity and loyalty of the country. But what is hidden in this terrible complaint, that the Bill will make the landlord a mere rent-charger? Why, if it gives an effective meaning to that term, many of the landlords will have much to thank the Bill for. Nor can I see that residence in Ireland will be made less comfortable, or less pleasurable, or less calculated to be of service to the State, in allaying class prejudices and harmonizing the differences of race, if the landlord and tenant are enabled to throw the responsibility and odium of settling a disputed rent upon the decision of an impartial tribunal. I confess that the difficulty will be to secure the impartiality of that tribunal. I am not afraid lest it should err on the side of the landlords; but I believe that there is a danger that unless great care is taken to insure that it is composed of persons of strong character and independent circumstances, it may be approached, in times of excitement, by popular influences and neglect the paramount duty of impartiality. This is a matter that needs careful attention in Committee; but I think that the supposed danger that the Land Court may be so constituted as to be too liable to popular influences is one that with careful attention may be met in Committee. I do not think that it constitutes in itself, or that the apprehended evils of litigation are sufficient to outweigh the paramount and absolute importance of fixing the rent, which Mr. Kavanagh has truly described as the gist of the Irish grievance, upon a basis which will secure as much justice as experience and equity combined, and honestly administered can offer, and which will have the inestimable advantage of being final. I do not understand why 15 years has been fixed upon as the period for which a valuation should be made; I should have preferred that a lease should be extended to 30 years, for, on the supposition that the tenant does all the improvements, 15 years are not enough. As to free sale, I think I can speak on that subject with the authority of practical experience, the principle of free sale having been allowed on my father's property since 1823. There is plenty of evidence in the Report of the Commission to show that it is impossible to prevent free sale. It exists already upon certain properties. Lord Lucan's agent, Mr. Larminie, states in his evidence how it existed on his Lordship's property, where it was not allowed. Again, it occurs on Mr. French's property, where it is forbidden; while it appears in the evidence that on the Fitzwilliam estates, during the lifetime of the late Lord, when free sale was allowed, but the price was fixed by office rules, the parties agreed to the stipulated price inside the office, and the purchaser paid the excess outside the office. It is impossible, even if it were expedient, to prevent or to limit free sale. If restriction were possible, it would be of no benefit to the landlord, it would be unjust to the tenant, and very injurious to agriculture. But how could I more conclusively condemn such restrictions, how could I better prove them to be upon the highest grounds of politics more inexpedient than in reminding hon. Members opposite that they constitute a direct invasion upon economic principles? It appears to me that the opinions of hon. Members opposite possess a convenient elasticity, or their Easter-tide lucubrations upon political economy have been studied upon principles rather of antipathy to the Bill than of sympathy with the rigid ordinances of their subject. They say it is wrong for the Land Court to interfere with the landlord getting as much rent as possible; but, still, they say it is right for a Land Court or landlord to prevent a tenant from making as much as he can of his tenant right. In the one case you advocate, in the other you condemn, freedom of contract. If you were to restrict free sale you must restrict it on some hard-and-fast rule. Nothing can be more unfair and inconvenient than for a tenant not to be able to measure exactly the extent to which the landlord may interfere with his realizing his tenant right in the open market. You can only limit free sale in one of two ways, except by elaborate arrangements which the House will at once admit to be impracticable—you can either limit the price to be paid to a stipulated number of years' purchase, or you must fix the value of the tenant right at so much per acre. But in both these ways injustice will be done to the improving tenant. Suppose, for instance, the tenant right is valued at £5 an acre, will it be fair to the improving tenant, who may have spent £10 an acre on his farm, that he shall receive no more than the bad tenant, who has left the land exhausted and worn out? To decide the value of tenant right is a more difficult and complex matter than to determine a fair rent. In consequence of the tenants having in most cases done all the improvements, the interest of the landlord is confined to what is described as the unearned increment. I do not envy the Land Court its duty in this respect, for it will be a very difficult matter to determine what is the unearned increment apart from all improvement. But it will be much more difficult for any body of men to decide on the value of the tenant's interest. How can it be done except by appealing to public opinion, and how can that be tested except by free sale? I am not aware that the tenant is any more infallible than the landlord. English Members who are practically acquainted with agriculture could call to mind numerous instances where so-called improvements had best been left alone. In some cases the interest from the money expended in such improvements is entirely sunk; in some it has been considerably diminished; while in other cases the land has been left in a condition inferior to what it was before. A public auction, where the bidders are practical men, many of them acquainted with the farm, will condemn such improvements. But I cannot conceive a better opportunity for an agricultural grievance than where the improvements have been foolishly conceived for the Land Court to step in and put a very disproportionate value upon the improvements to the sum that the tenant has expended upon them, or to the opinion he claims for them, and so afford him the excuse of grumbling at every market ordinary how he might have got twice as much, if he had only been allowed to sell in an open market. On the other hand, there are some improvements that do not necessarily add to the value of land for letting purposes, and free sale offers the only satisfactory way of testing the value of such improvements. If a man enlarges his house, or betters the position of the farm, there appears to me to be no reason why the Land Court should interfere to prevent him getting a fancy price, any more than there is reason why the Land Court should interfere to prevent a man obtaining the *pretium affectionis* from the returned emigrant. The just and fair way of looking upon the effect of free sale upon the incoming tenant who has purchased is not to regard it as increasing his rent, but as virtually throwing upon him the payment of interest on a capital sum, which is still his, and which, subject to the chances of all trade, he is able to realize whenever and in whatever manner he may wish. I consider that the whole case against free sale has completely broken down. In the first place, we have evidence that you cannot prevent its existence, in some shape or the other, on estates where it has not been sanctioned. In the second place, where it is possible to limit the price, it can only be done with great injustice, great inconvenience, and at the cost of a great deal of irritation. But, Sir, free sale can stand on its own merits; it needs no apology and no excuse. I believe that if it were practical or politic to confer tenant right with one hand, and with the other deprive the gift of all its grace by depriving it of half its value, free sale is to be desired in the interests of the State, of agriculture, and of the landlord. As regards the case of the landlord, with the permission of the House I will quote from the evidence of Mr. Kirkpatrick. Speaking to Lord Portarlington, who at the time was opposed to tenant right and free sale, and whose agent he is, he says—

> "There is tenant right, whether you heard of it or not. Undoubtedly it has been going on, and it is very greatly for your advantage. A bad tenant, who would be a burden to you, gets something from a good tenant for going. In every case these bad tenants have been replaced by excellent tenants; the outgoing people are no burden to you; everybody is satisfied, and your property is greatly benefited."

Let us hear what Mr. Kavanagh says on this point—

> "I entertain no disinclination whatever to extend this right to the majority of holdings on my own property, although I have spent very large sums myself in the improvement of them; and I must confess that, strongly as I was opposed to its general extension before I entered upon this inquiry, the evidence I have heard,

and done my best to sift, has convinced me that extending this right would confer more advantages on the present occupiers than disadvantages on me."

Secondly, it will be a source of great comfort to the landlord, because of the manner in which it eliminates the difficult question of compensation for improvements. Thirdly, it limits the value of tenant right to a matter of fact and not of opinion, and thus entirely removes many subjects of petty annoyance and discomfort from the ground commonly occupied by landlord and tenant. Fourthly, it has the advantage of giving to the landlord a security for the repayment of arrears of rent; and, lastly, it possesses this great advantage—that it becomes the interest of the tenant to keep and to leave his farm in good order. It happens too frequently in England that a man taking a farm for a few years puts nothing into it and takes everything out of it, and finally throws it upon his landlord's hands in a condition almost unletable. Against that evil free sale forms a simple and natural security. But free sale is not merely a custom which is agreeable to the landlord and tenant, but it is one which I think goes far to touch that which lies at the bottom of the Irish difficulty. Agitations must have a ground upon which to start; it is only half the truth to say that they create the miseries upon which they thrive; and if I could point to any one thing which has inspired and is the foundation of the present discontent and disaffection in Ireland, I would say that it is the desperate and despondent spirit which is fostered in the mind of the Irish occupier by the sense that in losing his holding he loses everything. It is this despondency, added to the sense of insecurity, which springs from that curse of Ireland, which has sapped the very life and energy of her people—the system of tenancy at will with leasehold conditions. It is this, and not what is described in the ignorant phraseology of the day as the thriftlessness of the Irish race, that has fed the spirit of agitation and crushed that of commercial prosperity. Where do we find that the Land League has its most devoted followers; where has it aroused the strength of its influence; where does the advice of some hon. Members who occupy some of the Opposition Benches below the Gangway, to keep a firm grip upon the land, speak with greater force and a deeper meaning than among those miserable cottiers in the West of Ireland, whose passionate clinging to the plot which they cultivate is only natural when we contemplate what the loss of that means? Sir, it robs them of everything that human life can give—of home, of respectability, often of the industry of a lifetime. Life alone is left to them; the life of an outcast in a world which offers no compensation but the workhouse. I have not exaggerated what the loss of his land means to the Irish cottier. Even the language of eloquence would be inadequate to describe it. Sir, free sale will go far to alter this. With free sale, it becomes the object of the tenant, who is doing badly, to realize his tenant right before it is consumed by arrears of rent. The tenant feels that in quitting his holding, so far from losing everything, he is often the gainer by a well-timed and prudent act. Of this important Bill there is nothing which, in my humble opinion, is of greater importance. No part of the Bill has been more objected to than free sale, while really there is none which is less open to objection. Nothing can so naturally relieve the land where the population is congested. Nothing will more materially conduce to its good cultivation; and, lastly, no agency could more effectually, and yet more pleasantly, meet that desperate spirit among the occupiers of land in Ireland to which I have alluded. We cannot expect that this measure or any other can, of itself, secure contentment and prosperity to Ireland. No legislation can take the place of a people's energy or enterprize. Those who support the Bill do not expect this. What they do look for in it, and what they trust it will accomplish, is to revive in the heart of the Irish agriculturist a spirit of security, confidence, and enterprize. The difficulties and anxieties of the task are very real and very great. But, by these—the accompaniments of all great measures—Members who sit on this side of the House are surely not going to be dismayed. But if this were so, we might well take heart and borrow some courage from the example that has been set by that illustrious statesman, whom a long and laborious life of public service has not deterred from a task which, in many senses, will be a thankless one, which can offer him no personal reward other than the blessings which posterity will award to the author of a great measure of justice, and of that boldness which the political circumstances of the case transfer from an act of rashness into one of statesmanship.

MR. W. E. FORSTER: I rise now, Sir, feeling that if I further postpone my remarks, we may be told that we are not prepared to carry on the debate, because we cannot reply satisfactorily to the arguments of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson); but I think my noble Friend the Member for Barnstaple (Viscount Lymington) has shown—in a speech of remarkable eloquence and thought, and of remarkable knowledge, arising partly from his hereditary connection with Ireland, and I must say from his sympathy with the Irish people and the Irish tenantry—with what ability the debate can be carried on. That speech may be taken as a sufficient answer to the taunts we heard earlier in the evening. Before entering upon the main subject of the debate, I may say a word with regard to the Amendment of the hon. Member for Waterford (Mr. Villiers-Stuart), who has brought forward a question of great importance—namely, the condition of the Irish labourers. I do not think he has painted their position in too strong language. The condition of the agricultural labourer is one which excites great sympathy, and it will become the House to consider most carefully how it can be improved. It is better now than it was 25 or 30 years ago, but it is very bad still. But we cannot do two or three things at once. This is a Bill for reforming the land tenure of Ireland as its principle object; but if my hon. Friend, or the hon. Gentleman who followed him (Mr. Blake), who has had great practical experience, can bring in any clauses in Committee at all germane to the Bill, to improve the condition of the agricultural labourers, we shall be glad to consider them. I will now refer to the speech in which the debate was opened, and which I heard with pleasure, and for this reason. The right hon. and learned Gentleman began with an attack upon the Bill and ended with a most fierce denunciation of it, and, as my noble Friend has said, he alluded to what he called its confiscatory clauses, complaining that we had not the courage, the justice, or the candour of open confiscation. We are not unaccustomed to these attacks on measures which we have thought it our duty to bring forward; but in the present case it was encouraging to find that the right hon. and learned Gentleman, who, from his great powers and his knowledge of Ireland, is almost, if not quite, our ablest critic, in spite of his dislike to the Bill, has not formally proposed to oppose it. The right hon. and learned Gentleman began by asking why the Bill was brought forward, and gave two or three reasons for that course, which he presumed were in our minds, but which were not in his. I thought he would have condemned the Bill as being mischievous; but he did not take that view, nor does the Conservative Party in England or in Ireland either wish that it should be thrown out. They are very anxious that there should be a settlement of the question this year, and they are well aware that it will be necessary to base that settlement upon the general lines of this Bill. The right hon. and learned Gentleman appeared to have misconceived several parts of the Bill, which I will endeavour to explain; and while he started some objections to it which will have to be met in the course of this debate, he mentioned others which are fairly matters for Committee. We must not forget that in a complicated measure of this kind there will be many clauses which admit of discussion in Committee, and in respect to which the Government—though they put them before the House as the method in which they think the matter may be best dealt with—is, of course, open to suggestions; but at the stage of the second reading we are considering only the principles of the Bill. The right hon. and learned Gentleman said that he found the Bill very complicated, and confessed that he could not fully understand it; but he gave it a good character in one respect, and said that it was clearly intelligible as regards the interests of the tenants. Undoubtedly, it is a measure of great complication. It is no matter of surprise that a Bill dealing with the land tenure throughout Ireland, and dealing with the evils of the condition of the people of the West of Ireland, and the overcrowded parts of Ireland, and also dealing with the great social object of increasing the number of the yeomen proprietors of Ireland, should be complicated; and if any hon. Member supposes that a Bill for these objects will pass in a few simple clauses, he must have very little experience of Parliamentary discussion. Now, the three main objects of the Bill are these—first, the reform of the land tenure of Ireland; secondly, the increase of the number of the proprietors of land; and, thirdly, the relief of overcrowded districts. As regards the second and third objects, I imagine that there is in principle no difference of opinion. With regard to the relief of overcrowded districts, the principle is that such relief must be given by State assistance. I am aware that many hon. Members doubt whether that ought to be done by migration, or emigration, or by the employment of the people on public works; but everyone admits that it is almost impossible to leave those districts as they are, without some attempt to provide State action to relieve them. Then as regards the increase in the number of landowners, although the principle is one to which, I think, the House assents, and our object is to effect that increase by lending money to tenants to enable them to purchase their holdings, there will be, no doubt, great differences in regard to the details of our plan. Now we come to our first object, which undoubtedly is the most complicated, the most important, and, as I believe, the most immediately necessary of the three—I mean the reform of the land tenure. Here, again, there are three principles in our scheme, to which principles, if they have not commanded universal concurrence, I do not expect very serious opposition, though there may be great opposition to the details by which we attempt to carry them out. They are—first, a Court or tribunal to fix a fair rent; next, security of tenure at this fair rent; and, lastly, the power of the tenant to sell his interest in his holding. Of these three, the first is, in my opinion, the most important. If there be one principle to which the House will agree, it will be the principle that, in the present relations between landlords and tenants in Ireland, we must have a tribunal in the last resort to fix the rent as between the two parties, and that we cannot leave it to be determined by competition and the laws of supply and demand. That is the most important proposal we have to make, and the most novel, and also to many political economists, or those who call themselves political economists, the most staggering; but, to almost all who have studied the condition of Ireland, the most necessary. It is most remarkable to notice how the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) passed over the objections from political economy in one phrase. I had expected that both he and the noble Lord the Member for Haddingtonshire (Lord Elcho) would urge them; but the right hon. and learned Gentleman all but ignored them. It is striking, as my right hon. Friend said in bringing the measure forward, that in the two Commissions, this is the one point on which almost everybody agrees. The majority of the Duke of Richmond and Gordon's Commission agree with the minority upon it, and it is the one proposal which all the five Members of Lord Bessborough's Commission agree upon. It is quite true that exception has been taken to it by Mr. Bonamy Price, the Professor of Political Economy at Oxford, who, I must admit, expresses his views very clearly, and strongly opposed a tribunal for fixing rents; but, although I will not weary the House with quotations, I will read what another authority, the late Mr. John Stuart Mill, said on this subject—

> "Peasant rents ought never to be arbitrary, never at the discretion of the landlord, either by custom or law. It is imperatively necessary that they should be fixed, and when no mutually advantageous custom has established itself, reason and experience recommend that they should be fixed by authority."

That is a strong argument in favour of what we propose to do; but the objec tions that are based on political economy have not really been started this evening, and I do not know that I need answer them. It is not very difficult to show the reasons why in this particular matter we must not allow the bargain to be settled by the bargain-makers themselves. The truth is, we must interpose in what is called freedom of contract, because it is not real freedom of contract. The two parties are not free to contract. An analogy has often been asserted to exist between rent and wages. It is said—"Why fix rents, when you cannot fix wages?" But I think the illustration is in favour of interference, and, as a matter of fact, we are obliged to interfere in the question of wages. If we were to carry out the principle of absolute non-intervention, and leave the capitalists and labourers to deal between themselves, without any sort of intervention by the State, the capitalist would have the advantage of the labourer's hunger for food; but, by the Poor Law, we protect the labourer, and so far we intervene between him and his bargain. Let us look for a moment to the various circumstances in Ireland at this time. If the House will allow me, I will just state how those circumstances vary. We have in Ireland facts for almost every theory. Indeed, I defy any hon. Member to have a theory about Ireland which he would not be able to produce facts in support of. There are many very low-rented estates in Ireland; there are some rack-rented estates; there are estates which are let at exorbitant rents; and there are many low-rented estates of which naturally we hear less than we do of the others. There are many estates where the rents have not changed for more than 20 years, and there are others where the landlord has thought it fit to raise the rents every three or four years. There are some landlords in Ireland who have improved their properties quite as much as the average of the English landlords, and some, I dare say, who have improved them more; but, undoubtedly, the general rule is that improvements are made by the tenants. Then there are many landlords who are doing their utmost for their tenants, who are a blessing to their neighbourhood, and whose departure from it, if we contemplated such a thing, would be a great misfortune. Other landlords never go near their property, but leave the management of it to agents; and, perhaps, in some cases, it is well that they do not go near their estates. After the distress of the late year or two, and the agitation, almost any hon. Member who wishes to make out a case could bring forward facts in support of it. Some tenants are perfectly unable to pay their rents. Many tenants are quite able to pay them and not willing to pay them; and there are some landlords, though not many I am happy to say, demanding payment most unreasonably. There are many landlords who are forbearing, and some who are forced to demand their rents, and others who are justified in doing so by both law and justice. Facts for partial and imperfect generalizations may thus be adduced for any theory; but there is one generalization which may be made all over Ireland, and that is that the demand for land does greatly exceed the supply, and has exceeded it for generations—for more years than any of us can recollect. My noble Friend (Viscount Lymington) has stated that the chief reason for this is that there are no other means of living, and that there is no other mode by which the farmers, or the peasants, or the middle class men and small capitalists can obtain a living. Therefore, a tenant clings to the land, and you cannot compensate him for disturbing him out of the land. And here comes the important fact that rather than be evicted he will make almost any promise and almost any contract. Well, therefore, we find that, as an absolute practical necessity, we must protect him against the contracts which he himself is willing to make, and, upon the whole, we shall find it wiser to do that than to rely solely on our power to oblige him to fulfil his contract. I have often asserted in this House—and I have been found great fault with for saying so—that we must enforce the law as it stands. But if we rely solely on our power of enforcing the law, we shall find it so difficult to do it that we shall have a very strong outcry not only in Ireland, but in this country also, that the law must be changed. Therefore, we find a tribunal to ascertain a fair rent to be necessary, and almost all practical politicians have come to consider it to be necessary in the last resort. My right hon. Friend called it an optional tribunal. We do not force the rent on the landlord and tenant upon every farm; but we do make it compulsory, it is true, upon the landlord on the application of the tenant. In doing that, I admit that one of our chief objects ought to be to give every possible inducement to the tenant not to apply to the Court to fix the rent. It is far better that a fair bargain should, if possible, be made between the two parties. If it should be found that there is any provision in our Bill which would prevent this inducement, and if any Amendments to improve the measure in this respect should be proposed, we should be glad to consider them; but we believe that the key-stone of our measure is the absolute necessity in the present condition of Ireland and of the relations between landlord and tenant that there should be an outside tribunal able to fix a fair rent which the tenant shall pay. If, then, we are driven to have this tribunal, let us come to the question of how this fair rent should be defined. And now I come to the chief point raised by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin. I understood him to make an objection similar to that which I have seen in two or three of the daily journals. It is that our definition of fairness will imply that the value of the tenant right is to be carved out of the existing rent. I see the right hon. and learned Gentleman accepts that interpretation; and it is stated how unfair this would be.

Mr. GIBSON: I do not know what the intention of the Government may be. I stated, as a matter of clear law, what might be the construction drawn by the Courts.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I understood that the right hon. and learned Gentleman wished to have an assurance of our own interpretation, and to know whether we take that view or not. Now, I say that that would be very unfair, especially if it was understood that the lower the rent the larger would be the tenant right, and the greater the deduction. Consequently, a generous landlord would suffer for his generosity. But I do not believe, and I cannot understand why the right hon. and learned Gentleman supposes, that our clause can bear any such interpretation. In the first place, I think the right hon. and learned Gentleman has forgotten—and the mistake is very general—that the meaning of the clause is not that the rent must necessarily be reduced. Its meaning is that the rent must be fixed. In fact, the clause does show in one of its sub-sections that it is possible the rent may be increased. That is one misrepresentation that our critics make. I do not believe that the tenant with a low rent will go into Court. He will have a wise reluctance to do so; he will fear that the rent may be raised if he does. The right hon. and learned Gentleman expected a great rush into Court. I do not believe, and we have no expectation, that that will be the general effect. The low-rented tenants will think it better to let well alone; and the rack-renting landlords will, I expect, lower the rent of themselves in order to avoid going into Court. And thus one of the great causes of discontent will be removed—the fear of a rise in the rent. The tenant hitherto has been obliged to choose between such a rise and the leaving of his holding. He fears to make improvements lest the improvements may be sacrificed. That is a fear which affects almost every tenant in Ireland. It affects the tenants upon low-rented estates, not so much but as well as the tenants not so favourably circumstanced, because they fear that upon the death of their landlord there may be a change, or that the landlord may choose to sell. But, by the provision we make, we remove, as I believe, that fear from their minds, because they will know that, at any time, they may apply to have the rent fixed. But the right hon. and learned Gentleman seems to me to have made a still greater mistake, and the mistake is a very general one. He seems to forget the first part of the definition of a fair rent, which is—

> "Such a rent as in the opinion of the Court, after hearing the parties and considering all the circumstances of the case, holding, and district, a solvent tenant would undertake to pay one year with another."

["Read on!"] I would rather explain this part first. That would mean, taken by itself, in all probability, a very considerable rise of rents upon many estates in Ireland. It would mean that upon the low-rented and a great many of the moderately-rented estates, according to the Irish acceptation of the term, the rent would be raised, for a solvent tenant would be willing and able to pay a higher rent. I do not believe the right hon. and learned Gentlemen himself would have accepted our definition if we had stopped there. He contrasted in his speech fair rent with rack rent, and said that a fair rent was not a rack rent. Rack rent has got a very bad name in Ireland; but what is rack rent but competition rent? Therefore, the right hon. and learned Gentleman allows that he would not interpret a fair rent to be a rack rent or a competition rent. But if we had left the clause there it would be a competition rent. The right hon. and learned Gentleman himself surely would not wish that the Ulster tenant right should be confiscated. But that right would be confiscated if we said that the Court was to fix the rent without any reference to the Ulster tenant right. It would mean this. Suppose the rent of a particular farm was £1 an acre, and that because the occupier had paid a considerable sum for the tenant right. But a solvent tenant coming in, and not having paid that money, would be perfectly willing to pay a much higher rent, perhaps 35*s*. or £2 an acre. That would be a definition of a fair rent, unless we had the provision that reference was to be made to the tenant right. These are the words to which objection has been made. In Ulster the tenant right exists, but out of Ulster we refer to improvements and compensation for disturbance. We do not mean that the words are to be absolute guides. Above all, we do not mean that whatever the tenant has paid for the tenant right should be given him, for he may, as my right hon. Friend said, have paid as a *pretium affectionis* a perfectly unreasonable sum. But what we mean is, that it should be the business of the Court to make a fair allowance for the tenant right. Will the House allow me to read one expression of opinion by a Member of Lord Bessborough's Commission, a Gentleman very unlikely to speak unfairly of the landlords? It is hardly possible to find anywhere a man of greater fairness—I mean The O'Conor Don. He says—

> "A fair rent must be something less—I am bound to express my own opinion—something considerably less than the fair commercial value or the letting value of the land."

I believe the right hon. and learned Gentleman would admit that. He would not for a moment admit that the rent should be such as to eat away and confiscate the Ulster tenant right. But then outside the Ulster tenant right we have to deal with improvements. If we were to take what a solvent tenant would pay, that would be to take no note of the improvements, and they would be confiscated. Besides, it is impossible to deny that there is some goodwill out of Ulster, some value attached to the goodwill, partly arising from the fact that the tenant has some property in the holding. He has made the improvements in the holding; they may not appear to us to be very valuable improvements, but they are often the only improvements on the estate—the clearing away of stones and the erection of the buildings. The fact that the landlord has allowed him to make the improvements is a fact that he cannot forget. The landlord is well aware that that does give the tenant some right, whether it be called property or interest, in the land. There is a goodwill—it exists; there is a right of continuous occupancy by the tenant which in Ulster is acknowledged by law, and which has been attempted to be ignored by law, but which, nevertheless, has been universally acknowledged throughout the country by sentiment and feeling, and was acknowledged in Ulster and out of Ulster; admitted by the practice of very many landlords themselves in the moderate and even low rents they have established, as compared with the commercial value. But it is said this is a punishment for low rents. What we maintain is this—that the Court is first to estimate what a solvent tenant would undertake to pay. The low rent might by this estimate be very considerably raised; and after the Court has determined it with due consideration for the tenant right, it may be left as it was before. We have no expectation that the low-rented tenants would venture to go into Court. They would rather leave well alone. The other provisions seem naturally to follow. Before making any remarks with regard to security of tenure, I may be allowed to answer some other questions that were put by the right hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Gibson). I understood him to say, supposing a fair rent fixed as we propose, on the landlord, after an interval, demanding an increase of rent, the tenant would get disturbance allowance. But I think the right hon. and learned Gentleman must have forgotten that the tenant could only claim that on eviction. It was only when evicted that he could demand that. Then the question was asked, Why the Court is not open to the landlords? Our view was that the landlord did not need the Court, and for this reason—he can alter the rent without the assistance of the Court, and we know he very often does. The tenant cannot. The hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arnold) asked why, at the expiration of a judicial lease, the occupier will not obtain the advantages of the Bill? The occupier will obtain the advantages offered to an ordinary or future tenant, though not to a present tenant. My hon. Friend inquired why we had fixed upon the term of 15 years as the duration of a settlement of the rent? And my noble Friend (Viscount Lymington) also expressed surprise at this. Well, that is a matter which will have to be thoroughly discussed in Committee. But when the hon. Member for Salford compared it with the term of the statutory lease, I must remind him that in the 15 years' lease fixed by the Court, the judicial rent is compulsory upon the landlord; whereas the 31 years' is the voluntary acceptance of both parties; so that they are not precisely similar. I have dwelt for some time on the tribunals for fixing fair rents, and it appears to me that the other provisions naturally follow. Let us take security of tenure; the right hon. Gentleman has given us a good character by saying that over a large part of Ireland our Bill will give fixity of tenure. What it does give, as we think, is very good security of tenure, and that follows from fixing a fair rent. What would be the use of giving a man a fair rent, if he is to be turned out next day or next month? May I allude to one objection not yet made in debate, but which is certain to be made—the objection that we have not given at once perpetual fixity of tenure, that we have not fixed the rent and the tenure to go on in perpetuity? Well, there are two objections to that. One is, that it must be a one-sided bargain. It is impossible that it could be anything but a one-sided bargain, as between landlord and tenant, because it would be perfectly good against the landlord, but it would be of no value against the tenant. If prices rise, the landlord would get no benefit from them; and if prices fell, no law we can pass could force a man to go on paying his landlord a rent which he was not able to earn from the soil. Then, secondly, we also believe that this arrangement would have the effect which it is said our Bill will have—but which we say it will not have—of converting landlords into mere rent-chargers, the consequence of which would be that we should lose the advantage of a landlord class, which I believe would be very injurious. As to free sale, that seems to follow fair rents quite as naturally as security of tenure does. In giving security of tenure at a fair rent we acknowledge the right of the occupier of the holding. My belief is that it would be impossible to prevent the sale of the tenant's right, and, indeed, although the landlords have set their faces sternly against it, yet the sale has been made; and it is far more to the interest of the landlord that he should admit a fact which gives the tenant the greatest inducement to leave his farm in a good condition. As to arrears, I do not think my hon. Friend the Member for Salford thoroughly estimates the effect of the clause to which he alluded. I may, however, state that the 48th clause, combined with the 13th, enables a tenant who is involved in legal proceedings in connection with the owing of rent, whether arrears or not, to apply to the Court for a judicial rent, and thereby obtain the advantages which the Bill is intended to confer. I have seen it stated in many speeches which have been made out-of-doors that no tenant can obtain any of the advantages of the Bill until he pays up his arrears. That, however, is not the case. He may apply to the Court if paying an exorbitant rent, and the Court may, and probably would, fix a lower rent, and he would obtain the power of selling his tenancy. [Mr. Parnell: But the arrears would not be wiped away as a debt.] That is perfectly true; but it is also true that he would obtain the advantage of the lowering of the rent. My hon. Friend the Member for Salford (Mr. Arnold) went further, and asked why the Bill should not be altered so as to apply to the prevention of all evictions from the time of its introduction.

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD: What I was contending for was that the protection afforded by the Bill should apply from the date of its being brought in.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I think my hon. Friend will find that the retrospective action of the Bill in respect to the protection it will afford will go further than he seems to suppose. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), I may add, drew attention to the veto which was to be given to the landlord. I find that the limitation veto which we have admitted is very much the veto claimed by those who have the greatest experience of free sale—the Ulster tenants. I do not think it reasonable that the landlord should have no veto. The argument of the advocates of the cause of the tenant is that there is a sort of joint ownership between him and the landlord. Now, even admitting that to be the case, it would not be fair to give one owner power to sell what he possesses to the injury and destruction of the property of another. The landlord has the power to sell; but we have so guarded the Bill that he cannot sell so as to injure the tenant. If you give no possibility of veto to the landlord, you may make the ownership of no value to him. Without doubt, there are great difficulties in these arrangements between landlord and tenant. Some hon. Members below the Gangway say—"Why not at once acknowledge you cannot make these arrangements between landlord and tenant, and get rid of the landlords altogether?" The hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), and the hon. Member for Tipperary (Mr. Dillon), who take that view, seem to me to agree very much with my noble Friend the Member for Haddingtonshire (Lord Elcho), who says—"Leave the landlords to do what they will with their own, and do not meddle with them." If, however, we were to take that line, very great power would be given to those who attack the institution of landlordism. I do not wish hon. Members to suppose that I think either this House or the country would not insist on making the law respected; but I am quite sure that if landlords are to be left to do exactly as they like with their land, as with Consols, without interfering with them, there will be a very strong feeling that, while the law must be enforced, it will be necessary to amend it. I must say, however, I do not think that anything that could be done for the purpose would have the effect of abolishing landlordism in Ireland or anywhere else. Two laws would have to be passed—one, that every landlord who is not an occupier must sell or transfer his land to an occupier; next, that an occupier should never sell his land, however tired of farming it he might be, to anyone who was not an occupier. It is only necessary to state these facts to show that in the present state of civilization it is impossible to abolish landlordism. You have landlords in France, you have them in large numbers in the United States, and you would find them very soon again in Ireland if you got rid of the present landlords. Well, the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin spoke of compensation to the landlords, and I think I am not mistaken in supposing that that was the real meaning of his speech. The real meaning of his attack upon the Bill, combined with his very careful avoidance of making that attack really serious, was that he hoped that terms would be made for the landlords in Ireland by means of a large State compensation. Now, I wish to state the argument for compensation fairly. I imagine the condition of things to be this — that equity gives one thing and the Statute Law enforces another. The Statute Law has not admitted in many parts of Ireland the right of the tenant to continuous occupancy, and even in that part of Ireland where that right is admitted, it is not guarded against being invaded; whereas equity now demands that it should be so guarded. We have had cases very often in which we have had to change the law in order to carry out the principles of equity, and there have been cases sometimes in which large compensation has been given out of State funds. I, therefore, am not surprised to hear a claim made for compensation. But the English law in the matter depends upon whether damage can be proved, and my firm belief is that no damage can be proved; on the other hand, that if the landlord were compensated, you would compensate him for conferring on him a benefit. ["Oh!"] Those who scorn that statement should consider the argument just used by my noble Friend (Viscount Lymington), who will probably be owner of a large estate in Ireland, on the subject. Let me remind those hon. Members of one fact—of the immense difference that there is, not now, not in consequence of the late distress or the agitation, but that there is generally between the selling value of Irish estates and of English estates. I have a very strong belief that the share that the Irish landlord gets out of his land is as much as that of the English landlords. [Hon. MEMBERS: More.] Well, I do not think it would be easy to prove that it is less.

What I say is this—that the number of years' purchase of an estate in Ireland for a long time past has been much less than it has been in England. I suppose it would be reckoned as between 20 to 25 years' purchase in Ireland, as against 35 or 40 years' purchase in England. Well, what does that arise from? It arises mainly from this, that some landlords in Ireland have used their power in such a way as to very much diminish the surety of letting estates there, and my noble Friend acknowledges that the limits of this Bill will be no real injury to any individual or to any class. Then there is another benefit to be conferred on the landlords—a very considerable one—namely, that a large number of new purchasers will be brought into the market by this Bill. ["Oh!"] Does any hon. Member doubt that if we lend a large sum of money to purchase land, it will bring a large number of new purchasers into the market? And does not that increase the value of the property? In the present state of trade I should be very glad if a large sum of money were lent to the purchasers of goods in the manufacture of which I am interested. It is stated that at this time landlords are very willing to sell, and I expect that for a time there will be as many sellers as purchasers. Undoubtedly, the provision of these new purchasers is something for which the landlords need not be compensated, for it is compensation in itself. To that part of the Bill I expect no Irish objections. If it be objected to at all, the objection should come from the English taxpayer. It is a matter which requires, I admit, great care and caution; but I believe the risk is far less than is supposed. You must remember this, that the tenant gets three-fourths of the value of his farm advanced to him by the Government, and it is not at all probable that he will be a defaulter if he can help it. We will bring to bear upon him the strongest possible inducement not to be a defaulter. Every year the value of his property will be increased, and every year what he would lose by being a defaulter will be greatly increased. There is some risk in it; but I think it is a risk which the State, and this country especially, might very gladly run, in the hope of obtaining a quieter state of things in Ireland. I have only a word or two to say upon another part of the Bill. I think there has been rather an unfair attack upon the Government with regard to the emigration clauses. It has been stated that our object is to sweep the Irish out of Ireland and to force them away. Well, we have no such object whatever. We have been forced to see what is the condition of some parts of Ireland, especially in the West, where, in some districts, there is an over population to an extent, perhaps, that no Bill for the reform of land tenure can altogether meet. Many of those people are highly rented; but if they paid no rent at all, they could not live in decency. We wish to relieve this distress by emigration. Some say—"Do it by the reclamation of waste lands, by migration." That might be useful to some extent; but there will be some who prefer to try their chance in Canada, Australia, or the Far West, and if they were my neighbours I should, in their own interest, strongly recommend them to try it. I very much doubt if hon. Members who so attack this scheme will be supported by the people of Ireland themselves. Several Catholic clergy have already organized an emigration of families to America. We have the Canadian Government anxious for families to emigrate, and the Pacific Railway requiring a large number of labourers. I am quite willing to admit that there have been great evils in Irish emigration—very little care for the material well-being of the emigrants for the first year or two, and disregard of their spiritual wants; so that there is ground for the complaints of the Roman Catholic clergy as to the temptations to which emigrants, particularly the young, are exposed. Our object is to avoid that; and if a scheme can be devised by which the wretched people of Mayo can be transplanted, and be looked after till they can earn their own living, it will be a great advantage. Of course, any emigration will be voluntary. I believe that if the proposal were fairly stated to the people themselves they would appreciate our motives, and would be sorry not to be allowed the chance of benefiting themselves by it. Undoubtedly, any such scheme must be extremely difficult; and I am not sure that if we pass the measure we shall find it possible to bring it into operation. It will require all sorts of safeguards against over-expenditure and mismanagement; but if it can be done, it will be of great advantage to those for whom it is intended. I agree with the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold) in looking forward to a time when the population of Ireland will be larger than it is now, though not, perhaps, in certain districts. I know not how we can meet the labourers' question except by emigration. At present the wages are miserably low, because there is an over-supply of labour. Of course, if that can be relieved, wages will in all probability rise. It would be a fair ground of complaint against our emigration clauses if it could be shown that they were a main object of the Bill, and that we had no real and honest intention to reform the land tenure. Hon. Members might then say—"You have given up all hope of doing good in Ireland, and you want to get rid of the people." But, no doubt, we are now calling on the House to engage in a most difficult task. There are great difficulties in the government of Ireland; but I have not lost hope, and I have probably as much reason to feel anxious on this point as any hon. Member. I believe there never was a better opportunity of meeting the difficulties of Ireland than now, if the House is determined resolutely—and I believe it is—to settle this question. In Committee we shall have many discussions, and very likely some alterations of the Bill; but I believe that in its main features it will pass through the ordeal of Committee, and will become law; for I believe there is a feeling in the House and in the country to support us in doing our utmost, by a reform in the land tenure of Ireland on the principles of this measure, to put the relations of landlord and tenant on a better footing, and thereby to remove the feeling of discontent. There is also a feeling that we ought to try to remove that overcrowding which is one of the chief causes of Irish misery, and to give to Ireland the great social benefit of an increase in the number of its landed proprietors.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned." —(*Lord Elcho.*)

MR. GLADSTONE said, it was rather early to move the adjournment of the debate at that hour (12 o'clock), and he hoped his noble Friend would be content to allow it to proceed. If, however, his noble Friend persisted with his Motion for adjournment, he would not oppose it, and the debate would be resumed on Thursday.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Debate *adjourned* till *Thursday.*

CUSTOMS AND INLAND REVENUE BILL.—[BILL 136.]

(*Mr. Playfair, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord Frederick Cavendish.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. GLADSTONE said, he would not ask the House to read the Bill a second time that night, because he was not aware whether there was any disposition to discuss it on the second reading or not; but, considering the nature of the Bill, he did not apprehend that any discussion would take place upon that stage. The points on which difference of opinion would arise would most naturally occur in Committee. On Thursday evening, if he had an opportunity, he should move the second reading; and he might add that, after the Land Law (Ireland) Bill, the Government would give the first place on the Paper to the Budget proposals.

Second reading *deferred* till *Thursday.*

ALKALI, &c. WORKS REGULATION BILL [*Lords*].—[BILL 119.]

(*Mr. Dodson.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."—(*Mr. Dodson.*)

MR. A. J. BALFOUR hoped the right hon. Gentleman did not propose to proceed with the Bill that evening.

MR. DODSON said, he merely wished the House to forward the Bill into the stage of Committee, and he only proposed to go on with the unopposed parts of the measure. He should not press any matter upon which there was opposition.

SIR SYDNEY WATERLOW said, he had placed a Notice upon the Paper of his intention to move that, instead of Mr. Speaker leaving the Chair, the Bill should be referred to a Select Committee. The measure was one which proposed to place serious restrictions, not only upon alkali works, but upon all persons engaged in the manufacture of cement. The Preamble of the Bill declared that it was necessary to amend the Alkali Works Act of 1874, and to make further provision for regulating works from which noxious gases were emitted. His reason for asking the House to send the Bill to a Select Committee was that he believed, if the House assented to that proposition, he should be able to show the Committee that there were no noxious gases whatever emitted in the manufacture of cement. He did not ask the House to accept that dictum from him; but he would read a few words, and a few words only, from the evidence given upon this subject by two most eminent chemists. The first was Dr. Russell, Honorary Secretary to the Chemical Society and Lecturer on Chemistry at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, and that gentleman stated in his evidence that he had spent some days in examining, in a most careful manner, the vapours and gases emitted from cement works, and the conclusion he arrived at from his analysis was that the smoke emitted was largely diluted with air, and that it became, immediately on emission, still more diluted, so that within a few yards only of its emission there was only to be recognized the very slightest trace of gas more than existed in the air itself. Certainly the extent of the existence of noxious gases was not sufficient to render the vapours emitted from cement works in any degree unwholesome or dangerous. Dr. Russell added, that on examining the condition of the neighbourhood in which these works were in existence, he failed to find any indication of injury. He (Sir Sydney Waterlow) might be told that in the evidence given before the Committee on Noxious Vapours some of the chemists who were examined gave an opinion which differed from that expressed by Dr. Russell; but the views of Dr. Russell were strongly confirmed by another eminent chemist—Dr. Odling. These very differences were, he thought, an argument in favour of the Motion he was about to make—that the Bill should be referred to a Select Committee, in order that such Committee might have an opportunity of examining scientific witnesses, so as to obtain a clear opinion upon the whole facts of the case. He ventured to think that if, instead of referring the Bill to a Select Committee, its provisions were dealt with by a Committee of the Whole House, it would be impossible to bring before the House any evidence of that kind. He might also point out that there were other matters involved in the Bill which could only be fairly inquired into by a Select Committee. The manufacturer of cement in this country was already seriously handicapped by foreign competition, and if further restrictions were to be imposed upon him by a Bill of this description, it would be impossible for the British manufacturer to hold his own in competition with the foreign trade; and the result would be that the Legislature would drive from the banks of our rivers a trade which at the present moment afforded means of employment for a large number of persons. It was unnecessary to point out that such a result would be a great injury, not only to the manufacturers, but to the working classes. The cement works had been erected on the faith of an understanding that they would not be interfered with. Large sums of money had been invested in the trade when the former Act of Parliament was passed; but the manufacture of cement would be most materially and injuriously affected if the Bill was to pass in its present shape. Under these circumstances, he hoped the House would allow the Bill to go to a Select Committee, because he believed it could easily be proved that the vapours from cement manufactories and from gas works were injurious to a very trifling and inappreciable extent. He did not think it was necessary that at that stage of the Bill he should trouble the House further; but he would simply move, as an Amendment, "That the Bill be referred to a Select Committee."

Mr. BIDDELL begged to second the Amendment. There was evidence already that the vapours from this particular class of works were not quite so injurious as represented; and the Bill, if passed as it stood, he was informed, would materially interfere with the conditions under which the manufacture of cement and manure would in future be carried on. It was only reasonable, therefore, that a Select Committee should have an opportunity of inquiring into the matter, and of hearing the evidence of scientific witnesses upon it, so that some means might be devised of giving relief to the manufacturers, without materially interfering with the main objects which the Bill was intended to accomplish. For these reasons, he had much pleasure in seconding the proposition of the hon. Baronet the Member for Gravesend (Sir Sydney Waterlow) that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee.

Amendment proposed, to leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "the Bill be referred to a Select Committee,"—(*Sir Sydney Waterlow,*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. RYLANDS said, he was fully alive to the extreme importance of taking care, in the passing of this Bill, that no works or manufactories should be brought under its provisions of which the necessity could not clearly be shown. But, at the same time, he confessed that he was unable to see in the arguments of the hon. Member for Gravesend (Sir Sydney Waterlow) anything sufficient to justify the House in referring the Bill to a Select Committee. He thought it would be granted that in Committee of the Whole House they would be quite ready to hear and consider all the arguments that might be adduced in favour of excluding certain works from the operation of the Bill, or in favour of including under its provisions other works which were not already included under them. It must be borne in mind that they were not altogether without evidence in the matter. Hon. Members would be aware that a Royal Commission had already held an inquiry, and had presented an important Report. He was bound to say that in certain districts of the country—certainly in some parts of his own neighbourhood—the results arising from the unrestricted emission of noxious vapours were most deplorable. It was quite time that Parliament should take the matter in hand, in order to see how far the evils complained of could be remedied. If the Bill were referred to a Select Committee, and if it was intended that evidence should be given before such Select Committee in relation to the various trades affected by the Bill, it would be quite hopeless to expect that the Bill could be passed during the present Session. Therefore, although he was quite prepared in Committee of the Whole House to consider the case of the cement manufacturers, and although he had no doubt that the House would be similarly prepared, he did not think the arguments of the hon. Member for Gravesend were sufficient to justify them, solely in reference to the interests of a particular class of manufacturers, in preventing progress being made with the measure during the present year.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS wished to say a few words upon the question before it was disposed of. He came from a part of the country which was very deeply interested in the whole question. Any hon. Member who had seen, smelt, or felt the evils which arose from noxious vapours emitted from alkali works, would certainly not vote for referring the Bill to a Select Committee. This was not a new matter; it was not a matter which they were approaching for the first time, and it was not a matter upon which the House had no information. The whole subject had already been inquired into by a Royal Commission, and had been thoroughly sifted in every possible shape and form, and the whole of the evidence collected by the Commission would be found in the Library. If any hon. Member would do him the favour to visit his (Sir R. Assheton Cross's) county, he would be able to see how matters stood under the present law. A person engaged in agricultural pursuits might see the finest crop of wheat one day, and look forward with the greatest possible hope to a good harvest; and the next morning he might awake to find the whole of his hopes absolutely blasted by the vapourings from alkali works. No one could well imagine the amount of destruction done to the crops unless he saw it. That being so, and the matter having already been thoroughly sifted and investigated in every form and shape, the Government had acted very properly in introducing the present Bill. In that Bill they did not adopt the entire Report of the Royal Commission which investigated the subject, and they did not seek to apply the provisions of the measure to all manner of works; but they took those works only which were considered to be of an injurious nature, and limited the scope of the Bill to them. He was bound to say that the Bill, as it stood, deserved in a great measure the support of the House. There would be no objection to consider the case of cement works when the Bill got into Committee, or any other special class of works in regard to which evidence might be brought before the Committee to convince them that such works should not be included in the Bill. But the measure was practically an Alkali Bill, and as an Alkali Bill it must be passed. He would appeal to any hon. Member connected with Lancashire, no matter from what part of the county he came, whether the Bill was not an absolute matter of necessity? All these smaller and minor matters could very well be dealt with in a full Committee. There was no one better able to deal with the case of the cement works than the hon. Baronet opposite the Member for Gravesend (Sir Sydney Waterlow), and the House, when the Bill went into Committee, would be quite ready to hear anything the hon. Baronet might have to say. He was quite sure that his hon. Friend behind him, the Member for Suffolk (Mr. Biddell), would bear him out when he said that it was quite time to put a stop to the main evil they required to deal with. If the Bill went to a Select Committee, everyone knew it would be absolutely impossible to deal with the question during the present Session. He therefore hoped that his right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board would not accept the Motion of the hon. Member for Gravesend, and if his right hon. Friend would not accept it, he hoped both sides of the House would support him.

Colonel MAKINS pointed out that the proposal of his hon. Friend the Member for Gravesend (Sir Sydney Waterlow) was based not upon the question of the alkali works, which had been so forcibly dwelt upon by his right hon. Friend the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross), but upon certain other other works, which his hon. Friend sought to exclude from the operation of the Bill. The questions which would have to be raised in regard to these works involved so many matters of detail, and so much technicality, that he was quite sure the House, with the immense amount of Business it had to transact during the rest of the Session, would not be able to devote to the consideration of the question the amount of time that was necessary to enable them to deal with it fairly. He was quite sure that if it was really desired to make speedy progress with the measure, the best plan would be to accept the Amendment of the hon. Member for Gravesend, and refer the Bill to a Select Committee, so that the time for the consideration it would require at the hands of the House, when it came down from the Select Committee, might be materially shortened. He did not think that anybody in the House was opposed to the principle of the Bill, so far as alkali works were concerned; but as regarded certain other branches of industry which, as it stood at present, were included in it, he thought they had not at present had an opportunity of being heard in the matter. It was, therefore, desirable that the Bill should be referred to a Select Committee, so that they might be able to obtain the opinion of scientific experts and of persons who were engaged in the trade. For these reasons, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board would accept the proposition of the hon. Member for Gravesend.

Mr. DODSON: I must ask the House to support the Motion I have made, that the Speaker do now leave the Chair. As I have already stated, if that Motion is assented to, I do not propose to ask the House to go, at this hour of the night, into any of the provisions of the Bill that may be opposed; but as soon as we arrive in Committee at any opposed portion of the Bill, I should ask the Committee to stop. I would ask the House to consider for a moment what the proposition is which I have submitted to it. This is a Bill founded on the Report of a Royal Commission, which Royal Commission was composed of Members of both Branches of the Legislature, of practical men engaged in business, and of scientific men. Some of the most eminent chemists in the country were Members of that Commission. The Commission heard evidence in regard to all the different businesses which are included in the Bill, and a great many more; and they made an elaborate Report, which was presented to Parliament with a very full volume of the evidence taken. The present Bill is founded on the Report of that Commission. As my right hon. Friend opposite (Sir R. Assheton Cross) has pointed out, it does not go to the full extent of the Report of that Commission; but it only applies to those businesses which the Commissioners emphatically declared stand most in need of such legislation. The hon. Baronet behind me (Sir Sydney Waterlow) says he wishes the Bill to be referred to a Select Committee, because it includes in its provisions as it now stands cement works, and he thinks he should be able to show a Select Committee that cement works should not be included. Now, I would ask the House if it is fair to ask that an entire Bill of this nature should be referred to a Select Committee on the single question of cement works? I should be perfectly ready in Committee of the Whole House, or privately, to give every attention to any representation that might be made to me by the manufacturers engaged in cement works, or by the hon. Baronet, or by any other hon. Member; but I cannot admit that any case has been made out for referring the Bill to a Select Committee. The matters with which the Bill deals have already been the subject of a very careful investigation by a Royal Commission; and if the only object of referring the Bill to a Select Committee is to take evidence upon scientific and business matters, upon which the Royal Commission has already taken evidence, the only practical result would be that you would be appealing from a tribunal more competent—namely, a Royal Commission—to one less competent, and with less power of affording information—namely, a Select Committee. It is not necessary that I should detain the House longer. I hope that hon. Members will support me in the proposition I have made, that the Speaker should now leave the Chair.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *agreed to.*

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 *agreed to.*

Clause 2 (Commencement of Act).

Sir SYDNEY WATERLOW moved, as an Amendment, in page 1, line 9, to omit "1882," and insert "1883." The Bill provided that after the passing of the Act the Inspectors should be empowered to order the works that were deemed necessary under it to be carried out; and Clause 2 provided that the Act should come into operation in January, 1882. Many persons, on the faith of the existing law, had incurred considerable expenditure in the construction of works for carrying on certain manufacturing processes, and they were now to be called upon entirely to alter the character of their works. It was hardly fair, he thought, to put a man in that position without giving him full and proper notice. If the clause remained as it stood, the manufacturer would, practically, have only four months to make what might prove to be very serious alterations. He had no wish to say anything in regard to alkali works, because he did not pretend to understand that question; but it would be perfectly impossible for any cement manufacturer to re-construct his works and put them in the form indicated in the evidence given before the Royal Commission in the course of four months. He would therefore move, as an Amendment, to insert "1883" instead of "1882," which would give an additional year for constructing the necessary works.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 9, to leave out "1882," in order to insert "1883."—(*Sir Sydney Waterlow.*)

Question proposed, "That '1882' stand part of the Clause."

Mr. DODSON said, that as he had told the House he would not press any matter that was objected to, of course, if the hon. Baronet insisted upon his Amendment, he (Mr. Dodson) would move to report Progress. He would, however, point out that it was a misapprehension to suppose that a manufacturer would be required within four months to alter his works, although the work of inspection under the Bill would commence at that date.

Sir SYDNEY WATERLOW remarked, that the manufacturer might be summoned if he had not complied with the provisions of the Act.

Earl PERCY hoped the hon. Baronet the Member for Gravesend (Sir Sydney Waterlow) would not press the Amendment. The statement made by the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down (Mr. Dodson) ought to be entirely satisfactory. He did not think the effect of the Amendment would be a very serious one, except that it would put off for another year all the benefits that were to be derived from the Act. It was, however, quite a mistake to suppose that the moment the Act came into operation the pains and penalties imposed under it would be put in force. It simply provided that from and after the time the Act came into operation a certain inspection should commence, and that the Inspector should have power to recommend certain alterations. In every case it was carefully provided that ample time should be given for carrying out the alterations required by the Act. He was quite satisfied that there was no desire to press the manufacturers unduly.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Chairman do now report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Mr. Dodson,*)—put, and *agreed to.*

House *resumed.*

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Thursday.*

MARRIED WOMEN'S PROPERTY (SCOTLAND) BILL.—[BILL 45-128.]

(*Mr. Anderson, Mr. Duncan M'Laren, Sir David Wedderburn.*)

CONSIDERATION, AS AMENDED.

Order for Consideration, as amended, read.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now taken into Consideration."—(*Mr. Anderson.*)

MR. SPEAKER: Are there any Amendments?

MR. ANDERSON: No.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he really hoped that this very important Bill would not be proceeded with at that hour of the night (12.35). He did not think that the Members of the House or the public in Scotland had the least idea of what the nature of this measure was. It was a Bill of enormous importance, and it totally changed the character of husband and wife in relation to the possession of property. It provided that in future marriage should be a mere partnership, and not one and the same interest. He believed that the measure was referred to a Select Committee; but the Committee was largely composed of Members who were what was known as "women's rights' men." He also found on the back of the Bill that the names of the hon. Members who had introduced it were all "women's rights men." It was a very important measure, but, nevertheless, it was to apply to Scotland only. In that respect he thought that the hon. Members who had brought it in had been a little unjust to Scotland. So far as the Bill had been discussed in Scotland very serious objection had, he believed, been taken to it by various persons of importance, weight, and authority; and he saw no reason, if the principle of the measure were a good and just one, why it should not be applied to the whole of the United Kingdom, seeing that the property of the whole of the country was in precisely the same position. The Bill now came before them, at that hour, as a matter of surprise; and, seeing that the questions involved in it were of so much importance, he must be allowed to express a strong hope that it would not be allowed to be proceeded with at that hour of the night.

MR. ANDERSON said, the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) had, he thought, drawn a very erroneous picture of the meaning and object of the Bill. Its provisions had already been considered by a Committee, not of Members in favour of women's rights, but of Members whom he, as the promoter of the Bill, looked upon as rather a hostile Committee. The evidence taken by the Committee was that of the principal lawyers of Scotland, and the Bill had been moulded in accordance with the statements which they made. The consequence was that the measure was not now entirely what he should wish it to be. It had been a good deal changed in its character, according to the opinions of the learned Lord Advocate, of the Solicitor General for Scotland, of the Dean of the Faculty of Advocates of Edinburgh, and also according to the opinions of other lawyers of Scotland who came to give evidence upon it. He had deferred his opinion to theirs, although he did not entirely agree with the views which they put forward, and the Bill was not now at all of the character described by the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy, but was an extremely reasonable, moderate, and mild measure. Then, again, in place of taking the House by surprise, the Bill had been before the House for a whole Session, and it had been, as he had already said, before a Select Committee upstairs. It had passed through that Committee, and various Amendments had been inserted in it. Certainly, the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy never placed any Amendment on the Paper at all, and never expressed any opinion upon what Amendments should be made on the Bill. The subsequent Amendments which had been made in Committee of the Whole House had been proposed by lawyers, and they had all been adopted. As the Bill now stood, it was a measure which, by a consensus of opinion, had been accepted by the lawyers of Scotland, and he was sorry that the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy should not accept it also.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 69; Noes 19: Majority 50.—(Div. List, No. 186.)

Bill *considered;* to be read the third time *To-morrow.*

INDIA OFFICE AUDITOR [SUPERANNUATION].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That it is expedient to make provision for the payment, out of the Revenues of India, of Superannuation Allowances to the Auditor of the Accounts of the Secretary of State for India in Council and his Assistants.

Resolution to be reported *To-morrow.*

MOTIONS.

ADJOURNMENT.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House at its rising do adjourn till To-morrow at Eight o'clock p.m."—(*Lord Richard Grosvenor.*)

Several hon. MEMBERS: Until 9 o'clock.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE said, he understood that the Notice given at an early period of the evening was that the adjournment should be until 8 o'clock; but he believed it was the feeling of the House that 9 o'clock would be a far more convenient hour. From a communication he had had with the Prime Minister, it seemed there was no objection on the part of the Government to an adjournment until 9 o'clock; and he therefore trusted that the noble Lord would assent to that course.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, his right hon. Friend the Prime Minister had been quite prepared to assent to this proposal. The only object in fixing 8 o'clock was to give as much time as possible to private Members to-morrow. If it was understood that it would be to the convenience of the House to adjourn until 9 o'clock, he would not offer opposition to the proposal.

Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to.*

Resolved, That this House at its rising do adjourn till this day at Nine o'clock p.m.

MONUMENT TO THE EARL OF BEACONSFIELD.

Committee, to consider a humble Address to be presented to Her Majesty, praying that Her Majesty will give directions that a Monument be erected, as a public charge, in the Collegiate Church of St. Peter, Westminster, to the memory of the late Right Honourable the Earl of Beaconsfield (Queen's *Recommendation* signified), upon *Monday* 9th May.—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

House adjourned at a quarter before
One o'clock, till To-morrow
at Nine o'clock p.m.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 26th April, 1881.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*Ordered*—Local Government Provisional Orders (Berwick-upon-Tweed, &c.) *; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 2) *.

QUESTIONS.

THE NAVY—SUPPLY OF SEAMEN.

CAPTAIN PRICE asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether it is the fact that at Devonport there is at present some difficulty in manning the ships of the fleet, and that, on an application being made for four ordinary seamen for H.M.S. "Arab," the reply made by signal was "None available, all being either in hospital or in gaol;" and, if this is a correct statement of the case, whether the Admiralty will reconsider their intention of reducing the number of men and boys this year?

MR. TREVELYAN: I may say, Sir, that the Question asked by the hon. and gallant Member, by the omission of two words, becomes about as far from being the fact as it is possible to be. On the 29th of March a signal was made from the Commander-in-Chief at Mount Wise, "Have you four ordinary seamen, second-class, available for draft?" The reply was, "None available. All being either in hospital or gaol." Now, Sir, second-class ordinaries are lads who are unusually backward physically or morally, who cannot be rated as ordinary seamen, and the fewer we have of them the better for the country. Of ordinary seamen there were 243 on the books of the *Royal Adelaide* at Devonport, of whom 141 were available for foreign service. I am sorry that this Question, reflecting as it does upon the Navy, has been allowed to stand for nearly three weeks on the Paper of the House, when a single word to me in private would have obviated the necessity of its being printed.

SOUTH AFRICA—THE BASUTOS (NEGOTIATIONS).

Mr. A. PEASE asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the Basuto chiefs have expressed their willingness to submit to the authority of the Cape Government; and, if so, whether he will inform the House upon what terms the High Commissioner is prepared to make peace with the tribe?

Mr. GRANT DUFF: Sir, the exact position of affairs can best be explained by my reading a telegram from Sir Hercules Robinson, dated April 20. It is as follows:—

> "After several weeks' negotiations, Lerothodi on Sunday last, at Maseru, informed the Governor's agent that he would accept my arbitration, and that he placed himself unreservedly in my hands. As proof of the sincerity of his intention to abide by my decision he promised to order his people forthwith to lay down their arms and disperse to their homes. As soon as I hear that this has been done I shall give my award."

We have no further information.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL asked whether the Cape Government had accepted the arbitration of Sir Hercules Robinson?

Mr. GRANT DUFF: Certainly.

MOTION.

PARLIAMENTARY OATH (MR. BRADLAUGH).

Mr. Bradlaugh, returned as one of the Members for the Borough of Northampton, came to the Table to take and subscribe the Oath, and the Clerk was proceeding to administer the same to him, when——

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE, Member for the Northern Division of the county of Devon, rose to take objection thereto, and to submit a Motion to the House; whereupon——

Mr. SPEAKER addressed the House as follows:—I understand that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon proposes to submit a Motion to the House on this matter. Before the right hon. Baronet does so, I think it right to say that the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh), having been introduced, has come to the Table to take the Oath required by Law in the accustomed form. He is prepared to comply with every provision of the Statutes in order to take his Seat in this House. Undoubtedly, a proceeding so regular and formal ought, under ordinary circumstances, to be continued without interruption; but, having regard to former Resolutions of the House, and to the Reports of its Committees in reference to this matter, I cannot withhold from the House an opportunity of expressing its judgment upon the new conditions under which the Oath is now proposed to be taken.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I waited, Sir, to see—[*Cries of* "Order!"]——

Mr. SPEAKER: Pending discussion on this matter, in accordance with the ordinary practice, the hon. Member for Northampton should withdraw below the Bar; and, acting in pursuance with the ordinary practice of the House, I now call upon the hon. Member so to withdraw.

Mr. BRADLAUGH: In complying, Sir, with your direction to withdraw—["Order!"]—I will only ask—[*Cries of* "Order!"]—I ask most respectfully through you—[*Renewed Cries of* "Order!"]—I ask through you, Sir, respectfully, that before the House comes to a decision—[*Cries of* "Order, order!"]——

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Northampton is, under existing circumstances, entitled to be heard. If, however, the hon. Member for Northampton should take a course which, in my judgment, appears to be uncalled for, I shall then submit the matter to the judgment of the House.

Mr. BRADLAUGH: In complying, Sir, with your direction, I most respectfully desire to ask through you that before the House comes to any decision upon my claim to fulfil the duty imposed upon me by law it may accord me the privilege of being heard.

The hon. Member then withdrew.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I am desirous, Sir, to call the attention of the House to the position in which we stand, and to submit a Motion for the judgment of the House with reference to the intention of the hon. Member for Northampton to take the Oath in the manner in which it is usually taken by Members on taking their seats in this House. I am anxious to say as little as possible, and to keep the question as free as possible from any extraneous matter which might be imported into it. It seems to me that the issue which the House has to decide is one of a very simple character, and one which admits of being very briefly stated. I waited before taking any exception to see whether the hon. Member proposed to take the Oath, or whether he proposed, in pursuance of the Standing Order which exists in such a case, to do that which he did on the occasion when he took his seat last Session—namely, to claim his right to affirm. The hon. Member proposed to take the Oath, and I, therefore, felt it necessary to rise, in order that I might remind the House of the Resolution at which the House itself arrived last Session with regard to the hon. Member. On the 23rd of June last, a Resolution was arrived at by the House to this effect—

> "That having regard to the Reports and proceedings of two Select Committees appointed by this House, Mr. Bradlaugh be not permitted to take the Oath or make the Affirmation mentioned in the Statute 29 Vic. c. 19, and the 31 and 32 Vic. c. 72."

I need not trouble the House—for the matter, no doubt, is fresh in its memory—by going into the circumstances which led to the passing of that Resolution. Suffice it to say that the Resolution was adopted, and that on the following day Mr. Bradlaugh presented himself with a view to take the Oath, and you, Sir, informed him that the Resolution which had been passed precluded him from doing so. The hon. Member was, therefore, not allowed to take the Oath; he was called upon to withdraw; and ultimately steps were taken to compel obedience to the Order of the House. Now, so much of that Resolution as stated that Mr. Bradlaugh should not be permitted to take the Oath, stands, I apprehend, upon the Journals of the House unrescinded. The second part of the Resolution, which forbade the hon. Member making an Affirmation, was, no doubt, subsequently rescinded, and a Resolution was passed and a Standing Order made, that any Member, including the hon. Member himself, who should claim the right to affirm should be allowed to affirm, so far as this House was concerned, but without prejudice to any proceedings in a Court of Law. Mr. Bradlaugh took that course, and did so subject to legal proceedings, which were adopted, and which resulted in a decision that he was not a person entitled to affirm. The result of his being held to be a person not entitled to affirm was this—that his seat immediately became vacant, and the House, recognizing the fact that that decision had rendered the seat vacant, agreed to issue a new Writ, which has resulted in a second and fresh election, and the re-election of the hon. Gentleman. Now, Sir, I wish to ask the House to consider this—we must regard the hon. Gentleman, when he comes before us, not as a stranger of whose opinions or whose antecedents we know nothing, but as a Gentleman whose opinions have, so far as they are material to the issue now before us, already been declared, and have been judged and decided upon by the House itself. The ground on which that Resolution was based, so far as taking the Oath was concerned, was this—that a Committee which had been appointed by the House to inquire into the matter reported their opinion—

> "That under the circumstances the compliance by Mr. Bradlaugh with the form used when an Oath is taken would not be the taking of an Oath within the true meaning of the Statutes, and that, therefore, the House can and, in the opinion of your Committee, ought to prevent Mr. Bradlaugh going through this form."

That was the Resolution at which the Committee arrived, and which the House accepted and acted upon. They held—and I believe the same would be the opinion of most hon. Gentlemen—they held that it would be a very serious matter that we who regard the Oath as a most solemn invocation of the Supreme Power should make ourselves parties to the use of that Oath by one who openly and freely expresses before the House his opinion that an oath is to him a mere meaningless form. We hold, as a matter of feeling, and of right feeling as I contend, that it is not our duty to sit by and to make ourselves parties to what I cannot but consider a profanation of a sacred form. But, Sir, with regard to the opinions of the hon. Member, I would point out that not only has this House, which was elected last Session, and is the same House that it was then—not only has this House so far taken cognizance of the proceedings and views of the hon. Member as brought before it as to adopt those Resolutions and that course of action, but we have now had laid before us within the last few days the record of proceedings of an authoritative character taken in Courts of Law; and in this record I see that so late as in the month of November last, in the pleadings of the hon. Gentleman in the action in which he was defendant, he made this defence—He stated, as an alternative defence, that at the time of the alleged offence in the statement of claim mentioned he was a person who,

> "when called upon to give evidence in any Court of Justice would object to take an oath, and upon whose conscience an oath, if taken, would have no binding effect."

That is not only a statement made in the pleadings which may have one or another technical bearing—I am not competent to speak upon that—but it is a statement which, in one way or another, the hon. Member has repeatedly made, and has never withdrawn. If the hon. Member withdrew that statement, we should find ourselves in a different position; but I understood him to adhere to the statement which the House has before it, and upon which it has made its Orders; and, upon that state of facts, I contend that it would be absolutely impossible for the House, with proper respect for its own dignity, with proper respect for the Oath which it is taking part in the administration of, to admit the hon. Gentleman to make that Oath, and, therefore, Sir, without introducing further matter, I beg to move my Resolution.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

> "That, having regard to the Resolution of this House of the 22nd June 1880, and to the Reports and Proceedings of the two Select Committees therein referred to, Mr. Bradlaugh be not permitted to go through the form of repeating the words of the Oath prescribed by the Statutes, 29 Vic. c. 19, and 31 and 32 Vic. c. 72."—(*Sir Stafford Northcote.*)

Mr. H. DAVEY, in rising to move, as an Amendment,

> "That in a case where a Member, duly elected, presents himself at the Table in conformity with the call of Mr. Speaker, and is proceeding to comply with the formalities prescribed for the taking of Parliamentary Oaths, without qualification, this House will not, on the ground of information extraneous to the transaction, offer any impediment to the fulfilment of the intention of such Member;"

said, he had not taken any part in the debates which took place last year relative to this question, and he had carefully guarded himself against expressing any opinion as to the legal merits of the question that had been so much discussed. He might confess that he had great doubts whether, having regard to the language of the statutes, the hon. Member was one of those persons who had a right to make an Affirmation; and, more than that, he had voted against the Resolution to which the right hon. Baronet had referred of the 22nd June, 1880, on the ground that the question at issue was one which, in his opinion, a Court of Law should decide, and because questions of the kind were discussed in such an Assembly with warmth, and topics were introduced and arguments used which tended rather to cloud than to clear the intellectual view of the issues. He had no personal acquaintance with the hon. Member for Northampton. He had never exchanged 10 words with the hon. Member in his life, and if he now intruded himself on the House it was because he thought the Resolution a novel one, and one which involved extremely dangerous precedents. The question was not one of propriety. The question was not as to whether the House should express either approval or disapproval of the course which Mr. Bradlaugh had chosen to take in reference to this matter. Many hon. Members might think that it would have been the wiser course for that Gentleman not to have presented himself to take the Oath, but to have engaged in an agitation for the purpose of obtaining an alteration of the law. That, however, was a matter for Mr. Bradlaugh himself.

It was not a question upon which the House had a right to express an opinion one way or another. The question appeared to him to be whether, at the invitation of the right hon. Baronet (Sir Stafford Northcote), the House was prepared to affirm what was without precedent in the annals of Parliament—whether the House would pass a Resolution which would create almost a revolution in our Parliamentary procedure, and establish a precedent which might be of little importance in the present case, but which would be fraught with danger to the future? Mr. Bradlaugh, in making his claim to affirm, had incidentally stated that he was a person upon whose conscience an oath would have no binding effect. The Committee of the House, to whom the question as to the right and jurisdiction of the House to refuse to permit any duly elected person to take the Oath had been referred, had reported that there was an inherent power in that House to require the law under which a Member sat and voted in the House to be duly observed, but that the House had no power to interrogate any duly elected person presenting himself to take the Oath as to his religious belief, or to hear any evidence in relation to such matter. It appeared to him that that Report of the Committee was absolutely fatal to the argument of the right hon. Baronet opposite. The only ground upon which the right hon. Baronet could pretend to interpose between the hon. Member for Northampton and his right to take the Oath was that in a previous Session, and under totally different circumstances, Mr. Bradlaugh had asserted that his conscience would not be bound by an oath. The right hon. Baronet, therefore, was, in the language of the Report of the Committee, seeking to induce the House to listen to evidence relating to the religious belief of the hon. Member for Northampton. The Committee had reported that in the then circumstances the taking of an oath by Mr. Bradlaugh would not be a taking of the Oath within the meaning of the statute. That finding was purely relative to the circumstances then existing, and it went to the extent of declaring that in those circumstances the taking of an oath by Mr. Bradlaugh would be an unmeaning form, and, therefore, would not be a compliance with the spirit of the statute, which required a Member of that House, before he sat and voted, to take the Oath. The Report of the Committee, however, went no further than that; and it could not now be contended that that Report was applicable to an entirely different set of circumstances. They now found themselves in this position—there had been recently a vacancy in the representation of Northampton; Mr. Bradlaugh had been elected; he was not disqualified by law from being so elected, and he had a right to present himself to take the Oath and to fulfil those conditions which were imposed upon Gentlemen elected to sit in the House; and Mr. Bradlaugh had not since his late election either said or done anything from which the House was entitled to infer that he was in any sense disqualified from taking the Oath. As far as his (Mr. H. Davey's) own opinion went, he was bound to say that had he been a Member of the Committee he should have concurred in the Resolution proposed by the hon. and learned Member for Preston (Sir John Holker), which was supported by several influential hon. Members, and which was to the effect that no precedent had been shown for that House refusing to allow a duly elected Member to take the Oath prescribed by law on the ground of his religious belief, and that the House could not constitutionally refuse permission to take the Oath upon such account. But whether the Resolution which the Committee arrived at, and the decision which that House then came to, was right or wrong, they related to a totally different set of circumstances from those which now existed. The hon. Member for Northampton, having been recently duly returned as a Member for that borough, came before the House and asked to take the Oath in the same position as though he were now elected for the first time; and in order to raise any valid objection to his taking the Oath the right hon. Baronet opposite was compelled to go back upon what had occurred last Session, and to ask the House to inquire into the religious belief of the hon. Member. Such a course would, in his opinion, be a most inconvenient one. He could readily suppose that the Party opposite were ready to admit extraneous evidence, and to institute an inquiry into religious belief. The principle of that Resolution which the right hon. Baronet proposed was that the House was entitled, and if entitled, then bound to enter into an inquiry as to religious belief. What the right hon. Baronet relied on was an admission by the hon. Member for Northampton, in the course of the proceedings of last Session of Parliament, and not on anything that had been said or done in or anything that had taken place as the result of the recent election. If they were to go back to the proceedings of the past Session, and admit such extraneous evidence, there was nothing to prevent any Member, when another came up to take the Oath, saying that in consequence of something he had heard him say at a dinner party, or in consequence of what a third person had said about him, he had a reasonable belief that the hon. Gentleman was defective in his religious belief. They could not stop short of an inquisitorial proceeding in such a case. The House then admitted that the question whether an hon. Member should be admitted to affirm or not was one which could betried in a Court of Law. The recent case of Clarke *v.* Bradlaugh showed there was no bar to the Courts of Law entertaining such points; but a Court of Law could not dive into the recesses of a man's heart or his state of mind at the time of taking the Oath, and the House ought not to do it any more than a Court of Law. The Statute contemplated that the question whether an hon. Member had or had not complied with the requirements of the Statute in taking the Oath should be determined by a Court of Law. The question whether an hon. Member could take the Oath or not was a question between his conscience and himself. He besought the House not to endeavour to discharge inquisitorial functions which—he spoke respectfully—it was absolutely unfit to discharge. He entreated the House not to enter into an inquiry into the state of a man's mind or into his religious belief. He submitted to the House that they had nothing to do with considerations of that kind. He submitted to the House that they were not entitled on evidence of that kind, or on evidence of any other kind, to entertain any question as to the religious belief or state of mind of any hon. Member who presented himself at the Table. And, above all, he entreated the House not by passing the Resolution to sanction a principle which he ventured to say would prove a most dangerous precedent. The hon. Gentleman concluded by moving his Amendment.

MR. LABOUCHERE, in seconding the Amendment, said, he thought the House would show its wisdom by adopting it. He confessed that, with the true respect he had for the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon, he was surprised that the right hon. Gentleman, as Leader of the Conservative Party in that House, should have thought fit to step in between a Gentleman entertaining Liberal views and elected by a Liberal constituency and the taking of his seat in that House. He was all the more surprised when he considered what called for that intervention. The ground of that intervention was a desire to stir up the smouldering elements of religious bigotry in order to delude the country into the notion that the Conservative Party were the champions of Christianity, and that the Liberal Party were its opponents. He ventured to say that Christianity had nothing to do with the present question. ["Oh!"] He was not discussing what ought to be; but what he asserted as a matter of fact was that that House ceased to be an Assembly exclusively of Christians when Jews were admitted into it. Let the House and let the country clearly understand what was meant by the Resolution of the right hon. Gentleman. Its object was to establish a Deistic test in that House. The right hon. Gentleman laid down that anyone who believed, or, speaking more correctly, anyone who asserted his belief in the existence of a Supreme Being had a right to sit in that House. Even heathen devil-worshippers would be received there with open arms. ["Oh, oh!"] Well, he was not making any personal allusion. He congratulated hon. Gentlemen opposite on this astounding creed. Whether it was a sound religious creed or not, there could be no doubt it was as different from, and opposed to, the creed of Christianity as the two poles were asunder. Therefore, he hoped the country would understand what the issue was that was raised by the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman said that a Resolution was passed in that House last year by which Mr. Bradlaugh was not allowed to take the Oath. The right hon. Gentleman asked whether that Resolution was not still binding on the House. He confessed he was surprised to hear the right hon. Gentleman ask that question, and he was obliged to tell the right hon. Gentleman that he was entirely in error. There was a difference between a Resolution and a Standing Order. On April 2nd, 1842, Mr. Speaker, in answer to Lord John Russell, said that a Resolution was binding on the House only for the Session in which it was passed. Consequently, the Resolution in question was in no way binding upon the House in the present Session. It was not surprising that that Resolution was not made a Standing Order, because if it had been it would practically have disqualified Mr. Bradlaugh again from being elected. The law did not recognize the right of the House to disqualify any Gentleman from being elected by a constituency of this country, nor did it disqualify him from taking his seat when elected. But the right hon. Gentleman did not ask the House to put in force the Resolution of last Session, and he contested the right of the House to pass the new Resolution now proposed by the right hon. Gentleman. Mr. Bradlaugh was elected honestly and fairly a few weeks ago by a constituency of this country. Being elected, he was obliged to come and take his seat in that House. By a Statute of Richard II., any Gentleman elected was liable to fine and imprisonment if he did not take his seat. To take his seat it was necessary by the Statute that the Gentleman elected should take the Oath of Allegiance. He ventured to contend, therefore, that a Resolution of that House could not override the statutory right of Mr. Bradlaugh. But if the House had a right to do so, he would ask if it was wise? The right hon. Gentleman had told the House that they should pass the Resolution on account of two statements which were made by Mr. Bradlaugh—one last year in a letter to *The Times*, and another in the pleadings in "Clarke *v.* Bradlaugh" to the effect that the Oath had no binding effect upon him, and that it really contained words that were unmeaning and merely formal. Far be it from him (Mr. Labouchere) to raise a metaphysical or theological discussion in that House; but he ventured to say it by no means followed from the words used by Mr. Bradlaugh that Mr. Bradlaugh did not consider the Oath in its declaratory sense as binding upon him. In his examination before the second Committee, Mr. Bradlaugh said he did not refuse to take it, nor had he then or since expressed any mental reservation, or stated that the Oath of Allegiance would not be binding on him; but, on the contrary, he said that the essential part of the Oath was in the fullest degree binding on his honour and his conscience. Many people who did not entertain Mr. Bradlaugh's opinions entertained the same views with regard to the Oath. He need only call the attention of the House to Jeremy Bentham, who said that veracity could not have two measures. They had in the House Gentlemen who objected to taking the Oath—for example, the right hon. Member the Chancellor for the Duchy of Lancaster. Did anybody assert that that right hon. Gentleman's word was not as good as the oath of any man in the House? When Mr. Bradlaugh came forward and said he did consider that declaration of Allegiance, commencing with the words "I swear," was absolutely binding on him, they were bound to believe him. How did the right hon. Baronet opposite or the House know what the mental condition of Mr. Bradlaugh might be at that moment? Before 1869, when an Act was passed enabling Atheists to affirm in Courts of Law, they were not allowed to give any evidence if it were shown that they were Atheists. But how was it necessary to show that they were Atheists? It was necessary to obtain it from their own words in Court. He only asked the House to take the same course as the Courts of Law, by accepting the assumption that anyone who came to the Table and offered to take the Oath was not an Atheist unless he should himself then and there state that he was one. Now, that Mr. Bradlaugh certainly had not done. The right hon. Gentleman opposite wanted a statement—a sort of recantation from Mr. Bradlaugh. What was to be the form of the recantation, and to whom was it to be made? Was Mr. Bradlaugh to come to the Table and say he recanted his letter to *The Times* or the pleadings in Clarke's case? The right hon. Baronet's suggestion was utterly absurd.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I did not want any statement from Mr. Bradlaugh. I said that he had made certain statements and had never recanted them.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, he certainly understood it to be the complaint of the right hon. Gentleman that Mr. Bradlaugh had not recanted. The letter in *The Times* of that morning from the right hon. Baronet appeared to bear out his construction, because, in that letter, the right hon. Baronet said he contemplated interfering to prevent Mr. Bradlaugh from taking the Oath because he had not made any statement recanting his previous views. Therefore, he might fairly ask—What was the nature of the recantation which the right hon. Gentleman wanted? The right hon. Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Walpole), in the Report of the Committee, said that no instance had been brought to the attention of the Committee in which an inquiry had been made into the moral or religious opinions of the person desiring to take a promissory oath, and that it would be impossible to foresee the evils which must arise if such a practice were adopted. Therefore, the right hon. Member did not take the same view as the right hon. Baronet, and did not wish to call Mr. Bradlaugh forward to make a public recantation. It had never been done before, and he humbly trusted it never would be done in that House. He admitted that it would be unsatisfactory that a man should go up to the Table and take in his hand a Book which they held sacred, and invoke a Supreme Being in whom he possibly did not believe; but it was acknowledged last year that Mr. Bradlaugh might have gone to the Table and taken the Oath. And why did he not? Out of respect for the feelings of hon. Members of the House; and this course subjected him to much obloquy and expense. He hoped that they would not have a succession of what were called "Bradlaugh debates." Mr. Bradlaugh was not a brawler; he was bound to take the Oath. Now, he himself, last year, and again this Session, had attempted to bring in a Bill to meet the case; but hon. Gentlemen opposite had blocked the Bill and rendered its introduction impossible. It was, therefore, owing to their own action that Mr. Bradlaugh was now obliged to take the course he was now pursuing. What would be the consequence if the Resolution of the right hon. Baronet opposite were adopted? According to Mr. Bradlaugh's own view, and that of many eminent lawyers, he derived his right to take the Oath from the fact that he had been elected, and he was bound to go up to the Table and take the Oath. The House, they held, had no right to interfere with him; and, therefore, Mr. Bradlaugh owed it to himself and to his constituents to come forward as often as he could and offer to take the Oath. What, therefore, was the alternative before the House? They must either agree to the Amendment or they must keep Mr. Bradlaugh in prison during the whole of the present Parliament. ["Oh, oh!"] That was the choice, because Mr. Bradlaugh, with his views, was logically bound to go to the Table and take the Oath; and the House, on the other hand, if the Resolution of the right hon. Baronet was passed, was logically bound to prevent him doing so by putting him in durance. There was no tribunal to interfere; but if they had to contest this question, it was not with Mr. Bradlaugh alone, but with the entire constituencies of the country. ["No, no!"] He said "Yes, yes!" Hon. Members would remember that more than 100 years ago the same thing was asserted with regard to Wilkes. No doubt, many Gentlemen said "Oh, oh!" and scoffed and jeered against Wilkes being able to hold his own against that House. Wilkes, expelled by the House, was re-elected; and, being again expelled, was re-elected. When another Parliament met what happened? The Resolution was expunged from the Journals of the House. Sir Erskine May said that Resolution was a warning to both Houses to act within the limits of their jurisdiction and in strict conformity with the law. The House would do well to pause before entering into a contest with the constituencies as to their right to send to the House whom they pleased, and to insist that he whom they sent to the House took his seat there, if he was not under any statutory disqualification. The House might succeed for a time in preventing Mr. Bradlaugh from entering it; but he ventured to say that in the end the House would not be able to succeed against the people of this country.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in a case where a Member, duly elected, presents himself at the Table in conformity with the call of Mr. Speaker, and in proceeding to comply with the formalities prescribed for the taking of Parliamentary Oaths, without qualification, this House will not, on the ground of information extraneous to the transaction, offer any impediment to the fulfilment of the intention of such Member."—(*Mr. Davey.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. EDWARD CLARKE wished to recall the House to the fact that they were discussing, not a question of law, but a question as to the dignity of the House and the self-respect of its Members. He had heard for a good while that the science of special pleading was going out of fashion; but they had seen its most fantastic survival in the speech of his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Christchurch (Mr. H. Davey), and in the speech of his hon. and he thought, under all the circumstances, he might say his learned Friend the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere). The Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Christchurch bore on the face of it a misrepresentation of the case that was before the House. To the greater part of the Amendment he should unreservedly give his adhesion; but it contained a statement that when a Member came to be sworn, and claimed to tender the Oath, no one was entitled to object on the ground of extraneous information. That rested the whole case on the question whether the knowledge the House had of the opinions of Mr. Bradlaugh depended on extraneous information or not; and it was the most fantastic special pleading that was ever heard, not only in the House of Commons, but in a Court of Law. That very House last year passed a Resolution in reference to the same person now before it, elected by the same constituency, whose opinions were not gathered from pamphlets or speeches delivered outside, but indicated by his coming to the Table and claiming to be allowed to affirm upon the only ground that a person could affirm—namely, that the Oath was not binding on his conscience. Now, it was said, "What do you know of the opinions of this gentleman?" Why, it was idle to ask the House of Commons what it knew of the opinions of Mr. Charles Bradlaugh! He had never denied them; he was too manly to deny them; and it must be said to his credit that, instead of concealing his unpopular opinions until he had taken the Oath, he had the manliness to avow those opinions in the face of the House, and to accept the consequences the House might impose. It was the same House that was discussing the same question, and the same person was waiting at the Bar to take the Oath in the same terms; and now they were asked from the other side to say it was by extraneous information that the House knew Mr. Charles Bradlaugh. Was a man an unbeliever down in the Hall, where men met him and cheered him; did he become a believer as he crossed the Lobby; and was his conversion complete as he took his stand in front of the Mace? He made no attack on Mr. Bradlaugh because of his opinions; but so long as the House retained, for its own security and for the security of the Throne, the Oath which was taken at the Table, he submitted it would be derogatory to its dignity to permit that Oath to be turned, in the presence of the House, into a meaningless farce. The suggestion was that he should be allowed to take the Oath, and the question again remitted to the Courts of Law to decide whether the Oath was valid. The House distinctly resolved last year not to allow Mr. Bradlaugh to take the Oath; and on the Motion of the Leader of the House it resolved to allow him to take the other alternative—to affirm, subject to the opinion of the Courts of Law. That opinion had been given against Mr. Bradlaugh; and with what sense of dignity or self-respect could the House now take another course and say, "Because it has been coerced by a second election"—a second victory, the Seconder of the Amendment would perhaps say; though two such victories would be a defeat—"it is to allow that performance to be gone through which it refused last year." Surely there was only one straightforward course to pursue in this matter. It was that a Bill should be proposed and proceeded with applying to all cases and relieving all Members from the obligation of taking the Oath. [*Cheers.*] He did not want to catch an approving cheer without following it up with this remark—that he should earnestly vote against any such measure, because he believed that the frame of mind which prevented a man recognising a Supreme Being disqualified him from being a useful Member of that House. He hoped the House would not remit this question to the Courts of Law, or allow itself to be confused by any idea that at a time and place not stated Mr. Bradlaugh had recanted the opinions he had formerly held; but that it would abide by the Resolution agreed to last Session, after full consideration, and refuse to make itself an accomplice in the performance which would take place at the Table if Mr. Bradlaugh was allowed to take the Oath.

MR. JOHN BRIGHT: If anybody in this House has hitherto, or even 10 minutes ago, had any doubt as to the extent of the question which is placed before the House by hon. Gentlemen opposite, by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devonshire (Sir Stafford Northcote), and by the hon. and learned Gentleman who has just spoken (Mr. Edward Clarke), he can have no doubt now after the speech to which we have just listened, because it is clear there that the whole matter is distinctly put before us as a question of religious disability. [An hon. MEMBER: Irreligious disability.] An hon. Member says "Irreligious disability." Well, you have objected before to the admission of the Roman Catholics. You objected to them because of their religion, which you deemed to be false; but the religion you deemed to be false you consider much better than no religion at all. On the same ground you resisted for many years the claim of the Jews to be admitted to this House; and you have now raised exactly the same question, but in a more offensive form; because you aim your shafts against a particular individual, who cannot be said to represent a class, asking to be admitted to a seat in this House. Now, in the last Session of Parliament — and I want just to turn to that for a moment, because I think a very great injustice has been done to the hon. Member for Northampton in many of the arguments used in this question—last Session, when Mr. Bradlaugh came to the Table he asked to be allowed to affirm. It is assumed that he asked to be allowed to affirm, and thereby, in the face of the House, and in a manner almost offensive, proclaimed that he did not hold the belief which men are assumed to hold who take the Oath which is tendered to Members of the House. But that was not the ground on which he proposed to affirm. The ground was this—a ground honourable to himself—it was, in point of fact, a tenderness of conscience as I should call it. [*Loud laughter.*] Hon. Gentlemen probably think no man has a tender conscience but themselves. I say that Mr. Bradlaugh, with his opinions—as I with my opinions—had a perfect right, believing that it was lawful, to offer to affirm in preference to taking the Oath. He did not, therefore, by that offer to affirm declare that he had no belief in a Supreme Being. He said nothing of the kind. He asked merely to be allowed to affirm, which to him was a preferable mode of making a declaration with regard to allegiance to the Crown than taking the Oath which the Statutes of the House have provided that hon. Members should take. And, therefore, I think it is a gross unfairness—it was then and is now—to bring forward the fact that he himself preferred to affirm rather than take the Oath, and then upon that to assume that the Oath would not be binding upon his conscience. The hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere)—who is in the House, and who seconded the Amendment—read a passage from the evidence given by Mr. Bradlaugh before one of the Committees on this question. In that passage, Mr. Bradlaugh states in the most distinct manner that the words of the Oath, as they are tendered here at the Table, are binding upon his conscience—binding, he said, "upon his honour and upon his conscience." If that be so, you have no right to assume, as you constantly do, that the Oath is not binding upon his conscience. You might as well tell me that, but for the clause in the Act of Parliament which prevents your doing so gross an injustice, if I come to make an Affirmation, an Oath is not binding upon my conscience. The Affirmation is binding upon my conscience, and the Declaration which Mr. Bradlaugh is willing to make he declares is binding upon his conscience. Therefore, in my opinion, you have no right to assume that, when he takes the Oath with the words which he would rather have omitted from it, the Oath is not as binding upon his conscience as upon the conscience of any other Member in this House. Now, he comes to the Table of the House, and he does not ask to affirm.

The law has decided that, in the particular circumstances of the case, he is not permitted to affirm; but no law has decided that he is not permitted to take the Oath. On the contrary, the law states as clearly as words can make it, and without any equivocation, that Mr. Bradlaugh, having been elected a Member of this House, must take the Oath at this Table before he takes his seat; and that is what he proposes to do to-night. But the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon has interposed, in a manner utterly unknown before, with the proposition that Mr. Bradlaugh shall not be allowed to take the Oath. He says, and the supporters of the Resolution also say with him, that notwithstanding that some thousands of the free electors of a constituency have returned Mr. Bradlaugh to the House, because you assume that which is absolutely untrue if you believe that the Oath is not binding upon his (Mr. Bradlaugh's) conscience, you will not allow him to take the Oath even in the form of words which you yourselves and the Statute have prescribed. What right have you to assume this? None whatever. You do assume it, however; every hon. Member on that side of the House who is about to vote for the exclusion of Mr. Bradlaugh assumes that the Oath is not binding upon his conscience. It is the right of every hon. Member of this House to be believed when he makes a Declaration. Amongst the Gentlemen assembled in this House it is not common to call in question any declaration which any man should make of that of which he is personally assured; and Mr. Bradlaugh has distinctly stated before a Committee of this House, and will, no doubt, state it here again, that the Oath which he purposes to take is just as binding upon his conscience as if he himself had written out the words, or as if he himself believed every word in it with the same implicit faith as Gentlemen opposite who oppose his admission to this House. I think the House will not be acting with due impartiality if it assumes that the words are not binding upon Mr. Bradlaugh's conscience which he declares are as binding upon his honour and conscience as either the Oath is upon your consciences, or the Affirmation is upon mine. But if it be permitted to make these assumptions with regard to the hon. Member for Northampton, why is it not equally right to make them with regard to other persons—I will mention no names—but we all know there are men in this House or outside this House, who, either by public declarations or private statements, are known to hold, with regard to this question, the same opinions as are assumed to be held by Mr. Bradlaugh? But nobody proposes to put any questions to them. It is admitted now—and, in fact, hon. Members opposite admitted last year—that if Mr. Bradlaugh had come to the Table and said nothing about the Affirmation—I do not hesitate to say that it is to his credit that he did not take that course—and had offered to take the Oath, no question would have been asked; but he would have been allowed to take the Oath just as other hon. Members of the House. If these questions are not to be put to any other hon. Member of the House, what is the position in which we stand in regard to the hon. Member for Northampton? Why should we inflict upon him such a disability, because his belief with regard to religious matters is not the same belief as that which is supposed to be entertained by the great majority of Members of this House? ["No, no!"] Does anybody say "No, no?" Nothing could be more clear—the speech of the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth proves it—than that it is a purely religious disability which is about to be enforced and inflicted upon Mr. Bradlaugh. Shall we make an exception in a special case of this kind? No other hon. Member of this House has been questioned. Nobody assumes to question any other hon. Member. Members affirming are not asked any questions with respect to their religious belief. Nothing in the Affirmation touches upon that point. Therefore, we who are accustomed and enabled and permitted to affirm are placed in a different position from the hon. Member for Northampton. We are not asked what we believe; he is asked what he believes. ["No, no!"] Hon. Members say "No, no!" but they must know that if the hon. Member for Northampton, in answering the letter of his correspondent, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon, had been able to inform him that his views on religious matters had changed since last year, the right hon. Gentleman would not have proceeded to oppose his admission to this House. Therefore, it is strictly a question of religious disability; and any hon. Member of this House who is going to vote for the Resolution of the right hon. Gentleman, if he denies that, denies that which is obvious, and which cannot be controverted by any honest and sensible man in this House. I wish the House, in considering this matter, to look upon it in this light—that in the year 1881, we are assuming to establish, to create now, to affirm, to perpetuate a religious disability, which I undertake to say, in this House of Parliament, in accordance with the Report drawn up by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Spencer Walpole), has never heretofore been proposed on the floor of the House of Commons. That is undoubted, and cannot be denied. You are seeking to establish now a religious disability. ["No, no!"] I ask hon. Members who belong to the greatest and oldest of the Christian Churches—those who are in communion with the Church of Rome—I ask them to recollect what their forefathers have suffered in consequence of opinions, and prejudices, and intentions, such as we have heard expressed to-night from the Benches opposite. And if there be any hon. Members of this House belonging to the Nonconformist Churches, I ask them also to recollect what their forefathers have suffered, and suffered under the pressure of the same disposition to inflict religious disabilities upon civil and loyal inhabitants of this country. I ask every hon. Member present who is unwilling that we should return to the system and practice of religious disabilities to disavow altogether and oppose to the utmost the principle and purpose put forward by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon, and to proclaim that now and for ever no man untainted by crime, unconvicted of crime, and elected by a free constituency, shall be disabled from taking his seat in this House upon making such a Declaration or taking such an Oath as Parliament in its wisdom may have determined to impose. ["Hear, hear!"] Yes, that cheer has reference exactly to the original point, that the hon. Member for Northampton, not being of your belief, does not take the Oath as a declaration binding upon his conscience—although he tells you, in the most express terms, that that is absolutely untrue. [An hon. MEMBER: What is the value of it?] And here, Mr. Speaker, I may express my regret at what I may call the almost violent temper with which some hon. Gentlemen opposite come to the consideration of this question. I can feel, myself, charity for a Member of this House who holds views on religious matters which appear to me so extraordinary and so unfortunate as those which are assumed to be held by the hon. Member for Northampton; but I think the House might be called upon to consider that the hon. Member for many months has sat in this House; that there has been no Member of this House who has conducted himself with greater propriety; that he has brought to our discussions at least average, perhaps more than average, ability; and that there is not a single word that he has uttered, not a single act that he has committed which, in the slightest degree, ought to debar him from taking his place in this Assembly of Gentlemen. I would ask hon. Members to think for a moment whether it is in accordance with that Christianity which they assume so much to defend, that they should now, after the many years, I may almost say the centuries, of discussion of the subject of the liberties of Members of this House, determine to raise up another barrier against that civil freedom which our constituencies believe themselves to enjoy, and against that fairness in the construction of Acts of Parliament in matters of this kind, so as to prevent a Member who has been duly elected from taking his seat amongst us. One of our poets has said about bigotry of this kind—I hope hon. Members will forgive me if I use the term bigotry; there is such a thing as bigotry, and I think that to bar the hon. Member for Northampton from his right according to law, to take the Oath which is prescribed by the law, is itself an act of bigotry—one of our poets has said—

> "Bigotry may swell
> The sail which sets for Heaven with blasts from Hell."

I hold there can be nothing consonant with Christianity in its highest principles, and nothing consonant with that religious freedom for which our fathers have striven in determining still to obstruct the hon. Member for Northampton when he goes towards the Table to take the Oath. I hope no Gentlemen in the House who have any regard for religious freedom, for civil and Parliamentary and Constitutional freedom as all the great lights of freedom in our country have understood it—I hope not one of them will give a vote which may bar the constituency of Northampton from their due and rightful representation in this House.

Mr. GORST thought that, after the speech which had just been delivered, the House ought to be recalled to the simple question for consideration. There was no disposition on this side of the House to treat the question in the spirit of intolerance and bigotry which the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster had done his very best to stir up. He, therefore, hoped the House would not be led away by the eloquence of the right hon. Gentleman to treat the question as a matter of theological passion. It ought rather to be treated purely as a question of legality and reasonable respect for the Forms of the House. Substantially, there were two simple points for the determination of the House. The first was, whether the House possessed jurisdiction and power to intervene between the hon. Member for Northampton and the Oath? The second, whether, if the House did possess such power, it ought, under the present circumstances, to make use of it? As to the first point, the hon. and learned Member for Christchurch (Mr. Davey) had told the House that it had no jurisdiction in the matter; but his opinion was altogether at variance with that of the Law Officers of the Crown, with that of the Committee who considered the matter last year, and with that of the House itself, for, by passing the Resolution of June 22, 1880, the House assumed the power and jurisdiction in question. He held, therefore, that the hon. and learned Member for Christchurch ought not to obtain the support of the House, when he said that they had no power to intervene between the hon. Member for Northampton and the Oath. Then came the important question whether the House ought to exercise its power in the present case. The right hon. Baronet the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) said the House ought to exercise it, because it did so last year, and he founded his objection to the taking of the Oath by the hon. Member for Northampton upon the Report of the Committee already alluded to. But the Resolution was not only founded upon the Report of the Committee, but also upon its proceedings, in the course of which there was placed in its hands a "Statement of the Oath Question by Mr. Bradlaugh." Now, that Statement answered in the most positive manner the statement just made by the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, who had told the House, in passionate language, that Mr. Bradlaugh had declared that the Oath was binding upon his conscience. The hon. Member for Northampton, in his Statement, said—

> "The Oath, although to me including words of idle and meaningless character, was and is regarded by a large number of my fellow-countrymen as an appeal to a Deity to take cognizance of their swearing. It would have been an act of hypocrisy for me voluntarily to take this form of affirmation if any other had been open to me, or to take it without protest, as though it would in my mouth contain any such appeal."

Mr. Bradlaugh went on to say that his duty to his constituents was to fulfil the mandate they had given him; and if to do that he should have to submit to take the Oath, so much the worse for those who forced him to repeat words which he had scores of times said were words which for him contained no meaning. It was the hon. and learned Member for Christchurch and the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster who wished to force Mr. Bradlaugh to repeat words which to him conveyed no definite meaning. Hon. Gentlemen on the opposite Benches had no desire to do any such thing. It was in consequence of Mr. Bradlaugh's own Statement that the House on the 22nd of June last came to the conclusion it did; and the question now was, whether the House was still of the same mind? To say that this was a question for the Courts of Law was absurd. The Courts of Law would naturally regard that House as the proper guardian of the sanctity of its Oaths, and it was, in fact, the duty of the House to see that the Oaths taken in its presence were properly, reverently, and effectively taken—a condition which, he contended, had not been fulfilled in Mr. Bradlaugh's case.

Mr. WALTER rose to address the House, when——

Mr. SPEAKER: It having been intimated to me that the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) wishes to address the House, I will now take the pleasure of the House that the hon. Member for Northampton should now be heard.

Question, "That the Member for Northampton be now-heard," put, and *agreed to.*

Mr. BRADLAUGH (who spoke from the Bar of the House) said: Mr. Speaker, I have again to ask the indulgence of the House while I submit to it a few words in favour of my claim to do that which the law requires me to do. Perhaps the House will pardon me if I supply an omission, I feel unintentionally made, on the part of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) in some words which have just fallen from him. I understood him to say that he would use a formal Statement made by me to the Committee against what the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. John Bright) had said I had said. I am sure the hon. and learned Member for Chatham, who has evidently read the proceedings of the Committee with care, would, if he had thought it fair, have stated to the House that the Statement only came from me after an objection made by me—a positive objection on the ground that it related to matters outside this House, and that the House in the course of its history had never inquired into such matters; but I can hardly understand what the hon. and learned Member for Chatham meant, when he said that he contrasted what I did say with what the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster said I said, for it is not a matter of memory, it is on the proceedings of this House. Being examined formally before the Committee, I stated—

> "That the essential part of the Oath is in the fullest and most complete degree binding upon my honour and conscience, and that the repeating of the words of asseveration does not in the slightest degree weaken the binding of the allegiance on me."

I say now I would not go through any form—much as I value the right to sit in this House, much as I desire and believe that this House will accord me that right—that I did not mean to be binding upon me without mental reservation, without equivocation. I would go through no form unless it were fully and completely and thoroughly binding upon me as to what it expressed or promised. Mine has been no easy position for the last 12 months. I have been elected by the free votes of a free constituency. My return is untainted. There is no charge of bribery, no charge of corruption, nor of inducing men to come drunken to the polling booth. I come here with a pure untainted return—not won by accident. For 13 long years have I fought for this right—through five contested elections, including this. It is now proposed to prevent me from fulfilling the duty my constituents have placed upon me. You have force—on my side is the law. The hon. and learned Member for Plymouth (Mr. Edward Clarke) spoke the truth when he said he did not ask the House to treat the matter as a question of law; but the constituencies ask me to treat it as a question of law. I, for them, ask you to treat it as a question of law. I could understand the feeling that seems to have been manifested were I some great and powerful personage. I could understand it had I a huge influence behind me. I am only one of the people, and you propose to teach them that on a mere technical question you will put a barrier in the way of my doing my duty which you have never put in the way of anyone else. The question is—has my return on the 9th of April, 1881, anything whatever to impeach it? There is no legal disqualification involved. If there were it could be raised by Petition. The hon. and learned Member for Plymouth says the dignity of this House is in question. Do you mean that I can injure the dignity of this House? This House which has stood unrivalled for centuries! This House supreme among the Assemblies of the world! This House, which represents the traditions of liberty! I should not have so libelled you. How is the dignity of this House to be hurt? If what happened before the 9th of April is less than a legal disqualification, it is a matter for the judgment of the constituency, and not for you. The constituency has judged me; it has elected me. I stand here with no legal disqualification upon me. The right of the constituency to return me is an unimpeachable right. I know some hon. Gentlemen make light of constituencies; yet without the constituencies you are nothing. It is from them you derive your whole and sole authority. The hon. and learned Member for Plymouth treats lightly the legal question. It is dangerous to make light of the law—dangerous, because, if you are only going to rely on your strength of force to override the law, you give a bad lesson to men whose morality you impeach as to what should be their duty if emergency ever came. Always outside the House I have advocated strenuous obedience to the law, and it is under that law I claim my right. It is said by the right hon. Baronet who interposes between me and my duty (Sir Stafford Northcote) that this House has passed some Resolution. First, I submit that that Resolution does not affect the return of the 9th April. The conditions are entirely different; there is nothing since the date of that return. I submit next that, if it did affect it, the Resolution was illegal from the beginning. In the words of George Grenville, spoken in this House in 1769, I say if your Resolution goes in the teeth of the law—if against the Statute — your Resolution is null and void. No word have I uttered outside these walls which have been lacking in respect to the House. I believe the House will do me justice, and I ask it to look at what it is I claim. I claim to do that which the law says I must. Frankly, I would rather have affirmed. When I came to the Table of the House I deemed that I had a legal right to do it. The Courts have decided against me, and I am bound by their decision. I have the legal right to do what I propose to do. No Resolution of yours can take away that legal right. You may act illegally and hinder me, and, unfortunately, I have no appeal against you. "Unfortunately," perhaps, I should not say. Perhaps it is better that the Chamber which makes the law should never be in conflict with the Courts which administer the laws that the Chamber makes. I think the word "unfortunately" was not the word I ought to have used in this argument. But the force that you invoke against the law today may to-morrow be used against you, and the use will be justified by your example. It is a fact that I have no remedy if you rely on your force. I can only be driven into a contest, wearying even to a strong man well supported, ruinous and killing to one man standing by himself—a contest in which, if I succeed, it will be injurious to you as well as to me—injurious to me, because I can only win by lessening your repute, which I desire to maintain. The only Court I have the power of appealing to is the Court of Public Opinion, which, I have no doubt, in the end will do me justice. The hon. and learned Member for Plymouth said I had the manliness on a former occasion to make an avowal of opinions to this House. I did nothing of the kind. I have never, directly or indirectly, said one word about my opinions, and this House has no right to inquire what opinions I may hold outside its walls. The only right is that which the Statute gives you; my opinions there is no right to inquire into. I shelter myself under the laws of my country. This is a political Assembly, met to decide on the policy of the nation, and not on the religious opinions of the citizens. While I had the honour of occupying a seat in the House, when questions were raised which touched upon religious matters, I abstained from uttering one word. I did not desire to say one word which might hurt the feelings of even the most tender. But it is said, Why not have taken the Oath quietly? I did not take it then, because I thought I had the right to do something else, and I have paid the penalty. I have been plunged in litigation, fostered by men who had not the courage to put themselves forward. I, a penniless man, should have been ruined, if it had not been that the men in the workshop, pit, and factory had enabled me to fight this battle. ["Oh, oh!"] I am sorry that hon. Members cannot have patience with one pleading as I plead here. It is no light stake, even if you put it on the lowest personal grounds, to risk the ambition of a life on such an issue. It is a rightful ambition to desire to take part in the Councils of the nation, even if you bring no store of wisdom with you, and can only learn from the great intellects that we have. What will you inquire into? The right hon. Baronet would inquire into my opinions. Will you inquire into my conduct; or is it only my opinions you will try here? The hon. and learned Member for Plymouth frankly puts it opinions. If opinions, why not conduct? Why not examine into Members' conduct when they come to the Table, and see if there be no Members in whose way you can put a barrier? Are Members, whose conduct may be obnoxious, to vote my exclusion because to them my opinions are obnoxious? As to any obnoxious views supposed to be held by me, there is no duty imposed upon me to say a word. The right hon. Baronet has said there has been no word of recantation. You have no right to ask me for any recantation. Since the 9th April you have no right to ask me for anything. If you have a legal disqualification, Petition, lay it before the Judges. When you ask me to make a statement, you are guilty of impertinence to me, of treason to the traditions of this House, and of impeachment of the liberties of the people. My difficulty is, that those who have made the most bitter attacks upon me only made them when I was not here to deal with them. One hon. and gallant Member recently told his constituents that this would be made a Party question, but that the Conservative Members had not the courage to speak out against me. I should have thought, from reading *Hansard,* not that they wanted courage, but that they had cultivated a reticence that was more just. I wish to say a word or two on the attempt which has been made to put on the Government of the day complicity in my views. The Liberal Party has never aided me in any way to this House. [" Oh!" *from the Opposition.*] Never. I have fought by myself. I have fought by my own hand. I have been hindered in every way that it was possible to hinder me; and it is only by the help of the people, by the pence of toilers in mine and factory, that I am here to-day, after these five struggles right through 13 years. I have won my way with them, for I have won their hearts, and now I come to you. Will you send me back from here? Then how? You have the right, but it is the right of force, and not of law. When I am once seated on these Benches, then I am under your jurisdiction. At present I am under the protection of the Writ from those who sent me here. I do not want to quote what has happened before; but if there be one lesson which the House has recorded more solemnly than another, it is that there should be no interference with the judgment of a constituency in sending a man to this House against whom there is no statutory disqualification. Let me appeal to the generosity of this House as well as to its strength. It has traditions of liberty on both sides. I do not complain that hon. Members on that (the Conservative) side try to keep me out. They act according to their lights, and think my poor services may be injurious to them. [*Cries of* " No!"] Then why not let me in? It must be either a political or a religious question. I must apologize to the House for trespassing upon its patience. I apologize because I know how generous in its listening it has been from the time of my first speech in it till now. But I ask you now, do not plunge with me into a struggle I would shun. The law gives me no remedy if the House decides against me. Do not mock at the constituencies. If you place yourselves above the law, you leave me no course save lawless agitation, instead of reasonable pleading. It is easy to begin such a strife, but none knows how it would end. I have no Court, no tribunal to appeal to; you have the strength of your votes at the moment. You think I am an obnoxious man, and that I have no one on my side. If that be so, then the more reason that this House, grand in the strength of its centuries of liberty, should have now that generosity in dealing with one who tomorrow may be forced into a struggle for public opinion against it.

The hon. MEMBER then withdrew.

MR. GLADSTONE: Two Gentlemen of the Legal Profession have addressed the House in support of the Motion which has been made by the right hon. Baronet opposite. One—the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth (Mr. Edward Clarke)—has said that this is not a question of law, but a question of the dignity of the House. Well, for my part, as regards the dignity of the House, my belief is that it will always be best and most effectually maintained by the strictest possible adherence to the law. But as regards the opinion of that hon. and learned Gentleman, that this is not a question of law, he must have observed that he is in direct conflict with the other legal authority who has addressed the House in support of the

Motion. The hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst), on the contrary, states that it is most distinctly a question of law; and thus those two persons are entirely at issue on the fundamental proposition which lies at the root of their argument. But as I understand the hon. and learned Member for Chatham, he says that Mr. Bradlaugh is under no legal disqualification. He says that it is idle to profess that he can go to the Courts of Justice, for if he does go to the Courts of Justice, it will be found that he has complied with the conditions of the law, as the law is understood in the Courts of Justice, and if so, then the Courts of Justice, in declining to try the case, will give the most solemn affirmation that Mr. Bradlaugh has complied with the conditions of the law. Well, if that is so, then I must say that, in my opinion, there is very great force in the appeal that has just been made by the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh), who used these words—"There is no legal disqualification upon me, and you have no right to impose upon me any disqualification less than legal." Now, Mr. Bradlaugh is upon his trial before this House; but the House also, permit me to say it with great respect, is upon its trial. It would be unpardonable in me, though it is perfectly pardonable and natural in the hon. Member for Northampton—it would be unpardonable in me if I were to speak on this occasion with the slightest tinge of warmth, or to deviate from the driest possible line of argument; and in endeavouring to avoid anything of the kind, I shall only be following in that respect the speech in which the Motion was submitted to the House. Nothing could have been more unexceptionable than the tone of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman. I do not wish to be censorious; but I must say that it was with some regret that I observed that when my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Christchurch (Mr. H. Davey) rose to make a most temperate and most able legal argument on this case, without a single syllable of exaggeration or imputation, he was not heard with the patience which befits a judicial Assembly like the House of Commons. Now, the House itself is, as I have said, upon its trial. It is upon its trial before the constituency that has returned the hon. Member for Northampton, who justly says that, apart from the authority our constituencies give us, we are nothing. It is upon its trial before the general public, upon issues which will possibly come before future Parliaments, as the Parliament that proceeded against Mr. Wilkes was tried by a subsequent Parliament, and was emphatically, formally, and ignominiously condemned. It requires great self-denial to look closely and calmly at these questions. Let us consider what is and what is not the question before us, and what are the judgments of those whom we regard as authorities. I do not understand that the highest authority in the House—namely, the Speaker of the House—has declared any legal objection to the taking of the Oath by Mr. Bradlaugh. I cannot but observe remarkable absences on the other side of the House to-night. I say on the other side of the House, because, though I speak from no Party spirit, it is known that Gentlemen belonging to the Conservative Opposition intend to vote for the Motion. I observe, I say, the absence of a very high legal authority, the late Attorney General (Sir John Holker), which, following up as it does similar absences on former occasions, and his emphatic declaration in the Committee last year, indicates that his opinion is radically different from that of his Party. I observe, in the same way, the absence, not less conspicuous, of my right hon. Friend the senior Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Walpole), who took a prominent part in these discussions last year, who was the Chairman of both the Select Committees that sat last year, but who has not come down to support the contention of the Party opposite to-night. In regard to these and other authorities, I may perhaps be permitted to quote an independent authority, one who, if he had still held his seat in this House, would have spoken with an authority second to that of no one on this occasion—I mean Sir George Grey. Sir George Grey was an ornament of this House for fully 40 years, and he has not ceased to take a lively interest in its proceedings. He has given much attention to this question, and has followed it most carefully. I hold in my hand his written opinion, expressed in the most decisive terms, and going to the fullest length. He says, speaking as one of the public, that he has the fullest conviction that the opposition to the taking of the Oath by Mr. Bradlaugh, if Mr. Bradlaugh offered to take the Oath in compliance with the letter of the Statute, ought not to be tolerated—with great respect I give this as the opinion of Sir George Grey—ought not to be permitted by the Chair. This is the position in which we stand as far as authority is concerned. Most marked absences from the opposite ranks of persons of the greatest weight, who are unwilling to support the Motion now made; no semblance of countenance given to it from the Chair; and an opinion given in the strongest terms by one who has only recently ceased to sit among us, and who brought to the question the double qualification of long experience and legal knowledge—that double qualification again crowned by a personal character of the highest stamp, and perhaps I may be permitted to say, distinguished by a known regard for those interests of religion which, I believe, are weighing upon the minds of many hon. Gentlemen opposite. Well, Sir, so much for authority. The question we have to decide is not whether the hon. Member for Northampton has or has not judged correctly in coming to the Table to take the Oath. Internally—*in foro conscientiæ*—many among us may believe the hon. Member mistaken; but in the court of conscience the repetition of the words does not constitute the Oath unless the man who repeats the words is able to give to every one of them its full sense and its full force. Yes, I say that many a man may be of that opinion, speaking of that process which is internal to the mind; but that process internal to the mind of man is not the subject-matter that we have now to deal with. Mr. Bradlaugh may be mistaken in his belief that he is right in coming to the Table to take the Oath. It does not follow that we shall be right in interfering to prevent him. Indeed, I am bound to say, in the most open way, that I think every man must, in common fairness, admit that Mr. Bradlaugh is to be credited with the best and highest motives. He is under a *primâ facie* obligation and duty, a presumptive obligation and duty, having been elected by a constituency, to present himself at the Table as the only means in which he can fulfil his duty to that constituency. On the other hand, I need not animadvert upon his conduct. Far from it. I think it is generally admitted that his conduct while he sat on those Benches was the conduct of a man of great ability, integrity, honour, and public spirit. But I wish to point out that the question as to the manner in which he can take the Oath is not the question before us. It is purely an internal question for his own mind and conscience, or else for some other tribunal than this House. We must have other grounds on which to proceed if we are to be justified in the face of the world, and in the face of those who, if we make a false step now, may be hereafter involved in the consequences of our error. Neither is it a question whether we ought to be parties—I think I am now taking a simple argumentative objection to the argumentative opening speech—whether we ought to be parties to the taking of the Oath in a sense which we believe to be unworthy. The contention of my hon. and learned Friend behind me (Mr. Davey), and my contention, and, I believe, the contention now generally made in opposition to the proposition is, that we ought not to be parties at all. The Statute has not imposed upon us the duty of becoming parties, or the right of becoming parties, nor has it given us the means of becoming parties. Our duty and voice are strictly limited by the terms of the Statute. It may be that, in the view of those opposite, it is thought that we should become parties. My contention is that we should not become parties. We have no charge placed upon us in this matter which justifies the examination we are asked to make. Lastly, it is not the question whether the Resolution of last year, to which the Motion appeals, was or was not a just and correct Resolution. I am very far from saying that it was a just Resolution. What I say is, that we are not bound by it in point of fact or in point of form. It has gone; it does not exist. I do not understand very well the appeal to it. If it means a formal appeal, the Resolution is in no sense binding on the House. Let us see, then, to what an extent it is an authority, and what it is that the Resolution does. The contention, and I think the sound contention is, that the House of Commons is not a Court for administering the Oath. If the Statute intended to make the House of Commons a Court for administering the Oath, it would have told the House of Commons that it should administer the Oath. It carefully avoids saying anything of the kind. It requires the presence of the House, the presence of the Speaker in the Chair, as necessary to constitute a regular House; but it places no duty, and in placing no duty on the Chair it places no duty upon the House, and it gives no right to the House. It states that the Member shall present himself at the Table, and shall there take the Oath. The House is nowhere directed, and nowhere empowered by the statute, with respect to the taking of the Oath. What was done by the Resolution of last year? Undoubtedly, it did something beyond the simple passive attitude we take up in ordinary circumstances. The Resolution of last year went this length—by circumstances it was brought about that the House became cognizant of the fact that certain words of the Oath were to Mr. Bradlaugh a meaningless formula; and it became cognizant of that fact as part of the transaction, as part of the *res gestæ*, and the meaning of the prohibition contained in the Resolution of last year was that, as that knowledge had come to the cognizance of the House as a portion of the transaction, the House should take notice of it and not permit the Oath to be taken. Now, Sir, what is now contended? It is contended that what took place a year ago, and was applicable to the transaction which then occurred, is applicable to the transaction that is now before us; and the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite the Member for Plymouth (Mr. Clarke), to whose opinions I, for one, always listen with the respect they deserve, contends that this is the same transaction, and not only so, but he treats with very considerable contempt, as a kind of exuberance of special pleading, any contention to the contrary effect. I am not going to say it is special pleading carried to an extreme which contends that this is the same transaction; but I would ask the hon. and learned Member to have compassion on the infirmities of intellects less robust and vigorous than his own. I must own that in point of common sense, and in the sense of the Constitution, I contend that the transaction is completely separate. I hold, as contended by the hon. Gentleman at the Bar, that the 9th of April is the origin of these proceedings, and that we have no title to go back beyond that date; but I should like, in what little I have to say, to keep in view the two questions together. I do not wish to put too highly the abstract argument; I wish to mix together the arguments of the absence of right and the absence of prudence in the House. My hon. Friend behind me makes no abstract proposition. He invites the House to declare that it will not, under the circumstances, interfere. Those who think the House has no right to interfere can, I believe, with the great authority of the hon. and learned Member for Preston (Sir John Holker) to sustain them—can, with the utmost ease, support the Amendment. So can those who think that it is imprudent for the House to interfere, and in what I have to say, if I incline to the stricter view, I will look chiefly to the question of prudence, and I begin by affirming that we are invited distinctly to go beyond the Resolution of last year and to take a new and distinct ground. It is perfectly intelligible to say that when an Oath is taken in your presence, Sir, with attendant circumstances such as to constitute it part of the proceedings of the House, that we may take an objection to it, and that it is legitimate to take an objection. But what, Sir, is now contended for? I am not imputing to hon. Gentlemen opposite that which I believe they would fervently disclaim—namely, that they are going to adopt in principle all the odious consequences of religious inquisition; but I am going to charge that without such an intention they are calling upon us to take a step which, consistently followed up, will lead to those consequences. I admit that by the Resolution of last year, to which I was no party, we have committed ourselves to this extent—that if in the course of the transaction itself the House were put into a position of becoming aware that the Oath was being treated as a meaningless formula the House would take notice of it, and on its own responsibility determine that the taking of the Oath should not be permitted. So far you are pledged; but can it be that that pledge being given at that time is a declaration having the same force and effect now that the hon. Member for Northampton has been back to his constituency, and that they, being cognizant of the whole of the case, have re-elected him and made him anew a Member of this House as much as if the Parliament had been dissolved and had been newly chosen? In my opinion that contention is most irrational; but what I want to urge on hon. Gentlemen opposite is this. They may all agree with me at first sight that that contention is irrational; but I ask, and I think I am entitled to know, up to what point it is to lead us? I observe that not a single Gentleman, not even the Mover of the Resolution itself, has thrown the slightest light upon the subject. It is now shown that on a given occasion, when in connection with the taking of the Oath an opinion was expressed by the hon. Member for Northampton that part of it was meaningless, the House interfered. But what is now contended? It is now contended that, because that was done a year ago in a transaction upon taking the Oath with reference to a former election, we are to hold it is done at the present moment. To what consequences does not this lead? Does it not lead to this—that if, from any source, at any time, in any way, you could obtain the knowledge that a Gentleman who proposes to take the Oath has not the belief you consider it necessary he should have to make it a reality, you will not allow him to take the Oath? On what ground are you to stand? Is it because a communication has been made to the House at some former period? Is that the ground? ["Yes!"] "Yes!" says an hon. Member. Then am I to understand that the communication having been made to the House it is to be held good for ever? Pray recollect that in your contests with the people, or in your contests with a portion of the people —a constituency—you have great advantages in your dignity, your authority, and your power over their Representative who appears at your Bar; but you have one disadvantage, and that is you are temporary; but they are permanent. By-and-bye you will cease to exist; but they will remain on the spot. Their power, their position, does not die. And is it, then, intended that for years and years Mr. Bradlaugh is to be put aside as not being a Member of this House on the ground of a declaration made by him—I believe extorted from him—["Oh!"]—at least, reluctantly made by him—he thinks extorted from him—is it to be held that on account of that declaration so obtained from him last year, upon another election, throughout any number of elections, for any number of years, in any number of Parliaments, because that declaration was made to this House—is that declaration to be held good for ever, and is he to be prevented from taking the Oath until there is a recantation? Is that a rational or a reasonable contention? Or, if you say you will not be bound by that contention, how far will you go? It is said the transaction is the same transaction now. If the transaction is the same transaction after one election, it is ridiculous to say that it would not be the same transaction after any number of elections. Therefore, upon the strength of a declaration made last year—I hope I am not saying anything that may offend anyone—on the strength of a declaration made last year, imputing logical and argumentative consequences, Mr. Bradlaugh is to be repelled unless he comes to volunteer a confession to you—which you have no right to ask from him—that the state of his conscience has undergone a change. Upon what principle is it that this distinction rests? Is it because a communication has been made to this House? Is it the source from which the knowledge comes, or the form in which it comes? If you are entitled to take cognizance of a man's belief, these are secondary points—the real point is the amount of knowledge. Do you know that a man's belief is such as to make his oath an unreality? [*Cries of* "Yes!"] Supposing an hon. Member had published a treatise which had appeared this morning, in which he had declared the same opinions, that publication would have no relation to the House, nor would be addressed to the public. Would that be a ground for interfering? [An hon. MEMBER: It would.] Yes, it would. Very well, then, it comes to this—that the House is, upon all occasions when there is evidence forthcoming, to say that in the opinion of the House a man, offering to take the Oath, who does not hold the belief which Members think necessary to make the Oath a reality, ought not to be allowed to take it, whatever be the source of the information, and however it may be got at. [*Cries of* "Oh!"] I beg pardon. I hope that hon. Members will not interrupt me in the middle of a sentence. I was contending that it is not the source of the evidence, nor the sufficiency of the evidence, that should justify you. If it be demonstrated and clear that a man does not hold what you consider to be the proper belief, are you going to take your stand upon such a quicksand as this—"Although I have absolutely certain knowledge—and no doubt can exist in the mind of any rational man—I will not act upon it at all, because the source from which I derive it is only a public and solemn declaration, made deliberately in an authentic and, perhaps, systematic work, which cannot leave any doubt upon the mind of anyone?" It appears to me that the Gentlemen who recommend such a course as this are bound to tell us how far they mean to travel along this slippery road. It is quite evident, I think, from what appears to be admitted sporadically, at least on the opposite side, that this is not the last occasion on which the declaration of last year will be held to be valid. Then you thereby establish a principle of the greatest breadth; and it is this—that the House of Commons may not only refuse the Oath on account of something that has happened in the course of the transaction which shows the Oath to be unreal, but it may likewise call for evidence *aliunde*, and if it has sufficient evidence it may refuse to allow the Oath to be taken. I should like to know what is the principle on which we are to stand? No declaration has been made of that principle. The Motion carefully avoids it; it refers us to a Resolution which does not govern the case; it refers us to a Resolution which speaks of a refusal founded on what happened in the course of the transaction; it invites us to apply it to a new transaction. My first contention is, that that Resolution was limited to the time it was passed, and it appears to me no one has argued the contrary, and that it is not without limit of time. Until we hear from Mr. Bradlaugh a recantation—which you profess not to desire, and are incompetent to ask or receive—you will inflict on him a permanent disability; and though you desire to limit the ground of it to a communication made to this House, you must necessarily go a good deal further; you cannot conscientiously stop short of this—that whenever you have evidence to convince you that a man's belief is not sound on fundamental portions of this Oath, you will not permit it to be taken. Is that a proposition that can be distinguished from a religious inquisition? I am as far as possible from imputing to any man the desire to institute it; but I have a perfect right to impute it to his argument. There is nothing more common in this House than for Gentlemen to use arguments, the real bearing and consequences of which they have not seen. Only two Gentlemen have addressed us who spoke with legal authority, and one disclaimed entirely any desire to deal with the question as a question of law. We contend, on the contrary—it is our strict, absolute, bounden, indispensable duty to deal with it as a question of law and as nothing else; and if we are influenced by any motive, any regard for what we call our dignity and consistency, any misplaced or misjudged regard for what we conceive to be for the benefit of our religion itself, that is an offence and an error. To maintain the law is our first and our only duty. [*Cries of* "Oh!"] There is surely nothing so monstrous in that statement that the observance of the law is our first and our only duty, that it should lead at once to a manifestation of impatience. I close, Sir, with the words used by the hon. Member himself—"If you are unable to fix on me a legal disqualification you must show, and as yet you have made no attempt to show, that you have a right to inflict upon me a disqualification which is less than legal."

SIR HARDINGE GIFFARD: The right hon. Gentleman has commented upon the absence of certain authorities whom he says ought to have been here; but he does not appear to have referred to the absence of the expression of an opinion on the part of the Legal Advisers of Her Majesty's Government. I trust, before the debate is concluded, that that omission may be supplied. I can understand the difficulty that really prevails with my hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General, because I observe that his name is among those who voted with the majority against the proposition of my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Preston (Sir John Holker), and that he affirmed, upon his view of the law, that it was not only the right, but, under the circumstances, the duty of the House to prevent Mr. Bradlaugh from going through the form of taking the Oath. [The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) dissented.] If my hon. and learned Friend questions that statement I will give the language. [The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James): I voted against it.] Then I will take it that my hon. and learned Friend voted against it himself. But what was the language of the Resolution—

> "Your Committee are of opinion that, under the circumstances, compliance by Mr. Bradlaugh with the form used when the Oath is taken would not be the taking of an Oath within the true meaning of the Statute; and, therefore, the House can, and, in the opinion of your Committee ought, to prevent Mr. Bradlaugh from going through that form."

Now, Sir, it appears to me that that expresses most guardedly and correctly the true condition of the question. What is the taking of an Oath? The Legislature has imposed that necessity upon every Member who comes to sit and vote in this House, and the question is by what Act is that legislative requisition complied with. It would appear the Prime Minister is of opinion that the mere repeating of the words and kissing the Book is a compliance with that form. That appears to me to be the whole question. And now let me invite the attention of the House to another consideration. There is no statute in point of law which involves the existence of a religious belief. It is part of the Common Law, and no person could be examined in a Court of Law who did not possess some religious belief—that is to say, that he must recognize the existence of a Supreme Power and of a responsibility here and hereafter. There is no statute that provides that. It is the condition of the Common Law and the Parliamentary Oaths Act, when it enacted that as a condition of a Member exercising his functions as a Member of Parliament, and it must be taken to have viewed the language in which the Oath was to be taken in the same sense as a Court of Justice requires the Oath to be taken. It is not an Oath unless there is the existence of that belief. Then, if the House is bound by the Statute and, as the Prime Minister says, the great thing is that we are to observe the law, the question is—Are we observing the law; are we complying with the requisitions of the Statute if we permit a Gentleman, who has proclaimed that the essential condition of an oath is absent from his mind at the time he takes the Book into his hands to go through the formula prescribed by the Act of Parliament—but, let it be remembered, prescribed as an Oath? And therein I can reconcile somewhat the difference which exists between the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst). Mr. Bradlaugh says—"A promise is binding on my conscience." He says—"I profess that when I say solemnly 'I mean to keep a particular engagement' that it is binding on my conscience." But Mr. Bradlaugh has never said, and he has not now in his later statement at all qualified what he said before—he has never said it is binding on his conscience as an oath. On the contrary, he proclaims that it is not binding upon his conscience as an oath, but that as a gentleman, and as one professing to speak the truth, it binds him, because any promise is binding upon him. Now, that is the exact state of the facts. Then can it be pretended that if a Member comes up to that Table and says at the time—I will deal with the question of the continuity of the transaction for the moment—suppose that when he takes the Book to be sworn he said, in the face of the House—"Now, I am going to repeat these words, and I intend to kiss this Book, but I beg you all to notice that I do not believe in the existence of a Supreme Being; that I do not believe in the existence of any responsibility hereafter, and to me it is not an oath." Would anybody say that that is taking an Oath within the meaning of the Statute? There is the finding of the Committee as to the jurisdiction of the House. The question of propriety and expediency is another matter depending upon the continuity of the transaction. Now, is this the same transaction? I am delighted to find that special pleading is not confined to my own Profession. What is the history of this transaction? It is really necessary to refer to it, although it must be familiar to the House. How is it that Mr. Bradlaugh comes again to tender himself at the Table to take the Oath? The history of the transaction has been related by the Prime Minister himself, when he contended that the point of departure was the 9th of April. That history is this—Mr. Bradlaugh declined to take the

Oath; and the Prime Minister, rescinding the Resolution of the House, as far as it related to the Affirmation, enabled Mr. Bradlaugh to make an Affirmation. It has been held by a Court of Law that that is not a compliance with the Statute, and that Mr. Bradlaugh has not taken the Oath. And now, because a new election has been rendered necessary by that transaction, the Prime Minister says—"We are to shut our eyes altogether to that transaction as to the point of time." Is it because it was last year? The same argument would apply if it was only last week. A new election has been rendered necessary by Mr. Bradlaugh's refusal to take the Oath. Can it be alleged, then, that this is not the same transaction? The Courts of Law, I think, would recognize that, at least, this was the same person whose religious belief was a fallacy —I do not want to use that phrase; but I observed that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer continually used it, apparently to attribute to Members on this side of the House indiscriminately that they were desirous of perpetrating a religious persecution. We have rested the case on a totally different ground, and have not drawn a comparison between this case and those in regard to which the law has made no provision as to taking an oath or making an affirmation. And now let me call the attention of the House to the true position of things. By the judgments of the Courts of Law Affirmations, such as are referred to in the Statute, are confined to particular classes of persons, holding certain religious opinions. An oath has been stated, I think with the general assent of the House, to be an appeal to the Supreme Being. Now, then, there comes a person—returned by a constituency, it is true; but if returned by a constituency when unfit to perform the duties of their Representative—is the constituency to overawe and command Parliament? Suppose the constituency had returned a woman as their Representative. There are certain people who entertain strong views on that subject; and if that course had been taken, are we to be told that female suffrage was to be immediately established, because a constituency had thought proper to act in violation of the law? The constituency of Northampton sinned against light and knowledge. They knew that, in the opinion of the House of Commons, a Member holding Mr. Bradlaugh's opinions—and it is idle to pretend that we do not know what Mr. Bradlaugh's opinions are—is not entitled to sit and vote, and that the very election at which he was returned was rendered necessary by that condition of things. The Prime Minister says that the House of Commons itself is on its trial. I think it is. It is on its trial before the country, whether it will allow, at the dictation of a particular constituency, and in favour of a particular Minister, a profanation of the religious feeling of both sides of the House. I protest against its being supposed that this side of the House alone feels the importance of the question. I believe that, at any rate, it was felt quite as strongly last Session by the other side of the House; and it was because it was felt so strongly last Session on that side of the House that the Resolution of the Prime Minister was carefully guarded, and only applied to the Affirmation, and that the right hon. Gentleman did not attempt to rescind that part of the Resolution which prevented Mr. Bradlaugh from taking the Oath. It was no secret that a great many of the right hon. Gentleman's supporters entertained strong views on that subject, and that they were not disposed to rescind what they considered and believed to be in accordance with the whole opinion of the country — namely, the profanation of a solemn appeal to a Supreme Being by a person who had been lecturing all over the country, and endeavouring to persuade the people that religion was something in the nature of a farce, and that a Supreme Being does not exist. Under these circumstances, we are now invited by the Prime Minister to treat the question, he says, as a simple question of law; and as a question of law it is to be treated in this wise. I do not understand the Prime Minister to deny that an oath does import a religious consciousness. I rather gather, although it is not easy to follow him—I rather gather from his observations that, as far as the internal conscience of the person taking an oath is concerned, he thinks that the making of an oath involves a religious belief. But he says—"You cannot find it out; and you have no right to inquire." What is the condition in a Court of Law? How is it when objection is taken in a Court of Law? No doubt, in 99 cases out of 100, or in 999 cases out of 1,000, no one thinks of making an objection. A man takes the Book into his hand and is sworn, and no objection is made. But if the person about to take the Oath proclaims his infidelity, and says he has no belief in a future state, and that the taking of the Oath is to him an unmeaning form, of course he is at once rejected. The practical difficulty will never arise unless a person claims to make an Affirmation on the ground that, as an infidel, he is a person entitled to affirm in a Court of Justice, and therefore entitled to affirm here. Therefore, the difficulty which the Prime Minister suggests will never, I venture to think, arise practically. No one will care to inquire into the abstract opinions of a person; and if such a person thinks proper to make the House a party to the proceedings in order to be able to say to the constituency hereafter—"See what I have done to the House of Commons. I told them I was an infidel, and I have taken the Oath in spite of them," and after an appeal to a Supreme Being, declares that no such Supreme Being exists—if that arises again I hope the House will interfere again. I do not think it is likely; but if it should, I am not struck with horror at the idea of rejecting a person who proclaims his infidelity in that fashion. But the Prime Minister says—"How far are you to go back? When are you to inquire into a persons views?" I should have thought that some of the advisers beside him would have told him the simple principle of law that things existing are presumed to continue until the contrary is shown. He might have learned that from the Law Officers, and, if so, we are not put upon any new inquiry with respect to Mr. Bradlaugh. He has given, with no uncertain sound, his views, and they continue until the contrary is shown. Therefore, the Prime Minister suggests what should be done under the circumstances. Do I understand that he is anxious that a person who makes those professions should be entitled to take an Oath, or is it that there is no right of interference in the House? Does he suggest that, although it is not an Oath, and although there may be a most outrageous profanation in language of what an Oath is, this House has no right to interfere? Then, if so, what is the meaning of the Statute? The Statute says a person who has taken his seat is to come with the full House, with the Speaker in the Chair, and take the Oath prescribed by Statute. Do I understand that the Prime Minister contends that there is no authority in the House to interfere, however outrageous the conduct of the person proposing to go through the form? Suppose there is an insulting and outrageous profanation, is the House not to interfere? I should like to know what is more insultingly profane than a man saying he will take an Oath, but he does not believe it. Well, now the sitting Member for Northampton was at great pains to point out that the Resolution of last Session was not binding upon us in the sense of its being an existing Order of the House. Nobody suggested that it was. If it had been, then the task of my right hon. Friend beside me would have been simply to call Mr. Speaker's attention to the Standing Order, and no Motion would have been necessary. But, although it is not binding in the sense of being an existing Order, is it not binding in this sense—that there was a deliberate discussion and considerable debate on the matter, and even afterwards, when, under the circumstances I have pointed out, the Prime Minister rescinded part of the Resolution, he allowed one part of it to remained unrescinded? Now, no new reasons are advanced except that as it is found that Mr. Bradlaugh cannot enter by Affirmation he is to be permitted to enter by Oath. If one looks at this as a dry question of law, it comes simply to this—two elements are necessary in the taking of an oath, one the belief in the taker, the other in the words taken. The broad proposition is that the House will allow one element to suffice for both, and that if a man repeats the Oath, that is enough, and the House will not interfere. I think that would be an extremely mischievous and undesirable precedent, and one likely to lead to much more misconstruction and misapprehension of what is the real meaning of the House upon this matter, in those very uncertain and unlikely circumstances to which the Prime Minister has pointed—the cross-examination of any Member on his religious beliefs. We may be certain that unless a man protrudes his religion before the House, no person will be particularly anxious to inquire what his religious beliefs are.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): I am sorry to interpose; but I think it would be regarded as somewhat strange if, after the observations of the hon. and learned Member opposite (Sir Hardinge Giffard), I did not for a short time occupy the attention of the House. I never intended to be entirely absent from this debate; but I did not desire to rush too hastily into it. I was not encouraged by the attention paid by the other side of the House to my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Christchurch (Mr. H. Davey); but now that the House has listened to the legal argument of my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Launceston (Sir Hardinge Giffard), I am sure it will not deny me consideration for a few minutes. There is another reason why I have not taken part in the debate till now. I admit that I was rather anxious to hear what the hon. and learned Member for Launceston would say, and how far he would share the views of his Colleague, the hon. and learned Member for Preston (Sir John Holker), who had expressed his views when we were discussing this question in a calmer atmosphere than we have to-night. When I thought the hon. Member for Northampton had not obeyed the Statute, and complied with the necessity for taking the Oath, I said so. I did not shrink from separating myself from some with whom I generally act, in supporting the Resolution that the hon. Member had not complied with the Statute, and in making record of that, not only in words spoken, but in the Resolution which resulted in the Report presented to this House. And when I felt that he had not complied with the necessary obligations, reasons were given why I thought he had not so done; and I did not shrink from the responsibility of that Report, which so far agrees with the views of my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Launceston. Equally now, when I think the hon. Member has complied with the statutory obligation imposed upon him, I am as prepared not to shrink from saying what my opinion is. May I remind the House what is the view contained in the Report presented to this House when, by Resolution, the Committee reported that the hon. Member for Northampton had not complied with the statutory obligation. I hope the House will recollect that we accepted certain views of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Cambridge University (Mr. Spencer Walpole) which he presented to the Committee. We agreed that the House could receive no evidence of any person's opinions; that it had no power to apply any interrogations to any Member who comes to be sworn. You can ask him nothing, you can take no evidence of anything outside this House, nor even of anything that has occurred inside this House. That was not the view of hon. Members on the Liberal side of the House only, but of the Conservative Members of that Committee. We agreed in these views, and they are expressed in the Report; but when we had to report whether the hon. Member for Northampton had complied with the statutory obligation of taking the Oath, and also had to consider whether this House could take notice of the fact that he had not taken the Oath, we proceeded by steps. We first said the House could take notice whether the Oath had been taken or not. The House took notice of that when Alderman Salomons refused to use the words "true faith of a Christian," and, as a determination of a question of fact, held that the Oath had not been taken. The House certainly had this power to notice whether the Oath was taken or not as a matter of fact; and if the Member refused to kiss the Book, or to utter only a portion of the Oath, we agreed the House had power to interpose. We did, therefore, so far admit, not that the man's mind could be probed, not that you could receive evidence or extraneous knowledge or information as to his religion; but that you could enter upon the question of fact as to the Oath being taken or not. Upon the next question I certainly spoke with great doubt; and I ask the Mover of the Resolution to consider that it is possible the hon. and learned Member for Preston was right, and that I was wrong on this point; but the opinion I expressed was that when the hon. Member for Northampton claimed to make Affirmation, and, when he was asked, gave the grounds why he so claimed, his answer conveyed the information that the Oath at that time was not an oath binding to him. I also went further, and stated that we regarded that statement as contemporaneous with the transaction when he claimed to take the Oath. That was the view expressed in the Committee, and we carefully guarded ourselves to this extent—we said it was because the declaration was a contemporaneous declaration that we believed and thought the hon. Member had not, as a matter of fact, taken the Oath at all; but we protested against the House asking him questions or looking at any other action than that which occurred contemporaneously with taking the Oath, and that it must be a part of the same transaction or you could not take cognizance of it. It may be that the hon. and learned Member for Preston was right. He moved an Amendment, stating that you could not listen to a contemporaneous observation; but I adhere to the opinion I then expressed. Every safeguard we put to that Resolution is of utility now. We then said you could take no evidence; you could not probe a man's belief, and everything we then said you could not do hon. Members are now asking the House to do. The hon. and learned Member for Plymouth (Mr. E. Clarke) said this was a piece of fantastic special pleading. I have known a great deal of accuracy and logic conveyed in the words "special pleading;" but the hon. and learned Member says you must not consider this as a legal question. He says it is a piece of fantastic special pleading to call what we had before us last May extraneous to what we have before us in April this year. He seems to mean by extraneous something outside this House. I suppose what the hon. and learned Member (Mr. H. Davey) means by the words of his Amendment is that it shall not be something extraneous to the transaction. May I ask what is the connection between what has occurred here in this House to-night and what occurred in May last year? I get my answer from the hon. and learned Member for Launceston. He says that, in consequence of what took place last year, an election at Northampton was necessary, and Mr. Bradlaugh returns here again. But it was no necessity for the electors to return him again. He has come back by virtue of their choice, not, as my hon. and learned Friend supposes, with the knowledge that they were electing a disqualified person; for the person they have chosen to elect labours under no disqualification. If that is part of the same transaction, I will ask the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth to consider where he will say it has ceased to be part of the same transaction. Suppose it occurred in the next Parliament, and at a General Election instead of a bye-election, under the same circumstances, you would say exactly the same thing. What is it we have to say here? Hon. Members have used the words—"We have the evidence of what took place here last year." That is exactly what the Committee reported you could not look at. It is not less evidence that it has occurred in this House if it be not part of the same transaction. What is it we are listening to when we ask what occurred here? Although I admit that, as a matter of degree, we have comparatively certain evidence—probably sure evidence, because Parliament says so—it is still evidence which we have to accept as proof. What did the right hon. Member (Sir Stafford Northcote) write to Mr. Bradlaugh for? Was it not to obtain proof of what Mr. Bradlaugh says? I admit the courtesy of that letter; but did not the right hon. Gentleman wish to give Mr. Bradlaugh an opportunity of recantation? What was it the right hon. Gentleman was wishing to obtain? To obtain the opposite to that presumption which my hon. and learned Friend named, that a thing, once existing, must always be supposed to exist until the contrary is shown. From first to last the argument on the opposite side of the House is that we have certain evidence of Mr. Bradlaugh's opinions, and that, therefore, we ought to act upon that evidence. May I remind the hon. and learned Member for Launceston of what fell from himself? Does he think he was justified in the principle he has placed before the House when he said—"We know Mr. Bradlaugh's opinions full well; we know he has been lecturing throughout the country on infidelity?" Was that evidence? That was not before the Committee last year. What is it that the House is listening to? It is listening to hearsay evidence; and we are asked now, in the face of this Report, to accept from the hon. and learned Member for Launceston the statement that Mr. Bradlaugh has been lecturing throughout this country in support of infidelity, and to hold that, therefore, it would be an act of profanity to allow him to take the Oath. We cannot discuss this matter of profanation in the manner he pointed out. It is equally profane if any Member, not believing in a Supreme Being, asks to come here and take the Oath. Are you to allow every person to come to this House, except the Member for Northampton, and make no exception? And yet if the principle he advances is to prevail, the hon. and learned Member, if he has heard any gossip in private life, if he has heard in any way of a man's disbelief, ought to endeavour to cause the House to say the taking of the Oath by such a person would be an act of profanity, and, therefore, to refuse to allow him to take it. But in this House there would be no declaration of a lecture; there would be no declaration of private conversation; and, therefore, you would have to probe the views of every Member of this House. In the face of this House you can administer no interrogatory. If you could you would have to say—"Did you lecture on infidelity? Did you write such an article?" Is the House about to agree to the view of my hon. and learned Friend? When last year we said the Member for Northampton had not taken the Oath, we said that because, as a matter of fact, he had not done so; and my view was that if at that time the House had allowed him to take the Oath a Court of Law would have had to determine whether the Oath had been duly taken or not. The penalty that is imposed on a person who sits without taking the Oath is one which the law imposes and enforces; and if the Oath has not been taken the consequence is the vacating of the seat and a pecuniary penalty. It was not till I came to the conclusion that the course the hon. Member took last year was such that the Courts would have held him to be sitting without having taken the Oath that I agreed to the Resolution of the Committee. Now, he comes here to-night and asks to have the Oath administered. The hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) says, of course, the Courts must say that he has taken the Oath. If he had done only what he did last year the Courts would, as I thought, have decided that he was liable to penalties; but the hon. and learned Member for Chatham says, of course, now he has taken the Oath in the view of the Courts; and yet we are asked to say that this Oath has not been taken. I would ask the House to recollect what its power is, and not to go beyond it. You may be dealing with an unpopular man; you may have a majority objecting to that man taking the Oath; but if this precedent be once established you will never be able to rescind it. If this House is to say whether there has been profanation, you will have discussion; you will have the consideration of what a man's opinions are; and you will even have to discuss the point of my hon. and learned Friend, that when a man comes to this House with no belief in a Supreme Being he he ought not to take the Oath. Whether the Oath has been taken is a bare question of law; but we shall set a precedent of inquiring into considerations which ought to be foreign to political controversy and to discussions in this House; and I ask the House, not only because Mr. Bradlaugh is legally entitled to take the Oath, and to perform the statutory obligation placed upon him, but also because it would be impolitic in the last degree to enter into the inquiry as to a man's faith, to accept the Amendment of my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Christchurch.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I am most reluctant to detain the House; but there are two points, and one is of a personal nature, upon which I think it necessary to say a few words. Reference has been made to a letter which I wrote yesterday to the hon. Member for Northampton; and a construction has been put upon that letter which most assuredly is entirely incorrect. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General asks why I wrote it; and he says I did it to put a question to Mr. Bradlaugh. I did no such thing. I had no contemplation of the letter being published; but I wrote it for this purpose only—I thought it was a matter of courtesy to a Gentleman whose right to take the Oath I was about to challenge, to give him notice of my intention, in order that he might not be taken by surprise when I took so strong a step. At the same time, in stating what I was about to do, I thought it necessary to put in a qualification that if anything occurred to alter the view I took that would be taken into consideration. I thought it possible he might make some statement that would alter my view. That is the simple explanation; and I can assure the House that I had no intention, directly or indirectly, to do that which is justly condemned by the hon. and learned Gentleman and others—that is, questioning the religious opinions of any man. I entirely repudiate any action of that sort. I also wish to take notice of an expression in the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Christchurch (Mr. H. Davey). The Amendment said that the House ought not, on the ground of information from extraneous transactions, to offer any opposition to the admission of Mr. Bradlaugh. His (Sir Stafford Northcote's) whole contention was that this was not a case in which they were proceeding on information extraneous to the transaction, and it was upon that ground he had been proceeding. They might take the thing in more than one way. They might say that each successive step was a separate transaction; they might say that when Mr. Bradlaugh came up on the 3rd of May and asked to affirm, that was one transaction; and when he came up on the 21st of May and offered to take the Oath, that was another transaction. They might like to say that anything that took place on the 30th was extraneous to anything that took place on the 21st of May; but the Attorney General could not contend that, because he himself moved in the Committee which sat on the question of the Oath the words which were put in the Resolution—namely, "that this House can, if it thinks right, exercise its power to prevent Mr. Bradlaugh taking the Oath." Why did the hon. and learned Gentleman do that? Because it was part of the transaction which began on the 3rd of May. That transaction was not complete, and was not complete up to this moment, and that was evident if they took into consideration the course of events. The House refused to allow Mr. Bradlaugh to take the Oath. A difficulty thereupon arose, and it was solved for a moment by a Resolution of the House that Mr. Bradlaugh be allowed to affirm, subject to the decision of the Courts of Law. That decision was given, and it was in consequence of that decision that the seat became vacant. It was not as if there had been a Dissolution—had it been so, they would have had to begin again with an entirely new question. It was not as if the hon. Member had accepted the Chiltern Hundreds, and vacated his seat and been re-elected; but it was a part of that transaction which began on the 3rd of May and had been continued ever since. All he asked the House to do was to maintain to the end that which they decided upon last year. They decided, after various proceedings, to part of which the hon. Gentleman was a party, that Mr. Bradlaugh ought not to take the Oath. That was only binding for the Session; and, therefore, he did not appeal to the Speaker to put it in force himself. He contended, however, that the Resolution having been come to, and never having been rescinded, and the House not having been put in possession of any new information, they were entitled, and being entitled they were bound, to call upon the House to adhere to its former determination.

Mr. NEWDEGATE wished to draw the attention of the House to a change in the position of affairs, which might cause very great inconvenience. For the first time, he had heard it stated that this House was not to consider itself a Court. He would like to know how the House could take evidence if it were not a Court; he would like to know the meaning of the laws as regarded the administering of the Oath to Members; and he would like to know what was the meaning of the law which required that the House should be full, and that the Speaker should be in the Chair if they were all to be lay figures. The very Resolution of the House under which the case of Mr. Bradlaugh had been tried referred the matter to the Courts of Law, and what had been the result of that reference? It had been to prove that Her Majesty's Advisers were totally wrong in law, and that the Affirmation was only another form of oath. That was the decision of the Court of Appeal, and the House was now asked to accept the opinion of the present Law Officers. Mr. Bradlaugh's affirming had been proved by the Courts of Law to be totally wrong in law; it would therefore be utterly unbecoming that the House should meet, and that the Speaker should occupy the Chair and witness another disgraceful exhibition, and yet be unable to intervene. They were asked not to ignore the Resolution merely of last Session, but they were asked to ignore the evidence before their own Committee. They were asked to believe that the declaration of Mr. Bradlaugh before their own Committee that the Oath was no oath to him if he took it, that it was a category of meaningless words—they were asked to ignore that evidence, and why? Because Mr. Bradlaugh had made an explanation, because the constituency of Northampton had re-elected him, and Mr. Bradlaugh had not changed his opinions; and there was not a tittle of evidence to prove that Mr. Bradlaugh was returned this year on different terms to those on which he was returned last year. They were asked to believe that the circumstances were different. Were they to close their ears to the transactions of Northampton before which constituency the Prime Minister told them they were on their trial. They were on their trial before that constituency, and that constituency persevered in attempting to force the opinion of the House. How totally different was the conduct of Mr. Bradlaugh from the conduct of Baron Rothschild and Alderman Salomons. They were returned time after time; they made no attempt upon the House, they made no attempt to force themselves upon the House; their constituents were content to wait until Parliament saw fit to change the law. What was the constituency of Northampton that this House should bow before it? Was it a greater constituency than the City of London? Was it a greater constituency than Greenwich? The City of London was content to remain disenfranchised for 10 years, and Greenwich was content to remain disenfranchised for seven years until the law was changed. Her Majesty's Government were now about to knowingly sanction the profanation of the Oath—the Oath which Mr. Bradlaugh had told them would be painful to him. That declaration he had never retracted, and yet for a mere matter of political convenience Her Majesty's Government were about to sanction an evasion of the law in a matter which they knew perfectly well deeply touched the religious convictions of the people of the country. He warned the House that Her Majesty's Government were on their trial before the nation, and he would be greatly surprised if they did not meet with their just reward.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 208; Noes 175: Majority 33.

AYES.

Alexander, Colonel C.
Amherst, W. A. T.
Ashmead-Bartlett, E.
Aylmer, Capt. J. E. F.
Balfour, A. J.
Barne, Col. F. St. J. N.
Barttelot, Sir W. B.
Bateson, Sir T.
Beach, rt. hn. Sir M. H.
Beach, W. W. B.
Bellingham, A. H.
Bentinck, rt. hn. G. C.
Bentinck, G. W. P.
Birkbeck, E.
Birley, H.
Blackburne, Col. J. I.
Blake, J. A.
Boord, T. W.
Bourke, right hon. R.
Brise, Colonel R.
Broadley, W. H. H.
Brodrick, hon. W. St. J. F.
Bruce, Sir H. H.
Brymer, W. E.
Burghley, Lord
Burnaby, General E. S.
Burrell, Sir W. W.
Buxton, Sir R. J.
Campbell, J. A.
Carden, Sir R. W.
Chambers, Sir T.
Chaplin, H.
Christie, W. L.
Clarke, E.
Clive, Col. hon. G. W.
Close, M. C.
Cobbold, T. C.
Coddington, W.
Cole, Viscount
Compton, F.
Coope, O. E.
Corbett, J.
Corry, J. P.
Courtauld, G.
Cross, rt. hon. Sir R. A.
Cubitt, rt. hon. G.
Daly, J.
Davenport, H. T.
Davenport, W. B.
Dawnay, Col. hn. L. P.
De Worms, Baron H.
Digby, Col. hon. E.
Dixon-Hartland, F. D.
Donaldson-Hudson, C.
Douglas, A. Akers-
Dundas, hon. J. C.
Dyke, rt. hn. Sir W. H.
Eaton, H. W.
Elliot, G. W.
Ennis, Sir J.
Errington, G.
Estcourt, G. S.
Fairbairn, Sir A.
Feilden, Major-General R. J.
Fellowes, W. H.
Fenwick-Bisset, M.
Filmer, Sir E.
Finch, G. H.
Fitzpatrick, hn. B. E. B.
Fitzwilliam, hon. C. W. W.
Fletcher, Sir H.
Floyer, J.
Folkestone, Viscount
Forester, C. T. W.
Fowler, R. N.
Fremantle, hon. T. F.
Galway, Viscount
Gardner, R. Richardson-
Garnier, J. C.
Gibson, rt. hon. E.
Giffard, Sir H. S.
Goldney, Sir G.
Gorst, J. E.
Grantham, W.
Greene, E.
Greer, T.
Gregory, G. B.
Halsey, T. F.
Hamilton, Lord C. J.
Hamilton, I. T.
Hamilton, right hon. Lord G.
Harcourt, E. W.
Harvey, Sir R. B.
Hay, rt. hon. Admiral Sir J. C. D.
Hicks, E.
Hildyard, T. B. T.
Hill, Lord A. W.
Hill, A. S.
Holland, Sir H. T.
Home, Captain D. M.
Hope, rt. hn. A. J. B. B.
Hubbard, rt. hon. J.
Kennard, Col. E. H.
Kennaway, Sir J. H.
Knight, F. W.
Knightley, Sir R.
Lacon, Sir E. H. K.
Lawrance, J. C.
Lawrence, Sir T.
Lechmere, Sir E. A. H.
Lee, Major V.
Legh, W. J.
Leighton, S.
Lennox, Lord H. G.

Lever, J. O.
Lewis, C. E.
Lewisham, Viscount
Lindsay, Col. R. L.
Litton, E. F.
Loder, R.
Long, W. H.
Lopes, Sir M.
Lowther, hon. W.
Lyons, R. D.
Mac Iver, D.
Mackintosh, C. F.
Macnaghten, E.
M'Coan, J. C.
M'Garel-Hogg, Sir J.
Makins, Colonel W. T.
Manners, rt. hn. Lord J.
Master, T. W. C.
Maxwell, Sir H. E.
Miles, Sir P. J. W.
Monckton, F.
Morgan, hon. F.
Morley, S.
Moss, R.
Mowbray, rt. hn. Sir J. R.
Mulholland, J.
Murray, C. J.
Newdegate, C. N.
Newport, Viscount
Nicholson, W. N.
North, Colonel J. S.
Northcote, H. S.
Northcote, rt. hn. Sir S. H.
Norwood, C. M.
O'Connor, A.
O'Donnell, F. H.
O'Donoghue, The
Onslow, D.
O'Shea, W. H.
Paget, R. H.
Palliser, Sir W.
Pell, A.
Pemberton, E. L.
Percy, Earl
Phipps, C. N. P.
Phipps, P.
Plunket, rt. hon. D. R.
Powell, W.
Price, Captain G. E.
Puleston, J. H.
Rankin, J.
Rendlesham, Lord
Repton, G. W.
Ridley, Sir M. W
Ritchie, C. T.
Rodwell, B. B. H.
Rolls, J. A.
Ross, A. H.
Ross, C. C.
Round, J.
St. Aubyn, W. M.
Sandon, Viscount
Schreiber, C.
Sclater-Booth, rt. hn. G.
Scott, Lord H.
Scott, M. D.
Selwin-Ibbetson, Sir H. J.
Severne, J. E.
Smith, rt. hon. W. H.
Stanhope, hon. E.
Stewart, J.
Storer, G.
Sykes, C.
Taylor, rt. hn. Col. T. E.
Thomson, H.
Thornhill, T.
Tollemache, H. J.
Tollemache, hon. W. F.
Tottenham, A. L.
Tyler, Sir H. W.
Walrond, Col. W. H.
Walter, J.
Warton, C. N.
Watkin, Sir E. W.
Watney, J.
Whitley, E.
Whitworth, B.
Williams, O. L. C.
Wilmot, Sir J. E.
Wortley, C. B. Stuart-
Wroughton, P.
Wynn, Sir W. W.
Yorke, J. R.

TELLERS.

Crichton, Viscount
Winn, R.

NOES.

Acland, Sir T. D.
Agnew, W.
Anderson, G.
Armitstead, G.
Arnold, A.
Balfour, Sir G.
Balfour, J. B.
Balfour, J. S.
Barclay, J. W.
Baring, Viscount
Barran, J.
Beaumont, W. B.
Biddulph, M.
Bolton, J. C.
Brand, H. R.
Briggs, W. E.
Bright, J. (Manchester)
Bright, rt. hon. J.
Broadhurst, H.
Bruce, hon. R. P.
Bryce, J.
Burt, T.
Buszard, M. C.
Butt, C. P.
Caine, W. S.
Campbell, Sir G.
Campbell-Bannerman, H.
Carbutt, E. H.
Causton, R. K.
Cavendish, Lord E.
Cavendish, Lord F. C.
Chamberlain, rt. hn. J.
Cheetham, J. F.
Childers, rt. hn. H. C. E.
Chitty, J. W.
Clifford, C. C.
Cohen, A.
Collings, J.
Commins, A.
Cotes, C. C.
Courtney, L. H.
Cowen, J.
Craig, W. Y.
Cross, J. K.
Cunliffe, Sir R. A.
Davies, R.
Dilke, A. W.
Dilke, Sir C. W.
Dillwyn, L. L.
Dodson, rt. hon. J. G.
Duff, rt. hon. M. E. G.
Edwards, H.
Edwards, P.
Farquharson, Dr. R.
Fawcett, rt. hon. H.
Ferguson, R.
Firth, J. F. B.
Fitzmaurice, Lord E.
Fitzwilliam, hn. H. W.
Flower, C.
Foljambe, C. G. S.
Foljambe, F. J. S.
Forster, Sir C.
Forster, rt. hon. W. E.
Fort, R.
Fowler, W.
Fry, L.
Fry, T.
Gladstone, rt. hn. W. E.
Gladstone, H. J.
Gladstone, W. H.
Gourley, E. T.
Gower, hon. E. F. L.
Grant, A.
Grant, D.
Grenfell, W. H.
Grosvenor, Lord R.
Hamilton, J. G. C.
Harcourt, rt. hon. Sir W. G. V. V.
Hardcastle, J. A.
Hartington, Marq. of
Hastings, G. W.
Hayter, Sir A. D.
Henderson, F.
Heneage, E.
Herschell, Sir F.
Hibbert, J. T.
Hollond, J. R.
Holms, J.
Hopwood, C. H.
Howard, J.
Hutchinson, J. D.
Illingworth, A.
Inderwick, F. A.
James, C.
James, Sir H.
James, W. H.
Johnson, W. M.
Kensington, Lord
Kingscote, Col. R. N. F.
Laing, S.
Lambton, hon. F. W.
Law, rt. hon. H.
Laycock, R.
Leake, R.
Leatham, W. H.
Lefevre, right hon. G. J. S.
Lloyd, M.
Macdonald, A.
Mackie, R. B.
Macliver, P. S.
M'Arthur, A.
M'Laren, C. B. B.
M'Laren, J.
M'Minnies, J. G.
Magniac, C.
Mappin, F. T.
Marriott, W. T.
Martin, R. B.
Mason, H.
Mellor, J. W.
Milbank, F. A.
Monk, C. J.
Moreton, Lord
Morgan, rt. hn. G. O.
Morley, A.
Mundella, rt. hon. A. J.
Nolan, Major J. P.
O'Gorman Mahon, Col. The
O'Shaughnessy, R.
Paget, T. T.
Palmer, G.
Pease, A.
Pease, J. W.
Peddie, J. D.
Pender, J.
Potter, T. B.
Pulley, J.
Ralli, P.
Ramsden, Sir J.
Rathbone, W.
Reid, R. T.
Richard, H.
Richardson, T.
Roberts, J.
Rogers, J. E. T.
Russell, G. W. E.
Rylands, P.
Seely, C. (Lincoln)
Sheridan, H. B.
Shield, H.
Simon, Serjeant J.
Smith, E.
Spencer, hon. C. R.
Stanley, hon. E. L.
Stansfeld, rt. hon. J.
Story-Maskelyne, M. H.
Summers, W.
Taylor, P. A.
Thompson, T. C.
Tillett, J. H.
Tracy, hon. F. S. A. Hanbury-
Trevelyan, G. O.
Villiers, rt. hon. C. P.
Waterlow, Sir S.
Whalley, G. H.
Whitbread, S.
Williams, B. T.
Williams, S. C. E.
Williamson, S.
Willis, W.
Willyams, E. W. B.
Wilson, I.
Wodehouse, E. R.
Woodall, W.

TELLERS.

Davey, H.
Labouchere, H.

Main Question put.

Resolved, That, having regard to the Resolution of this House of the 22nd June 1880, and to the Reports and Proceedings of the two Select Committees therein referred to, Mr. Bradlaugh be not permitted to go through the form of repeating the words of the Oath prescribed by the Statutes, 29 Vic. c. 19, and 31 and 32 Vic. c. 72.

Mr. Bradlaugh again came to the Table to take and subscribe the Oath, when——

Mr. SPEAKER: Mr. Bradlaugh, you have now heard the Resolution to which the House has come, and I have now to direct you to withdraw.

Mr. BRADLAUGH: The Resolution of the House is against the law, and I respectfully decline to follow your direction, Sir. I refuse to withdraw. I am here commanded by my constituents.

Mr. SPEAKER: Mr. Bradlaugh having declined to withdraw, I have now to ask the House for instructions as to the course I shall pursue. As the House knows, without the Orders of this House I have no authority to exercise force to compel Mr. Bradlaugh to withdraw.

Mr. Gladstone was hereon called upon by hon. Members; who not rising in answer to the appeal——

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE said: Sir, I rise to put a question to the Prime Minister, the Leader of the House. I wish to ask him whether, the House having adopted by a majority a certain Resolution, and you, Sir, having in conformity with that Resolution called upon the hon. Member for Northampton to withdraw, and the hon. Member having declined to withdraw, and you having appealed to the House for instructions and authority in the matter—I wish to ask the Leader of the House whether he intends to give any counsel to the House, or to propose to the House any course for the purpose of maintaining the authority of the House and the Chair?

Mr. GLADSTONE: My answer is this—that the appeal of the Speaker of the House to the House is an appeal to the majority of the House, and as I voted in the minority, I desire to leave it to the majority to carry out its will. [Sir William Harcourt: Hear, hear!]

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: There is a difficulty in seeing what so very much amuses the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department. The Prime Minister, the Leader of this House, having, as I consider in this matter, abdicated the proper functions of his position, and having called upon those who voted in the majority upon a particular question to act in a matter in which the honour, as I consider, of the whole House is at stake, I will not refuse to accept the responsibility; but I do it under protest, and I do it maintaining that it is inconsistent with the traditions of the House and with the duty of Leader of the House that he should refuse to deal with a Resolution adopted by the House. Sir, under the circumstances, and in conformity with your appeal to the House for authority, I will now move that you do order that Mr. Bradlaugh do now withdraw.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Bradlaugh do now withdraw."—(*Sir Stafford Northcote.*)

Mr. GLADSTONE: The right hon. Gentleman has been obliging enough to read me a lecture upon the duties of the Leader of this House, and I, with great respect to him, am not prepared to accept any lessons from him upon that subject. It appears to be his opinion that it is the duty of the Leader of the House, upon an occasion when he has had the misfortune to differ in opinion from the majority of the House, to immediately take into his hands the guidance of that majority, and to make a proposal in prosecution of the vote that majority has carried. I challenge the right hon. Gentleman to produce to me an authority, either in principle or in practice, in support of that proposition. In my experience it has not been so; I have not known the obligation enforced upon Leaders of this House, or acknowledged by them. It is their duty as Members of this House, quite irrespective of the question whether the House has concurred with them or otherwise, at all times to consider and advise with the House in matters contributing to the dignity and advantage of the House. I do not think it to the dignity or advantage of the House that the Leader of the House should, upon an occasion of this kind, or upon the carrying of a vote of this kind, immediately take out of the hands of the majority the direction of their course. Without in the slightest degree attempting to embarrass or impede the course taken in this matter, we shall leave the direction to those who are responsible for what has been done, and not take upon ourselves the responsibility which does not belong to us, by taking the matter out of their hands.

MR. SPEAKER: The Question is that Mr. Bradlaugh do now withdraw.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I merely wish to point out what will be the consequence of this Resolution being passed. Mr. Bradlaugh, as I stated when I was addressing the House this evening, from his point of view, considers that he has got a perfect right to take the Oath; that he has derived that right from his election, and that the House has got no legal right to prevent him. As Mr. Bradlaugh stated, of course the House is stronger than any single individual; but I would point out to you, Sir, what will occur if this Resolution is passed. Mr. Bradlaugh, very naturally, will conceive it his duty to return, and return again, in order to fulfil what he believes to be, not only his right, but his duty. If this Resolution is passed the House will have to face this position—that it will be necessary to retain Mr. Bradlaugh in prison during the whole time this House sits, and this Parliament exists. I want the House to understand that I shall take the liberty of asking the House to divide on this Motion; and I would suggest to the right hon. Gentleman, who in this case is leading the House, that he should carry out his own views to their proper end. He should carry them out logically, as Mr. Bradlaugh intends to carry out his, by moving, not that Mr. Bradlaugh be ordered to withdraw, but that he be committed to prison. We should then see how long the right hon. Gentleman would lead the House; we should then see how long the right hon. Gentleman would keep in prison a Gentleman who had been elected a Member of the House, and who had got as good a right to a seat in the House as the right hon. Gentleman himself. Sir, last year, the right hon. Gentleman moved that Mr. Bradlaugh be committed to prison, and hon. Gentlemen opposite jeered and smiled; but they did not jeer and smile when the right hon. Gentleman had to come down the next day, and very humbly move that Mr. Bradlaugh be released. I tell the right hon. Gentleman that when he tries to set himself against the whole constituencies of the country, though he may have a subservient majority behind him, he may find that he is not the first man who has set himself against the nation.

MR. JOHN BRIGHT: The hon. Gentleman who has just addressed the House knows my views upon the general question that has occupied the attention of the House to-night; but after the decision of the House which has been arrived at—after full and sufficient debate —I would recommend that he should take my advice, and not ask the House to decide upon the question which has been submitted by the right hon. Gentleman opposite. The decision of the House is clear. I do not know what proceedings will be taken; but clearly, whatever they are, they will not be furthered in any way by having another division. I hope the hon. Member will not ask the House to take another division.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

MR. SPEAKER: I have now to call upon you, Mr. Bradlaugh, to withdraw, in obedience to the Order of the House.

MR. BRADLAUGH: I am here in the performance of my legal right and my legal duty, and I respectfully refuse to obey the Order of this House as being against the law.

MR. SPEAKER: I have now to call on the Sergeant-at-Arms to remove Mr. Bradlaugh below the Bar.

MR. BRADLAUGH: I trust that the House will not resort simply to force, because I am here in the performance of my legal right. I admit the right of the House to deal with me after I have taken my seat.

The Sergeant-at-Arms having placed his hand on Mr. Bradlaugh——

MR. BRADLAUGH: I shall retire to the Bar only to return again when I get there——

And he was then conducted by the Sergeant-at-Arms below the Bar.

MR. BRADLAUGH, however, again advancing within the Bar, said—I have come here to take and subscribe the Oath according to law. I refuse to submit to an illegal Order of the House.

The Sergeant-at-Arms conducted Mr. Bradlaugh below the Bar, when the hon. Gentleman again advanced within the Bar; but was prevented from reaching the Table by the Sergeant-at-Arms, assisted by the Messengers of the House.

MR. BRADLAUGH: I refuse to submit to the Order of the House, and physical force must be used to remove me. I am ready to submit to any legal Order of the House; but the House has no right to expel me by mere force. I am ready, I say, to submit to an Order of the House dealing with me otherwise. I ask the House not to put me to the indignity of a physical struggle with the Messengers of the House. The House has an authority to which I will submit. [*Cries of* "Order!"]

MR. SPEAKER: I must again take the pleasure of the House, after the course which has been taken by Mr. Bradlaugh. Mr. Bradlaugh has been ordered by the House to withdraw, and he refuses to comply with that Order. He still claims his right to take the Oath as a Member of the House, and I must throw myself upon the House for instructions. [*Cries of* "Gladstone!" "Northcote!" *and* "Leader of the House!"]

After a pause——

MR. STAVELEY HILL: I rise to ask you, Sir, whether—the House having agreed upon a Motion that Mr. Bradlaugh be ordered to withdraw—the Order has not been given by the House already that Mr. Bradlaugh be removed?

MR. SPEAKER: The Order agreed to by the House, and given by the Chair, was that Mr. Bradlaugh should withdraw below the Bar. The Order goes no further than that.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I gather, Mr. Speaker, from what you have said, and from what has taken place, that you are of opinion that the proper course now to be taken is that some hon. Member should submit to the House a Motion for committing Mr. Bradlaugh to the custody of the Sergeant-at-Arms, in consequence of his disobedience to your Orders. I did, last year, upon a similar occasion, make such a Motion. I should not, in the least, shrink from the responsibility of making such a Motion now, but for one consideration, and that is, that I consider it would be hard to move for the committal of Mr. Bradlaugh when his conduct appears to be encouraged and supported by Her Majesty's Government.

MR. GLADSTONE: I shall be prepared to give my authority to any proposal, within the bounds of usage and precedence, which would lead to the maintenance of the authority of the House; and I do not think that a prolongation of the present scene is desirable. I think any decision agreed to on the part of the majority of this House should be carried into effect. I shall be prepared, therefore, to support any proposal made on the part of the majority of the House for securing the order and regularity of our proceedings. I must, however, say that I entirely repel and repudiate the statement made by the right hon. Gentleman opposite, that the conduct of Mr. Bradlaugh has been sanctioned or encouraged by the Government. The Government have neither spoken a single word, nor done an act of any kind, to encourage the proceedings of Mr. Bradlaugh. They have, undoubtedly, expressed an opinion that it is unwise for the House to interfere with Mr. Bradlaugh in his claim to take the Oath. They have expressed that opinion in a regular manner, by speech and by vote; and, having done so, they acquiesced in the decision and Order of the House that Mr. Bradlaugh should withdraw. Indeed, a Member of Her Majesty's Government rose for the purpose of requesting that that Order should be assented to without a division. Under these circumstances, I certainly consider that the accusation of the right hon. Gentleman is groundless and wanton, and it is for the right hon. Gentleman to state the facts upon which a charge so grave has been founded.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: This is rather an irregular discussion; but after the appeal which has been made to me, I am bound to explain on what grounds I made the charge I did. I am of opinion that the words I used were perfectly justified; and I will tell the House under what circumstances, and with what meaning, I used those words. A question of the highest importance has been under discussion throughout the evening. A certain course was proposed by me, and it was opposed by an independent Member selected from the other side of the House. The Amendment proposed by that hon. and learned Gentleman was supported both by the speeches and votes of Her Majesty's Government. According to the terms of that Amendment, the course which I proposed the House should take was disagreed to, on the ground that it was not expedient. The terms of the Resolution were not challenged even by the words of the Amendment. The Motion which I had originally made was adopted, after a full discussion, by a majority of the House. It is new to me to be told that I have a majority at my back. The Resolution, however, was carried by a substantial majority in a House in which, I beg to say, we (the Opposition) do not usually command a majority. That having been the case, it became a Resolution of the House. The hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) challenges, not the policy of the Resolution—which was challenged by the hon. and learned Member for Christchurch (Mr. H. Davey) and the Members of Her Majesty's Government—but he challenges the power of the House. [Mr. LABOUCHERE: The legal power of the House.] Well, the legal power of the House; and the legal power of the House, we contend, has been already admitted, even by the Committee on which the hon. and learned Attorney General sat last year, and in which he moved words to the effect that the House had the power to do what they had already done. The matter now stands thus—the House has chosen, against the advice of the Government, to adopt a certain Resolution; which, although deemed, perhaps, by the Government to be unwise and imprudent, they were unable to say, and they did not say, was beyond the legal power of the House. That having been admitted, it is challenged by the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) on the ground that the House has exceeded its legal powers; and, so far as we can see, the hon. Member stands alone against the whole body of the House in that contention. [*Cries of* "No!"] At any rate, it was not called in question by the Amendment. Then, this is the position of the House. Having, against the advice of the Government, no doubt, adopted the Resolution which we say it had the legal power to adopt, it empowers the Speaker, as the presiding authority, to give effect to that Resolution by an Order. An individual Member of the House challenges its power; but the Speaker gives the Order—not on the authority and responsibility of the Government, or of an individual Member, but of the House. The Order was thus given, and when it was given, I should imagine that there was nothing more entirely the duty of the Whole House than to see that the authority given to the Speaker was properly supported. I should have thought that, under the circumstances, it would not have been altogether unworthy of the Leader of the House to have given some counsel to the Member, whose cause he has, in a certain sense, been fighting, and to prevent him from placing himself in a position which appears to be a false position. The hon. Member (Mr. Bradlaugh) has done everything that, it seems to me, honour required on his side. He has had the decision of the House given against him, and I can conceive no more proper course for him to take than to say that he would look for some future alteration of the Law or Rules of the House, and to act as others have done in similar cases—namely, to remain Member for Northampton, although he finds himself excluded from taking his seat in the House. Or, if he thinks he has any legal right in the matter, let him take the steps he may think competent to try that legal right. It is not for me to give advice. These are only suggestions which might have occurred to me if I had been the Leader of the House; but if the Leader of the House does not find himself in a position to give advice of that sort, the House has a right to expect from him some movement in support of the authority of the Chair. Last year, as I am reminded, I took upon myself the responsibility of moving the committal of the hon. Member; but on the following day I moved his release. If it were necessary to take the same step now, I should do precisely the same thing to-morrow; but I do not consider myself bound to take upon myself and to exercise the right or duty which does not, I conceive, properly belong to an independent Member. While the Government maintain the attitude they do by silence, and by abstaining from that which would be their natural course of action, supporting the Chair, I do not think that I am called upon to relieve them from their duty.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I presume the House would wish me to speak again, although I have already spoken. The right hon. Gentleman has now stated the grounds upon which he founds his action; and he says the conduct of Mr. Bradlaugh was sanctioned and encouraged by the Government. It is for the House to decide whether that charge is justified. How stands the case upon which he has made that most scandalous charge? He says the Leader of the House had refused to support the Chair. The Leader of the House had spoken on the Motion, and having some respect for the Forms of the House, he did not think it his duty to rise again. In consequence, I begged my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster to rise on my behalf and in my place, and request the hon. Member for Northampton not to oppose the Motion which had been made; and it is under these circumstances that I am charged by the right hon. Gentleman with having sanctioned Mr. Bradlaugh's action. I conceive that, under those circumstances, I am justified in saying that nothing could be more groundless than that charge. So far as I understand the matter, another charge now arises—namely, that the Motion for the withdrawal of Mr. Bradlaugh having been carried, and the Motion not having been obeyed, the right hon. Gentleman appears to entertain the opinion that it is my duty to suggest the mode by which he and those who have voted with him are to carry out their Motion. I will not take any step until it appears to me that I can do so with advantage to the House. Whether I am wrong or not, it is surely an excess beyond the bounds of reason and fairness, as they are commonly understood in this House, to say that because I do not think it my duty to find the means and expedient by which the majority may give effect to their Motion, I am giving sanction and encouragement to the conduct of Mr. Bradlaugh. I give no such encouragement or sanction to his conduct, and the charge is utterly groundless.

Mr. J. COWEN observed, that the House found itself somewhat in a dilemma. It had arrived at a Resolution which neither the Leader of the House nor of the Opposition seemed disposed to carry to a conclusion. Under the circumstances, he thought the House had better settle the matter. A night's consideration might soften asperities and clear the atmosphere. Mr. Bradlaugh had been ordered to withdraw, and he had obeyed the Order—at least, he had withdrawn behind the Bar. To-morrow, possibly, some means might be found of getting out of the difficulty. Under any circumstances, he thought the prolongation of that scene did not tend to the dignity of the House, and, as the best solution of an unpleasant dilemma, he would move that the House should adjourn.

Mr. RYLANDS seconded the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. Joseph Cowen.*)

Mr. O'DONNELL regarded the Motion as a most proper one, and said, that in the present state of the House, and seeing the strife and confusion which seemed to reign in the policy of the Government, he thought it would be well that not only the House, but in a special degree the Government, should have an opportunity of considering the situation. The House had been witnesses on several occasions of the expulsion of hon. Members. In those expulsions almost uniformly the Head of the Government had taken an active and energetic, if not a distinguished, part. It was true that on those occasions the Gentlemen whom he helped so energetically to expel were not habitual supporters of his policy. He (Mr. O'Donnell) hoped that among the questions which the right hon. Gentleman would take into consideration, and which he would be able to expound with more lucidity than he had displayed that evening, would be the question whether or not he declined to have anything to do with the repression of offences against the authority of the House when committed by supporters of the Government, and would only remember that he was Leader of the House when there was an opportunity of bringing the penalties of the House on the heads of some independent Member or a frequent opponent of his policy. He (Mr. O'Donnell) had heard the right hon. Gentleman speak with emphasis on the necessity of maintaining the authority of the House and of the Chair; and he did hope that when next the right hon. Gentleman rose, he would be able to explain the apparent discrepancy between his conduct that night and on former occasions.

Mr. ONSLOW reminded the Head of the Government that the question of the majority was over. The present question had been unanimously agreed upon—namely, that the hon. Member for Northampton should withdraw; and he appealed to the hon. Member opposite, what was the use of an adjournment when the House was agreed that the hon. Member should withdraw? If the House adjourned now they would be in exactly the same position when they met again, because the Prime Minister would refuse again to interfere. The hon. Member would have been told to withdraw, and no Resolution would be before the House. The question was not one of a majority—that question was over—and when an hon. Member had been ordered to withdraw and had refused to obey, it was the duty of the Head of the Government, in order to preserve law and order in the House, to show what course the House should take in order to restore the order and dignity of the House.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (BERWICK-UPON-TWEED, &C.) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Hibbert, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to the Boroughs of Berwick-upon-Tweed and Cheltenham, the Urban Sanitary District of Folkestone, the Rural Sanitary District of the Hendon Union, the Metropolis, and the Local Government Districts of Redruth, Swinton, and Willington, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Hibbert and Mr. Dodson.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (POOR LAW) (NO. 2) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Hibbert, Bill to confirm certain Orders of the Local Government Board under the provisions of "The Divided Parishes and Poor Law Amendment Act, 1876," as amended and extended by "The Poor Law Act, 1879," relating to the Parishes of Bromsgrove, Claines, Doddeshill, Grafton Manor, Hadsor, Hampton Lovett, Hanbury, Hinlip, In-Liberties, Pelhams Lands, Saint Andrew, Saint Nicholas, Saint Peter, Salwarpe, Swineshead, Upton Warren, and Warndon, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Hibbert and Mr. Dodson.

House adjourned at a quarter after Two o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 27th April, 1881.

MINUTES.] — Select Committee—House of Commons (Accommodation), *appointed.*

Private Bill—*Select Committee*—Cheshire Salt Districts Compensation*, Mr. Hastings *discharged,* Mr. Story-Maskelyne *added.*

Public Bills—*Resolution in Committee—Ordered—First Reading*—Beer* [142].

Resolution [April 25] *reported—Ordered—First Reading*—India Office Auditor (Superannuation)* [140].

Ordered—First Reading—Solway Fisheries (Scotland)* [141].

First Reading—Local Government Provisional Orders (Berwick-upon-Tweed, &c.)* [138]; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 2)* [139].

Second Reading—Church Boards [14], *debate adjourned.*

PARLIAMENTARY OATH (MR. BRADLAUGH).

Mr. BRADLAUGH (advancing to the Table): I am here, Sir, to take and subscribe the Oath required by Law on my return as duly elected Member for Northampton. [*Cries of* "Order!"]

Mr. SPEAKER: I must point out to the hon. Gentleman, with reference to this matter, that the House having already ordered Mr. Bradlaugh to withdraw, it is my duty to see that the Order of the House is carried out. I must therefore call upon the hon. Member to withdraw below the Bar. If the hon. Gentleman refuses to obey that Order, and does not withdraw below the Bar, he must be removed from the Table by the Sergeant-at-Arms.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (amid *cries of* "Order!" *and* "Withdraw!"): Sir, I most respectfully submit that, though the House has the right to vacate my seat or to expel me, the House has no right to interfere with me in the performance of my duty as a duly elected Member, by resorting to physical force. Therefore, unless compelled by physical force, I cannot withdraw.

Mr. SPEAKER: Sergeant-at-Arms.

The Sergeant-at-Arms came to the Table.

Mr. SPEAKER: You will remove Mr. Bradlaugh below the Bar.

Whereupon, the Sergeant having placed his hand on Mr. Bradlaugh, he was conducted below the Bar.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: Sir, the scene which occurred last night was a very unusual one, and the House will not desire that it should be renewed; therefore, I would now venture to ask this question of the Prime Minister—whether he will give facilities to enable me to introduce a Bill upon this subject, and which was printed last year, but not introduced because of opposition to it? I would ask whether he will give me facilities for introducing such a Bill, of course on the understanding that progress would be made with it, and the decision of the House taken upon it, and during that time Mr. Bradlaugh would not interfere in any manner with the Resolution which was passed last night by the House? ["No, no!"] I venture to ask this question.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I sympathize, Sir, to the full with the hon. Member for Northampton in his desire to avoid a repetition of the scene of last night. To some extent it appears to me, Sir, that your decision from the Chair, carrying out as it does, and giving effect to, the Vote of last night, has defended the House from a repetition of that scene in its fulness. Whether that defence is sufficient is another matter, upon which I will not now enter. I also feel that the difficulty of those who object to the Resolution which they think debars a duly-elected Member of Parliament from the exercise of a legal right, would be very greatly mitigated were it practicable for any Member of this House to suggest or to give effect to any alternative method of proceeding—were it possible, for example, to devise a mode whereby the title of Mr. Bradlaugh might be brought under the judgment of a Court of Law; or were it possible, as my hon. Friend has just asked, to enter seriously upon the work of legislation. But, Sir, when the hon. Member asks me if I will give facilities for the introduction of a Bill for the purpose of dealing with this case, he places me under a very grave difficulty. It is quite true, Sir, that many Members from Ireland do not appear to have considered, from the course they took last night, that they were involving the House in embarrassments that might—[*Cries of* "Oh, oh!" *and cheers.*]—I am sorry to be under the necessity of recommencing my sentence. It is quite true that many Members representing Irish constituencies do not appear to be under the belief that the course they took last night may involve the House in embarrassments seriously obstructing the progress of Business in which they feel a deep interest. I think, however, they will agree with me that I cannot on that account be at all influenced in my view as to the urgency of the Irish Business now before the House. The question put to me by the senior Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere)—and put in so proper a manner and so good a spirit—virtually amounts to this. Am I prepared to do one of two things—am I prepared to ask the House to vote a state of "urgency" for Public Business; am I prepared to give facilities for the progress of a particular Bill? I will not now endeavour to explain the modes by which, as far as I can see, facilities might be given, or at what cost; but I am not at the present moment, in the absence of any assurance as to the disposition of the House, prepared to make a request to that effect to the House. The giving of the facilities asked for really means the postponement of the Irish Land Bill; and I am not, Sir, prepared to postpone that Bill, much as I feel the great embarrassment in which the House, as it appears to me, is now placed by the vote of last night, and gladly as I would do anything which lay within my reasonable discretion for the purpose of relieving, not myself, but the House, from its present position. Looking, however, to the gravity of the issues involved in the Irish Land Bill and the condition of Ireland, I am not prepared to give up either of the two days which are alone at the disposal of the Government for the conduct of their Business and for the progress of the Irish Land Bill. I am sorry to say, therefore, that so far as I am concerned, I do not see any way of giving facilities for the Bill of my hon. Friend, if it is to be an opposed Bill. The question is really one which should be put to others rather than to me. ["Hear, hear!" *and* "No, no!"] I mean whether the Bill is to be an opposed Bill. ["Oh, oh!" *and laughter.*] I know not what is gained by that mode of meeting an inquiry; and, if the House will permit me to say so, I think that since yesterday evening at 9 o'clock there has been a little too much manifestation of that kind. If the Bill be not an opposed Bill, then, undoubtedly, the question might assume a different aspect. As far as I am concerned, I am not aware at the present moment of the mode in which it is proposed to proceed with it. All I can say is that Her Majesty's Government would be greatly disposed to give the most favourable consideration and to waive every secondary difficulty or objection for the purpose of promoting a solution of this matter. Sir, as I have said, the question whether the Bill is to be opposed is one for others rather than for me. If the Bill is to be opposed and discussed with a continual importation of the invidious topics and of the heated tempers which are too apt to accompany the discussion of a question of this kind, then I regret to say that it is not within my power to give the facilities for which my hon. Friend asks.

Mr. A. M. SULLIVAN: Sir, I am sure the House will indulge me for a few moments if I offer one word of expostulation with the Prime Minister. He has, I consider, made a most unkind attack on the Irish Members. I quite sympathize with the spirit of the remarks made to the House by its Leader; but I assure him that there is not a Member in the House who feels the necessity of avoiding irritation and levity in dealing with the grave issues before it more than I do; but I do complain very strongly that he has singled out one, and only one, section of this House, not only to cast upon it special blame, but shall I say—did he mean it?—to lay before us almost a menace with regard to a measure of the greatest importance to our country—the Irish Land Bill—which is now before Parliament. The right hon. Gentleman has complained, that for the sake of the grand material benefits which might accrue to our country from the measure if passed, that we did not play fast-and-loose with our consciences last night.

Mr. SPEAKER: I must point out to the hon. and learned Member that the House is now engaged in that portion of the Business of the House which relates to Questions put to Ministers of the Crown. A Question has been put by the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) to the First Minister of the Crown, and the right hon. Gentleman has answered that Question. The hon. Member is not now putting a Question to any Minister of the Crown, but he is entering into a matter of argument and debate; and he is, therefore, out of Order.

Mr. GLADSTONE: Perhaps, Sir, I may be allowed to say that nothing could be further from my intention. [*A laugh.*] I think that that is a most unusual way of receiving an explanation. Nothing, I say, was further from my intention than to make an attack on the Irish Members for the part they took in the proceedings of last night; and so far from desiring to convey to them a menace not to proceed with the Irish Land Bill, I desired, as far as my power of expression enabled me, to convey the contrary. What I said was in effect that I felt that the part taken by them could not in the slightest degree absolve me from my duty of leaving no stone unturned for the purpose of prosecuting that Bill.

Mr. RYLANDS: I wish, Sir, to put a question to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon, who is, I believe, in possession of the Bill introduced last Session by the hon. Member for Northampton, and which is simply to give Members the option of taking the Oath or of making a Declaration. [*Cries of* "Order!"] I am anxious simply to explain the terms of a question which I am about to put to the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition. [*Renewed cries of* "Order!"]

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member, as I understand, proposes to put to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon a question with reference to a Bill which is not before the House.

An hon. Member: Which has not yet been brought in.

Mr. SPEAKER: Then if the Bill, in regard to which he desires to put a question, is not regularly before the House, the course proposed to be taken by the hon. Member is still more irregular. It is not competent to put the question which the hon. Member proposes to ask.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: Sir, in order to put myself strictly within the Rules of the House, I will conclude with a Motion. The Bill which I have already put into the hands of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon was introduced by me last year. I sought to introduce it this year, but I have been prevented from doing so. It is, in the simplest mode possible, to give every Gentleman—["Order!"]—who is duly elected——

Mr. GORST: I rise to Order. I wish to know whether the hon. Member is in Order, on a Motion for adjournment, in discussing the terms of a Bill which is not yet in the possession of the House?

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Northampton has announced his intention of concluding with a Motion; and I am bound to say that he is entitled to proceed, until, in the course of his address to the House, he may make use of any observations which are out of Order. As far as the hon. Member has gone at present, I have not observed that he has committed any breach of Order.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: The Bill in question will give, in the simplest mode possible, an alternative choice to any duly elected Member of affirming or taking the Oath of Allegiance. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon said last night that the proper course for Mr. Bradlaugh to take after the Resolution that had been passed was to wait outside until the House had legislated on the matter. I wish, therefore, to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, in the face of that statement, he would undertake not to place any impediment in the way of the Bill being discussed—[*Cries of* "Order!"]—and decide upon one way or other, provided that Her Majesty's Government gave facilities for its progress? [*Renewed cries of* "Order!"]

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is now, under cover of a Motion for adjournment, proposing to put a question to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) in reference to a Bill which is not before the House, and which I have already stated to be irregular. It is not made regular by the Motion for adjournment.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: Then, Sir, I will only venture to express a hope that we shall hear from some Gentleman exercising authority over hon. Members at the other side of the House that, provided these facilities are given, an expectation may be entertained that the Bill will be discussed within a reasonable time, in order that a vote may be taken upon it. At the same time, I would call the attention of the House to the fact that a question of Privilege can be brought forward every night. ["Oh, oh!"] It is, therefore, obvious that the position of Mr. Bradlaugh is an exceedingly difficult one. As was stated last night, Mr. Bradlaugh, rightly or wrongly, is under the impression that he has a valid right to tender himself at the Table to take the Oath from the fact of his having been duly elected. In that view he has been duly supported not only by the Legal Advisers of the Government, but by the principal Legal Adviser of hon. Gentlemen opposite. It cannot, therefore, be said that Mr. Bradlaugh entertains a wild opinion on the subject. For my part, I wish to avoid the difficulties that have been raised; and I propose, most respectfully towards Mr. Bradlaugh, that, if it is understood that the Bill will be allowed to be brought forward and a vote taken upon it within a reasonable time, my hon. Colleague will not till that is done come forward again to the Table; and I am sure that no hon. Gentleman on this side of the House will exercise his right of bringing the matter forward as a matter of Privilege. I beg to move the adjournment of the House.

Mr. RYLANDS: Sir, I beg to second that Motion. I think that, as a matter of convenience, it is right that the adjournment of the House should be moved, in order that we may ascertain what course the Front Bench on the other side propose to take with regard to the difficult question before us. The right hon. Gentleman (Sir Stafford Northcote) has begun now a policy of silence and of "masterly inactivity;" but he cannot get rid of the responsibility which rests upon him in consequence of having induced the House to pass the Resolution of last night, which placed us in a position of very great difficulty. The right hon. Gentleman must have known, when he moved his Resolution, what course he intended to take if it were carried. I take it for granted that he had reason to believe that it would be carried; and surely, with his experience, he ought not to propose a Resolution which must lead to serious consequences, and then quietly sit down in his place with a placid countenance, and take no further trouble in the matter. It is impossible for him to take the course he did take, without at the same time undertaking the responsibility of guiding the House with regard to the future course which the House may have to take. The right hon. Gentleman did take the first step last night, in moving that Mr. Bradlaugh should withdraw, and he must have known that there was one other Motion which must follow—namely, that Mr. Bradlaugh, having disobeyed the Orders of the House, should be committed to prison. But the right hon. Gentleman shrinks from taking the second step. I remember the painful position in which the Leader of the Opposition placed himself last Session. Having induced the House to fall into a pitfall in this same matter, he went a step further than the step he ventured to take in a trembling manner last night. He then proposed that Mr. Bradlaugh should be committed, and that was the logical conclusion of the matter. But what happened? He came down to the House next day in a sort of white sheet of repentance, asking the House to let Mr. Bradlaugh out again. I am surprised that the Leader of the Opposition, having had the humiliating experience of last Session, should have ventured on taking the step he did last night, unless he was prepared also to take the subsequent step. I hope that the Government will not be induced to take action in order to carry out the policy of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon. Believing, as the Government do, that Mr. Bradlaugh, having been duly elected, has a legal right to come to the Table of the House and to take the Oath, I trust that nothing will induce them to inflict pains and penalties upon him because he seeks to perform his duty in accordance with his legal right. Then, if the Government will not do it, what position are we in? Is the right hon. Gentleman (Sir Stafford Northcote) to be allowed to get us into this position, and then to pursue a policy of "masterly inactivity?" If the majority of the House, on the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman, should decide to commit Mr. Bradlaugh to prison, what next? Would the right hon. Gentleman, as he has done before, move for his release? Mr. Bradlaugh would then make his appearance again. How long is that to go on? There are only two courses open to the right hon. Gentleman. One is to commit Mr. Bradlaugh, and keep him in custody as a public scandal and disgrace to this House during the Session. Is the right hon. Gentleman prepared to do that? If he is not, the only course is to take up this matter as sensible and reasonable men. Do you want to keep out of the House of Commons Atheists? If you want to ostracize persons who do not believe in the existence of a God, then your present arrangements will not have that effect. The only alternative, therefore, is that we should have some intimation from the other side whether they will join with the Government in passing a Bill of Relief. If the right hon. Member for North Devon gave some assurance to that effect, the whole thing might be arranged in a manner satisfactory both to the House and the country.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. Labouchere.*)

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I am sorry to interpose at this particular moment, as my hon. Friend the Member for North Warwickshire (Mr. Newdegate) is anxious to address the House; but I feel it necessary to address a few words to the House in answer to the appeal which has been so directly made to me. I noticed the observation of the Prime Minister a few minutes ago, in which he said, regrettingly, that there had been, since 9 o'clock last night, much more heat in the conduct of Business in this House than was at all desirable. I entirely agree with him in the remark; but I should really like to ask from what quarter the heat has come? I do not think that either the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. John Bright) last night, or that of the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) this morning, was at all calculated to conduce to the frame of mind in which we ought to approach a question of such great gravity as that now before us. In bringing this matter before the House, I wish also to say that last night I endeavoured most carefully to avoid saying anything of an excited or heating character, and the Motion which I made was entirely in the nature of a defensive Resolution; for I wished to defend the House against a particular course which the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) proposed to take, and against which I thought it absolutely necessary, in the interests of what I consider religion and decency, to interpose in order to prevent an oath, or the form of an oath, being taken in a manner which would be offensive to those who regard the Oath as being something solemn. Beyond that, I did not propose to take any responsibility upon myself. At the same time, I am aware that, in taking that step, I incurred a certain amount of responsibility, and I did not take it without having carefully considered the responsibility I then assumed. What I wish to say with regard to this whole matter is, that I consider from the beginning of this transaction, which I date back to the 3rd May last year, when the hon. Member first came before the House and asked to affirm, the House has been left without guidance on the part of those who we might expect ought to have guided it. When I say that the House has been left without guidance, I do not mean to say that on no occasion proposals were made by the Government. They have made various proposals; but I must say that the proposals made have been in the nature of suggestions which, if accepted, would have had the effect of shifting from their own shoulders the responsibility of dealing, or proposing to deal, with a question of the utmost importance. They referred the matter to a Committee, and upon its Report they induced the House to pass a Resolution which shifted the responsibility on a Court of Law; and now again, having had the matter so clearly before them for so long a time as the whole of last Session and since the commencement of the present one, they are still without any counsel that they can give to the House if we refuse to accept one particular proposal which is made, and which conscientiously we cannot and will not accept. Without entering into any other question whatever, I say for myself, and I believe I speak the feeling of a very large body of Gentlemen on both sides of the House, we will not tolerate any proceeding, if we can prevent it, in which we shall be made parties to the profanation of an Oath. There then remain two questions still to be considered. One is—How is the order and decency of the proceedings of this House to be maintained? The other is—In what way are the admitted difficulties raised by the return of the hon. Member for Northampton to be dealt with, as to the mode in which Gentlemen elected to sit as Members should be allowed to take their seats? We have a right to have these two questions separately considered. With regard to one of these—namely, the actual solution which ought to be sought for out of the difficulty; that is a matter as to which we ought to be, in the first place, informed as to the views and intentions of the Government, who should also make some proposal to the House concerning it. With regard to the other question—-the maintenance of order and decency in the House; I must say, with still more confidence, that, in my view, it is the duty of the Leader of the House to support the authority of the Speaker, who is the presiding Officer of the House, in maintaining the Orders of the House. I have acted under circumstances of very great pressure, and in the absence of any readiness to act on the part of those who ought to have acted, in order to get the House out of a difficulty. I think, as I have said, that proceedings of this kind ought to be initiated by the Leader of the House, for it is not becoming that such proposals should come from anyone else; but I say, also, that, at the same time, I am always willing to make any proposals where it is absolutely shown that the Leader of the House declines to exercise the functions which properly belong to him. But I still hope that if, by misfortune, it should become necessary to take any steps to vindicate the order and decency of the proceedings of the House, the Government will adopt the course that it is proper they should take. In answer to the appeal which has been addressed to me by the sitting Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), I can only say—although I do not admit that such a question ought to be put in the circumstances, for it is quite irregular, and quite impossible that I should answer it—that if a measure of the kind to which he alludes is introduced, I shall give it my careful consideration, whether it be introduced by the Government or by any private Member of the House. But I object entirely to the manner in which that proposal is made; and, whether it were good or bad, I could take no notice of it, if it were introduced, as was hinted by the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), in the nature of a bargain. The bargain into which he proposes we should enter is that we should undertake to facilitate, as far as we can, the discussion of a particular measure altering the forms of admission to this House, on condition of which he undertakes that his hon. Colleague will abstain—from what? From disturbing the proceedings of the House. That is a bargain into which, from my view, the House cannot consistently enter; and, in saying that, I hope I may say also that I trust Mr. Bradlaugh will be sufficiently well advised to abstain from anything of an indecorous nature, which can only lead to proceedings of a kind calculated to bring scandal on the proceedings of this House. I cannot, however, anticipate that he will undertake to interrupt by indecorous proceedings the Business of the House further than he has felt it necessary to do in order distinctly to raise the challenge he has put forward in asserting his right to a seat in the House. He has asserted his claim, and the House has distinctly pronounced its resolution to adhere to its decision that he cannot be permitted to take the Oath. I admit the great difficulty and the painful nature of the case, and I am most anxious to co-operate in any way I properly can to conduct it to a satisfactory conclusion; but I cannot assent to a solution in the nature of a bargain such as has been suggested by the sitting Member for Northampton; and I hope that we may be spared any more of the excited speeches which have been spoken, and those charges which have been so freely bandied about, but the imputing of which, in my view, is both un-Parliamentary and improper. We have acted in this matter from a sense of duty. We have regretted exceedingly the necessity under which we found ourselves placed; but by that action I, for one, and I believe many others, intend to stand.

Mr. JOHN BRIGHT: I would like to make an observation or two, rather by way of suggesting a course that the House might possibly take, and I do it entirely at my own instance, and not after any consultation with my right hon. Friend who is sitting near me (Mr. Gladstone). I judge from the speech of the right hon. Baronet (Sir Stafford Northcote) last night, in moving his Resolution, and I judge more clearly, if possible, from what he has said now, that his objection to the admission of Mr. Bradlaugh to this House is that he objects to what he calls the profanation of the Oath; I judge, also, that he does not object to Mr. Bradlaugh because of Mr. Bradlaugh's opinions upon a religious question. He laments those opinions, as I trust the great majority of us do; but what he objects to is Mr. Bradlaugh coming here and going through a ceremony which, to those who think it necessary, is, no doubt, one of great solemnity, but which, under the circumstances, can have no solemnity for Mr. Bradlaugh. That is the point. Then, if that difficulty be got rid of, as it clearly would be got rid of if Mr. Bradlaugh were allowed to affirm, our course would be clear; but he cannot affirm by reason of the state of law, as decided recently by two Courts of Justice. If that be really the case, if hon. Gentlemen who sit behind the right hon. Baronet and hold his opinions do not go beyond that, I think that our mode of arriving at a settlement of this question must be obvious, and that its attainment need not be far distant. Because, if the right hon. Gentleman and his Friends are not resolved to keep Mr. Bradlaugh out of the House on account of his religious opinions, but are merely resolved that they will not let him in through this door of the Oath, because that would be a profanation of a ceremony they hold to be one of great solemnity, then, surely, they would not object that some other door might be opened by which he might be admitted. You do not propose by the processes you are now going through to change Mr. Bradlaugh's religious convictions, or his absence of religious opinion. You do not propose to convert him at all; but you say you do not want, on account of those opinions, to keep him out. We have good reason to know that there are even now hon. Members of this House, and that there have, and will be hereafter, men whose opinions would not differ from those of Mr. Bradlaugh, who can come here through one of the two portals—either through the Oath, or through affirming; therefore, if the right hon. Gentleman has fairly and honestly expressed, which I do not doubt, his own views, and if, as Leader of the Party, the views of the 200 Gentlemen by whom he was followed last night, and who agreed with him, then surely it would not be difficult, by the general consent of the House, to pass a very simple measure to show—not that we approve of Mr. Bradlaugh's opinions, not that we rejoice to have men amongst us of his opinions, but that we have regard to the determination of the constituencies of the country with regard to the selection of their Members, and that we are anxious to interpose no improper obstacle—no obstacle at all, indeed—to their taking their seats in this House; and if a measure of the nature which has been indicated by the sitting Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), which would give to all Members of the House who come to the Table the option of taking the Oath, or making a Declaration such as the one as I am permitted to make — then the whole question would be settled, and hon. Gentleman would not be outraged by having the Oath made what they call a farce; Mr. Bradlaugh would not be debarred on account of his religious opinions in coming into the House where religious disabilities have been so long supposed to have been abolished, and the electors of Northampton would be fairly represented, according to the choice which they made at their recent election. Now, the right hon. Gentleman says that the House gets no guidance from my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister. How is it possible for my right hon. Friend to guide or steer in a directly opposite course to that which he wished to travel? How is it possible that he can induce 200 or 300 Gentlemen on this side of the House to approve of a policy, and to give their votes in favour of a course, which they are bound to condemn? We are as honest in the condemnation of your course as you may be honest in the condemnation of ours. But, surely, it cannot be expected that the Leader of the House, overborne as he was by a majority last night, can be expected at once, with enthusiasm, to take up a policy he condemns, and to insist upon a course the end of which he cannot see? The fact is, the course which has been pursued has brought the House into a difficulty that the wisest men in the House, whether it be on that side of the House or this, find it very irksome to decide what advice should be given. But it is found to be a matter of extreme difficulty what advice should be given. I could have advised you last night how to keep out of a deep hole; but if you have plunged into it, I find it very difficult to tell you how to get out of it. I think the right hon. Gentleman is hardly fair when he says there are rather urgent expectations that my right hon. Friend should give advice and strengthen the Party opposite in the course which has brought us to this disaster, and which may lead to even greater troubles. The right hon. Gentleman would not allow the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) to ask him a question, as he said it was impossible to answer it; but I now put it to him in the difficulty in which we are placed—and he has as much of that difficulty on his shoulders as any man man in the House—that being in this difficulty, from which I see no way of extrication, I put it to the right hon. Gentleman whether he can, on behalf of his Friends and himself, give any expectation that a general support would be given, or that there would be an absence of opposition to a measure so simple as that of which I have indicated? There remains the question of time, to which my right hon. Friend referred, and especially with reference to the Land Law (Ireland) Bill. We know that this House can be the worst in the world for getting any work through; so, at the same time, we know there is no other Body in the world that can get through more work in a little time, if there be a general unanimity to get the work done. I have no doubt whatever, if the right hon. Gentleman would accept this proposition—which is made in all seriousness and friendliness, and without wishing to condemn anybody for anything that has been done, because I am quite sure hon. Gentlemen opposite—that is to say, the bulk of them—are as perfectly honest in the course they have taken as I am in the course which I have taken; but we all find ourselves in this difficulty, and if he would accept it I am sure that it would give intense satisfaction; and I think it would be a great advantage to the House if the right hon. Gentleman could bring himself to give us some hope or expectation that he would allow us to escape by the door which I have endeavoured to open for us.

Mr. J. G. HUBBARD asked the House to look calmly at the circumstances of the case. If Mr. Bradlaugh had come down to the House without antecedents, nobody would have prevented him taking the Oath; but he had himself created his disability. He had openly said that the Oath which he was about to take would have no binding effect upon his conscience—that he denied the existence of the God whom he invoked. Could any man patiently endure to hear his father reviled or his Queen insulted? And how could the Members of this House do other than resent and resist indignities offered to their Heavenly Father and their Eternal King? The English mind revolted against such conduct as that. The Business of the House was being interrupted by an intruder. The proper course would be to remove that intruder by force if he resisted. Where was the Minister for the Home Department? Had he not got a large body of police at his service? And of what use were the police, or the officers of the House, if they could not protect the House from the intrusion of people who had no business there. It was absurd to talk of their having no alternative between admitting Mr. Bradlaugh, and having to submit to disorder at his hands. The right hon. Gentleman in the Chair was not supported last night as he ought to have been by the Government in his endeavours to carry out the Orders of the House; and it was now the duty of the House to see that the Speaker's orders were obeyed.

Mr. WALTER: As one who voted last night in the majority, and who would do so again, if necessary, any number of times, I wish to make one or two observations in reference to the suggestion that has been thrown out by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. John Bright). I am exceedingly glad that the right hon. Gentleman addressed the House in the tone he adopted, and I hope he will forgive me for saying that, in my opinion, if last night he had made the speech we have heard this afternoon, a great deal of the heated temper which has been shown in this discussion would have been prevented. For my own part, I have never entertained any objection to Mr. Bradlaugh making an Affirmation, believing, as I did—until my mind was disabused by the decision of the Courts of Law—that the Affirmation in his case would be valid. I believed, also, that any Affirmation he might make would be a full indication of his sincerity and trustworthiness as a Member of this House. I thought, as I have said, that Mr. Bradlaugh might be allowed to enter this House by the portal of an Affirmation; but I have always felt that he ought not to be allowed to enter through the door whose passage involved the taking of an Oath. For this reason, I could not sit in my place and see the hon. Member perform the solemn act of kissing the Bible and invoking the name of the Almighty to help him, when I knew—and it is idle to say that the House has not official cognizance of the fact—that the hon. Gentleman belongs to a sect which does not believe in the existence of God. As a Member of this House, I say that if I assented to and witnessed the taking of the Oath by Mr. Bradlaugh, I should have my share in the responsibility—I do not scruple to say the guilt—of permitting a sacred rite to be abused. I do not, as I have said, object to Mr. Bradlaugh taking his seat; but I hold that he should do so after making an Affirmation — beyond that, I entirely decline to go. The question is one of conscience, and I deny the right of anyone to charge those who hold the views I do with either bigotry or intolerance. I think, however, the House would do well to attempt some such moderate and judicious solution as has been suggested by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, for I cannot admit that, in my view, the matter is nearly so critical as it has been represented to be.

Mr. GLADSTONE: When my hon. Friend who has just sat down (Mr. Walter) commenced his speech by stating that he was about to offer some observations in reply to the remarks of my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. John Bright), I must own that I had some feelings of alarm; but I experienced a feeling of relief when, as he proceeded, I found that my hon. Friend, although he earnestly and strongly supported the Resolution last night, was one of those who agree with the proposal of my right hon. Friend. That is so much to our gain, and all that is desired on this part of the subject is that other hon. Members should, if they can, act in a similar sense, and show that many of those, probably the bulk of them—although I have no means of knowing the fact—who voted in the majority last night are prepared to accept the suggestion of my right hon. Friend. With regard to the proposal of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), what I wish to say is that, provided there was a general disposition on the part of the House to entertain that suggestion, it might be possible on the part of the Government to make a proposal to the House on the subject—yet, at the same time, not interfering with the limited duration of time which we can give the Land Law (Ireland) Bill—a proposal to test the feeling of the House upon the suggestion of the hon. Member for Northampton by the aid of one or more Morning Sittings on Tuesdays and Fridays. ["Oh, oh!"] Hon. Gentlemen mock at that suggestion—I do not know who they are, but I only hope they are prepared with something better to propose. Therefore, my first object is to come forward and frankly recognize the speech just heard. The simple suggestion I would make is embodied in the words—"*Si non, his utere mecum.*" I do not hesitate to say that I feel no scruple whatever in supporting the Order of the House and in removing the difficulty stated by the right hon. Gentleman opposite; but I will go a little further than that, and say with respect to the difficulty in which I find myself, that it would be entirely removed if the House was about seriously to consider the proposed piece of legislation. As to the notion of making a bargain, I state frankly, and wish to state it broadly and plainly, if once the House is ready to entertain and pass its judgment upon the proposal of the sitting Member for Northampton, it is entitled to take at once the most stringent measure it may think fit to adopt for preventing any kind of interference with the order of its Business; and I do not hesitate to say that I for one should be perfectly free to support, or even to propose, such measures if they became necessary. I have now done all that it lies in my power to do, from my point of view, and I think some responsibility is laid upon the Members of the majority last night to state whether they are prepared to proceed upon such a basis as that I have indicated, and if not to state upon what basis they are prepared to proceed. Following that, I am bound to refer to the general statement which proceeded from the Leader of the Opposition. I had much pleasure in admitting last night that the right hon. Gentleman's speech on the Main Question was one to which no reasonable man could take exception, and I have equal pleasure in making the same observation in regard to his remarks to-day. I do not say we have come to an agreement; but we have made some approximation by the admission of certain general principles. It has been said that we should not tempt hon. Members to play fast and loose with their consciences, and the right hon. Gentleman has stated that this being a matter of conscience, he is bound to take a particular course. Nobody is more willing to admit the truth of that proposition, to assert it more broadly, or adhere to it more tenaciously than I am. I am glad that the Leader of the Opposition has confessed that the question is a great, a difficult, and a delicate one. But if it be a great, a difficult, and a delicate one, can we not put aside all manifestations of feeling in discussing it, all language that may tend to complicate it? If the subject is one of such difficulty and delicacy, surely the debate on it should be conducted with careful temper, and the fullest and fairest hearing should be accorded to everybody. In such a case, on each side of the House there should be a disposition to recognize the nature of the difficulty felt by the other side of the House. I entirely concur in the main defensive statement of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, in which he says that he and his Friends will be no parties to the profanation of an oath. I entirely concur with him that none of us ought to be parties to such a proceeding. But here we come to a point on which we part company. Our contention is, that by permitting Mr. Bradlaugh to take the Oath without our interference we do not in any sense make ourselves parties to that profanation. ["Oh, oh!"] It seems that even now there is a difficulty in restraining manifestations of feeling in discussing the question. You differ from me; but it is an issue with regard to which each side can give credit to the other side for the integrity and sincerity of their motives. While, however, I have not the least objection to make to the tone of the statements of the right hon. Gentleman so temperately made last evening and to-day, he said that from the beginning the Government had left the House without guidance. I entirely and absolutely dispute the accuracy of that statement. From the first we have taken a firm stand on this question. When the matter originally came before us last year we took the line of advising the House to send it before a Committee in order that the whole subject might be investigated, and we afterwards took the line of advising the House not to interfere to prevent Mr. Bradlaugh from taking the Oath. This year we have taken the same course, and we again advised the House not to interfere in the matter. Is not that guiding, or attempting to guide, the House on the subject? Did we not, in taking that course, attempt to recommend a distinct course to the House? What can Her Majesty's Government, what can the Leader of the House, do more than recommend the adoption of a particular course of action—one which, in their opinion, is in accordance with prudence and duty, and to many of us even absolute legality? Surely, that is a sufficient answer to the charge that has been brought against Her Majesty's Government that they have left the House without guidance in this matter. I should now wish to address a few words to the House on the subject of the duty of the Leader of this House on such an occasion as the present, and I will endeavour to do so in a spirit and a temper to which no one can object. As I understand the right hon. Gentleman opposite, it appears to be his contention that when once a Resolution has been passed by a majority of this House, it becomes the duty of the Leader of the House, whatever may be his opinion as to the legality of the particular Resolution, to propose the measures necessary to give effect to that Resolution. If that be the right hon. Gentleman's contention, I am bound to say that I entirely differ from it. I do not hesitate to say that no such duty as is suggested by the right hon. Gentleman is imposed upon the Leader of this House, either by law, or by Parliamentary usage. I have in my mind a multitude of instances in which the Leaders of this House and the Government of the day have declined to adopt measures to give effect to Resolutions of this House relating to matters of mere policy of which they disapproved. But the question before us now is not one of policy; and I agree with the right hon. Gentleman opposite, and with others who sit on that side of the House, that the question now raised is higher than one of mere policy with them, and it is also one far higher than one of mere policy with us. If, on their side, they do not wish to be parties to the profanation of an oath, how can they ask me to be a party to measures to give effect to and to undertake to be their guide and adviser in carrying out a Resolution to which I am opposed, and against which I have warned the House on every ground of competency and prudence—a Resolution which I believe will debar a subject of Her Majesty, duly elected and duly returned to this House, from the exercise of his legal right? Looking at the matter from the false point of view of hon. Members opposite, I think that they are right and consistent in what they have done, and that they have no choice but to go forward in the course they have entered upon; but, holding the opinion I do, the same thing is not so with me; and if I consider the Resolution to be a Resolution to debar a duly elected Member of this House from performing the acts necessary to enable him to fulfil his duties to his constituents, am I not under a similar compulsion, and would it not be a violation of duty on my part, would it not be the grossest inconsistency, to recommend measures for the House to give effect to the Resolution? Then, it is asked by the right hon. Gentlemen opposite—Do I intend to support the authority of the Chair? I entirely agree with the right hon. Gentleman opposite that I ought to support the authority of the Chair, and I place no limit to the doctrine that the Chair should be supported on all occasions. But what is supporting the authority of the Chair? I apprehend that supporting the authority of the Chair means sustaining the Speaker by every means in our power in the exercise of the authority which the House has committed to his hands. The contention of the right hon. Gentleman, however, goes far beyond that, and he now calls upon us to take the initiative in granting fresh powers to the Speaker. This is not a question of supporting the authority of the Chair in the exercise of the authority committed to the Speaker, because as you, Mr. Speaker, pointed out last night, your power in the matter was exhausted, and you said that you must refer to the House for fresh instructions. It was not, therefore, a question of supporting you in the exercise of the authority that you already possessed, but of giving you fresh authority, and of who should propose to give you that authority, that we had to determine. As to the Motion of supporting the authority of the Chair, I accede in the fullest manner to the doctrine that may be laid down respecting that; but it is different with Motions that are for creating fresh powers, and respecting which I, as Leader of the House, recommended a different course. In these circumstances, therefore, I must say that the initiative in giving you fresh power to give effect to the Resolution lay, not with the Leader of the House, who disapproved of the Resolution, but with the Leaders of the majority who last night approved of that Resolution, and carried it against the advice of Her Majesty's Government. Sometimes the question arises to my mind whether or not it is a question of legality. But I see distinctly, and when the Leader of the House distinctly sees in the course that has been taken a prejudice to legal right, surely it is strange that he should be thought the proper person to devise means to give effect to a Resolution to which he has so strongly objected. Having said that, I hope not offensively, and without having attempted to infringe upon or restrict the rights of others which we claim for ourselves, I may further say that I will make this admission—it is not my part, and it would be an offence to offer needless and obstructive opposition. Last night we began and prevented a division on the Main Question, and we then went on by endeavouring to prevent a division on the Question that arose in the subsequent discussion, and we shall continue to act in that spirit. Although, in cases of necessity, if I saw my opportunity, I might desire to give practical effect to that opinion, yet I fully agree, on the other hand, it would be an unworthy course, or an undignified course, for me to endeavour to defeat that Resolution by obstructing the natural and consistent measures which might be proposed, though we do not feel called upon to take the initiative in carrying it into effect. We shall do nothing calculated indirectly to defeat that Resolution, and we are prepared to give fair and favourable consideration to any proposals for carrying it into effect. I trust that there will be no misunderstanding as to what I have said on this point. I am under the impression I cannot see my way, even were the expectations of this House much more definite and of a more distinct character than I believe them to be—I cannot see my way to be the author of a policy and take the initiative of a Motion which is to prevent the exercise of a legal right. I must conclude, as I began, by remarking that, as no proposition of a really remedial character has been proposed on this subject except by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, I hope that his suggestion will be accepted in a reasonable and in a favourable manner. After all, no merely defensive measures which we may take against Mr. Bradlaugh will ever settle this question; and, although I can assure hon. Members opposite that I regard those measures in no carping spirit, still I hope that we may arrive at some method of bringing this controversy to an immediate issue. It is something of a more positive character which you must have. Some hon. Gentlemen say that persons not believing in the existence of a God ought not to sit in this House. I recognize that as an opinion upon which hon. Gentlemen have a right to obtain the judgment of the House. But do let us endeavour to arrive at some method of carrying on this controversy to a legitimate issue; because, depend upon it, whatever we may say as to the duties of the Leader of the House or of the Opposition, however one may cast the blame one way or the other, the correct judgment of the public will be governed by a disposition not to enter into the minutiæ of the matter, but, I am afraid, will pass some disparaging sentence on the entire proceedings and upon the entire body of the House for having got ourselves into a position of difficulty, and then, instead of welcoming any practical proposal for extricating ourselves from it, having found no better expedient in the circumstances than the miserable one of resorting to mutual recriminations.

Mr. NEWDEGATE said, that it was Mr. Bradlaugh's avowed intention to compel the House either to allow him to take the Oath, or to commit him to custody. He held in his hand a copy of *The National Reformer*, which contained the last speech of Mr. Bradlaugh, delivered by him before he came to the Table to be sworn, in which he said—

> "I should be unworthy of the constituency which has elected me—I should be unworthy of the confidence which the people have placed in me, if I did not take my seat. I shall go to the Table of the House and ask to be allowed to take the Oath. If my right to take my seat is discussed, I must of course withdraw, while the subject is under debate; but except for that purpose I shall not leave the Table except for my seat—I shall not leave the Table except to take my seat, unless the House thinks it right to exercise its power, which it undoubtedly has, of committing me to gaol."

He (Mr. Newdegate) wished to place those statements before the House, because he had very recent information that Mr. Bradlaugh regarded them as constituting a pledge to his constituency. Therefore, Mr. Bradlaugh came to the House with the avowed object of defying the authority of the Speaker. In the event, therefore, of there being any hesitation shown by the Leaders of the House on either side, to move that Mr. Bradlaugh be given into custody, he should himself, in the event of Mr. Bradlaugh continuing to set the Speaker's authority at defiance, make that Motion. He desired to say a word or two on the subject of the duty of the Leader of that House. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister might have objected to the course which the House adopted in 1880, and also last night, on both of which occasions the right hon. Gentleman represented the minority. The right hon. Gentleman now said, practically, that unless he had a perpetual majority, he had a right to abdicate his functions as Leader of the House for the preservation of its order and dignity, and that whenever a Resolution was passed that he did not approve of, no one had a right to call upon him to support the authority of the Chair. In the whole course of his (Mr. Newdegate's) long experience in Parliament he had never before heard any Leader of the House assume to himself such a position. The right hon. Gentleman had thrown the duty upon the House of having, when its nominal Leader abdicated his functions, to take steps for maintaining its own order and dignity. He had known Prime Ministers resign; but he had never known them, while they remained in Office, abandon their duty of supporting the authority of the Chair. He regretted that after his long political career the right hon. Gentleman should refuse to exercise his functions as Leader of that House, except upon the condition of his being supported by an abject majority. If such were the case, the right hon. Gentleman desired to assume the position of the infallible Pope of that House. He sincerely trusted that the right hon. Gentleman would not set so bad an example to those who were to follow him.

Mr. NORWOOD, in explaining that he had felt bound to support the Leader of the Opposition on this question last night as a matter of conscience, fully endorsed what had fallen from the hon. Member for Berkshire (Mr. Walter), who had stated in a clear and forcible manner the motives which had induced him and others on that side of the House to take that course. He had a strong conscientious scruple that he should have been a party to a profanation had he assented in any shape to Mr. Bradlaugh taking the Oath, in the sanctity of which that Gentleman did not believe. Having said that, however, he must add that he had no objection to Mr. Bradlaugh being admitted to the House through a fair and open portal that should be provided for him and for others in his position. In his opinion, the course which the Government should have taken last year was to have brought in a Bill to meet the case of those who had a conscientious objection to take an oath, and thus have saved the House from the difficulty in which it was now placed. He had spoken on this subject to hon. Members on that side of the House who had abstained from voting last night, and he was satisfied that they would hail with pleasure any solution of the difficulty such as that which had been proposed by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. He must again thank the hon. Member for Berkshire for having so ably vindicated the motives of hon. Members on that side of the House in taking a course which was opposed to the view of the Government on this question.

MR. CHAPLIN remarked, that the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister had said that he had carefully examined the position in which the Members of the Opposition were placed; but, with all respect for the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman, he thought that he was mistaken in the view of that position which would be taken by the public. No one on that side of the House asked, wished, or expected that the right hon. Gentleman would adopt their policy. The question of policy was determined by the vote of the House last night; but what they did desire and expect was that, the question of policy having been determined, the right hon. Gentleman, as the Leader of the House, would have maintained the authority of the Chair. The right hon. Gentleman had admitted that it was his duty to support the authority of the Chair. But how did he propose to support it? By remaining in his seat when it was defied and set at naught by the hon. Member for Northampton. When the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon rose last night and appealed to the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, and asked him whether he meant to vindicate the authority of the Chair or not, the latter remained silent in his place. The right hon. Gentleman was a master of argument, sophistry, and of what he called minutiæ; but he (Mr. Chaplin) thought that in this case the public would disregard minutiæ, and, in judging of the matter, would look at the broad fact that the authority of the Chair had been openly defied, and that the Prime Minister, while the Leader of the House, had declined to exercise his duty and to vindicate that authority, merely because he did not happen to agree with a Resolution of the House which had been carried by an ample majority. This was the age of bargains. The hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) had proposed a bargain between the House and Mr. Bradlaugh; and now another bargain was offered to the House by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. John Bright), by which he undertook, in the event of all parties agreeing to accept a certain Bil, to introduce the measure immediately. [MR. JOHN BRIGHT: I never said any such thing.] Then, if the right hon. Gentleman did not mean that, what did he mean? He (Mr. Chaplin) hoped that no one on that side of the House would be so unwise as to commit themselves to the acceptance of a measure which they had not yet even seen. Personally, he had no objection to Mr. Bradlaugh. During the time that Gentleman had occupied a seat in that House he had acted with ability and with great moderation, and into his private belief it certainly did not come within the province of that House to inquire. The House, however, could not shut their eyes to the fact that it stood upon their records that Mr. Bradlaugh had openly avowed that an oath would have no binding effect upon his conscience. That House professed, at all events for the present, to be a religious Assembly. They commenced their proceedings each day with prayer, and invoked the aid of the Supreme Being to guide them in their labours. In these circumstances, therefore, they ought not to be taunted with bigotry because they declined to sit by while the Oath was profaned. What was to be the nature of the proposed Bill? As far as he could understand, it would simply enable Mr. Bradlaugh to take his seat, and if so, it was opposed to the Resolution passed last evening. He certainly declined at present to pronounce any opinion in reference to such a measure. This was a very grave matter; and as long as the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister held the position he now occupied he certainly ought to vindicate the dignity of the Chair whenever it was assailed.

MR. WHITBREAD thought the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster had thrown some light on the ultimate solution of this difficulty. In the course of the debate on this subject last year, Mr. Bradlaugh's right to affirm was contested on purely legal grounds, and it was said that the remedy lay in special legislation. Unless, therefore, it was desired to maintain the Oath as a religious test, he failed to see what evil consequences could result from adopting the practical suggestion of the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. The right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) had said that if Mr. Bradlaugh had come up in the ordinary course of things in the crowd of Members to take his seat he might have passed, and they would not have noticed him. The hon. and learned Member for Launceston (Sir Hardinge Giffard) put the same thing, not quite so strongly. Because Mr. Bradlaugh had brought the case openly before them, they said he had himself to thank for the consequences. He could quite understand hon. Members declining to be party to what would to them appear like an act of blasphemy. If the real ground of the objection of Members on the opposite Benches to Mr. Bradlaugh's taking the Oath was that they could not consent to what seemed to them a profanation of the Oath, then he thought it might reasonably be expected that the difficulty in which the House now found itself would be met by the suggestion that had been made that a Bill should be passed to enable Members to affirm or take the Oath as they pleased. He felt sure the Opposition would find it very difficult to object to such a Bill. They could not object to it without going back to find totally different grounds from those which they had already stated. He gave them full credit for their motives throughout this controversy. There was a certain number of Gentlemen opposite who felt themselves justified in taking any steps to keep out men of Mr. Bradlaugh's opinions. He did not expect that such hon. Members would assent to the passing of such a measure; but many of those Gentlemen were very strong guardians of the law and order of the House, and, having recorded their opinions by a division, he was justified in hoping they would not think it right for them to offer a Parliamentary obstruction to the passing of such a measure.

LORD JOHN MANNERS said, he was a little surprised at the speech of the hon. Member who had just sat down, who had so large an experience of the proceedings of the House. That speech might more properly have been made on the second reading of a Bill which was not yet before them. The whole object of the hon. Gentleman, as far as he could gather from his speech, was to obtain from some Members of the House whom he named, and others whom he did not name, some justification for the course they might or might not pursue when that Bill came before the House for consideration. Such a course on the part of so old and experienced a Member as the hon. Member, did seem to him to be a very curious mode of approaching this question. He (Lord John Manners) had had some experience in that House, and he must very respectfully decline to enter in any degree whatever upon a consideration of that measure on the present occasion. If he wanted any further proof of the extreme inconvenience of the course suggested by the hon. Member, he should find it in some of the speeches to which they had already listened. His hon. Friend the Member for Berkshire (Mr. Walter) had made a most admirable speech in tone and temper. He said he should be very willing indeed to see any measure passed which would admit Mr. Bradlaugh and Gentlemen who thought with Mr. Bradlaugh to affirm at the Table. He made that speech having heard the proposal thrown out by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. He (Lord John Manners) listened to that proposal of the right hon. Gentleman, and if he misunderstood it, the right hon. Gentleman would, no doubt, kindly correct him. But what was that proposal as he understood it? Why, that Mr. Bradlaugh and others similarly situated should be permitted at their option either to take the Oath or affirm. But such persons might then, by a new Statute to be passed by both Houses of Parliament and to be Royally assented to, do the very thing which last night the House of Commons decided they should not do. He maintained that in speaking thus he was not prejudging any measure, which, on the authority of Her Majesty's Government, might be submitted to the consideration of the House; but was only pointing out to the very experienced Member for Bedford the immense inconvenience of expecting Gentlemen in that House to rise in a haphazard manner and say they would support or oppose a Bill of the character indicated by the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. It seemed most ungracious to say a syllable after the conciliatory tone in which the Prime Minister had addressed the House on that proposal upon the speech he had made. But while he wished to restrict his observations to the very narrowest possible compass, and while he tendered his thanks to the right hon. Gentleman for the whole tone and temper of that speech, the conduct of the right hon. Gentleman as Leader of the House, so far as that speech referred to the Order and dignity and decency of the proceedings of the House, was in derogation of what the right hon. Gentleman had said. The right hon. Gentleman drew a broad distinction between a question of policy and a question of Order. What they were discussing in the early hours of this morning, and what they were discussing now, was a question of the Order and dignity and decency of the proceedings of the House, and not of policy. When his right hon. Friend spoke early this morning as to the duty of the right hon. Gentleman as Leader of the House to maintain the dignity and Rules of the House, his right hon. Friend was referring to a proposal to which the right hon. Gentleman was a party, and to which he had given his own adherence. The question was put that Mr. Bradlaugh be ordered to withdraw, and the right hon. Gentleman himself assented to that Motion. And then it was that his right hon. Friend asked the right hon. Gentleman, as Leader of the House, to maintain the Order and dignity of their proceedings. The right hon. Gentleman declined to do so; and, therefore, while he raised no objection against the general principle laid down by the right hon. Gentleman, he said that it was wide of the mark in this particular instance, and that the condemnation passed by his right hon. Friend on the conduct of the right hon. Gentleman as Leader of the House remained intact and unimpaired.

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD acknowledged the moderate tone in which hon. Members opposite had expressed their views, and admitted that it would be unbecoming on his part, and especially in their absence, to instruct them how to proceed in a matter of so much difficulty and delicacy. The noble Lord who had just addressed the House appeared to fall into a considerable error. The right hon. Member for North Devon disclaimed the intention of imposing any religious test; but the noble Lord, in the speech he had just made, distinctly proclaimed his intention of retaining the Oath as a religious test. Hon. Members on that (the Liberal) side of the House believed that Mr. Bradlaugh had a legal right to take the Oath at the Table; but they denied that they were in any degree parties to the position in which the House was now placed. His hon. Friend the Member for North Warwickshire (Mr. Newdegate), who was always courageous, logical, and consistent, pledged himself, if Mr. Bradlaugh presented himself at the Table again and again, as the hon. Gentleman held it his duty to do, that he would move Mr. Bradlaugh's committal to prison. Now, that was a perfectly logical and consistent course. It was the course taken by the right hon. Member for North Devon last year; and if the right hon. Gentleman had followed the same line of consistency, it was the course he would have taken on this occasion. The noble Lord the Member for North Leicestershire (Lord John Manners) accused the Prime Minister of declining to assist in maintaining and supporting the authority of the Chair. The Prime Minister did, in the most conspicuous manner, all that it was possible for him to do to support the authority of the Chair. When a Motion was made on the other side of the House that Mr. Bradlaugh should withdraw, the right hon. Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright) at once rose and deprecated any opposition to that Motion from the Liberal Benches; and the authority of the Chair was supported without a single dissentient voice. The transaction was then concluded on the removal of Mr. Bradlaugh, and so was concluded, completely and entirely, the question of the authority of the Chair. Mr. Bradlaugh was not after that Motion contumacious. At this moment he was not acting in any degree contumaciously, and there was no question of his contumacy before the House. His hon. Friend the Member for North Warwickshire had now, with his usual consistency and courage, intimated that he was prepared to bring forward what he (Mr. Arthur Arnold) believed would be the solution of the question. His hon. Friend had told the House—and he was a man who never deviated from his word—that he would move the committal of Mr. Bradlaugh to prison if Mr. Bradlaugh presented himself again at that Table. He knew that his hon. Friend would keep his word, because he knew the man. He would suggest that the personal character which the question assumed, which would remain so long as the Bill continued in the hands of the senior Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), would be removed by the Attorney General or Solicitor General taking charge of the measure. No one desired to keep Mr. Bradlaugh in prison for the next five or six years; and the course he (Mr. Arthur Arnold) now suggested would, he thought, provide an early solution of the difficulty. But seeing the position the Government had taken up, seeing that in their opinion Mr. Bradlaugh had a legal right to take the Oath, and the House had no right to prevent him, the Government would be committing a grave error if they consented to undertake the responsibility of legislation, having regard to the state of important Public Business, until they had received from the other side of the House an intimation that their proposals would receive a fair and impartial support.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER said, there was one remark which he felt it his duty to make in consequence of what had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to propose that a Bill should be brought into the House by the senior Member for Northampton, or, as was suggested by the hon. Member who had just sat down, by the Law Officers of the Crown, to enable Mr. Bradlaugh to make an Affirmation instead of an Oath. He should feel it his solemn duty in every division which might take place to give his vote against such a Bill. He did not think he should be entirely alone. He should not offer any unnecessary opposition to such a Bill being brought in; but whatever course was taken by his right hon. Friends below him he would feel it his duty to oppose it by every means in his power —to go into the Lobby on every occasion against it.

Mr. Serjeant SIMON congratulated the House on the calmness which had succeeded the warmth of the previous night. He pointed out the difference of position occupied by Mr. Bradlaugh now as compared with that which he occupied on former occasions and when before the Courts of Law. The Courts of Law having decided against Mr. Bradlaugh's right to affirm, his seat became vacant, "as though," in the words of the Statute, "he were dead." But, by his re-election, he came to that House as a Constitutional Representative of the constituency that returned him, with the legal obligation to fulfil the duties of that position. He was bound by law to present himself at the Table to take the Oath and qualify himself for the discharge of his duties. He had no option. He could not resign his seat; he must perform his duties as long as the present Parliament lasted. There were instances in which Members had been threatened with pains and penalties because they had not taken the Oath. Mr. Bradlaugh had offered to take the Oath, and his position was, therefore, very different compared with what it was when he claimed to affirm. This was a matter which required the grave consideration of the House, and he trusted they would leave altogether on one side questions as to religious belief. It was said that it would be proposed to commit Mr. Bradlaugh to the custody of the Sergeant-at-Arms. Was that to be repeated every Session during the present Parliament? Would that be a course in which the House would persist, or which the country would approve? He hoped hon. Gentlemen opposite would consider well what they were doing. They were attempting to deal with the question by a side wind, and he put it to the House—Would it not be more dignified to meet the question raised by the Bill of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), and determine, "Aye" or "No," whether persons of Mr. Bradlaugh's opinions should be admitted to that House? That, he thought, was the fair and becoming course to take; and he hoped that the hon. Member who had blocked the Bill would re-consider whether he should persist in preventing its being discussed.

Mr. J. R. YORKE said, it was assumed that the supporters of this Resolution had no course open to them but to commit Mr. Bradlaugh to custody or to admit him to take the Oath. But the police might be instructed to exclude Mr. Bradlaugh from the precincts of the House, or, if he was twice guilty of a breach of Order, he might be suspended for the rest of the Session. With regard to the Bill of the hon. Member (Mr. Labouchere) for allowing Members to affirm, he should prefer one of two courses, either that they should leave the matter alone, or that they should pass a

Bill abolishing Oaths and Declarations altogether. He remembered, when an undergraduate at Oxford, declaring his unfeigned assent to the Thirty-Nine Articles, and the memory of that unseemly ceremony had never vanished from his mind. He did not think that oaths strengthened the well-intentioned, or that they formed any barrier to the entrance of evil-disposed persons into the House. He believed that he was speaking in a manner not unworthy of a Member of the Conservative Party when he said that he—and he believed he represented the sentiments of others who sat near him—had no wish to retain idle forms and ceremonies, which, whatever might have been their original effect, had long ceased to be of any real value. They would, therefore, be prepared to seriously consider any Bill brought in by the Government with a view to the total abolition of all these ceremonies on entrance into the House, though if an Oath was to be retained at all the existing form would be much preferable, as having, at any rate, the dignity of antiquity, and it was their duty to prevent it degenerating into a mere farce. He congratulated the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster on the change which had taken place in his tone since last night. The right hon. Gentleman had laboured to establish two measures of Ministerial responsibility; but the only two courses were, when a Government was placed in a minority—first, if the matter was one of supreme importance, to resign; and, second, if it was a matter of subordinate importance, to assist in carrying out the wishes of the House. He thought it highly to the credit of the Leader of the Opposition that he did not shrink from supporting the authority of the Chair under the circumstances. There was one point on which he wished to obtain information from the Government. When the Courts of Law decided that Mr. Bradlaugh could not affirm, the Statute declared that the seat which he held should be vacated "as if he were dead." When he read those words he came to the conclusion that they had got rid of the difficulty once and for ever. He, therefore, wanted to know why, if the seat of Mr. Bradlaugh was vacant, "as if he were dead," it was possible for him to rise again and be again elected for Northampton?

MR. J. COWEN said, the only contribution he wished to make to the debate was a suggestion which he would compress into as few sentences as possible, and which, if adopted, would help to end the unhappy wrangle in which they had been engaged so long. There were two points upon which there was a general consensus of opinion in the House. First, it was contemplated by all—or, if not all, by nearly all—that the only way of effectively settling the question that had been raised was by legislation. All other specifics were but makeshifts, and would be found ineffective. Parliament had abolished the Christian tests and admitted Jews. They had abolished the Protestant test and admitted Catholics, and they would in time be compelled to abolish the orthodox tests and admit Freethinkers. Already men entertaining unorthodox opinions were permitted to make affirmation in a Court of Law in cases of the greatest nicety and importance; and surely if oaths could be dispensed with under such circumstances, they might be dispensed with in that House. Legislation, then, simple but effective, was the only satisfactory way of getting them out of the difficulty with which they were beset. The legislation would not be only for Mr. Bradlaugh, but it would apply to all, and would prevent a repetition of such occurrences. On that point they were agreed. They were also agreed that the only chance the Bill had of being carried would be by its receiving the aid of the Government. But the Members of the Ministry felt unwilling to commit themselves to the introduction of such a measure. The state of Public Business would not permit them to take it in charge; but the Premier and the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster had both said that if the Bill of his hon. Friend the Member for Northampton was introduced, the Government would afford facilities for its passage. This was probably as fair an offer as they could well make. Affording facilities meant, in fact, using the power of the Government to aid the passage of the measure. Ministers hesitated to give a pledge until they had some engagement from the Opposition as to the course they would pursue. The Leader of the Opposition did not feel himself at liberty to make any bargain which would bind, or appear to bind, his supporters. Indeed, it was impossible for him to do that; but he had spoken with great moderation and fairness during the discussion, and it was reasonable to gather from his remarks that, while he might not really approve of the Bill to be proposed, no obstructive course would be taken towards it. This was as much as they could expect from the right hon. Gentleman under the circumstances. They had, therefore, these two points before them. They were all agreed that legislation should take place, and the Government were prepared to aid it, if they were not prepared to take it entirely under their control. Of course, there would be differences of opinion. That was only natural. There would be opposition. That was inevitable; but, nevertheless, the preponderating opinion of the House was in favour of the course that he had thus roughly outlined. The chief difficulty was Mr. Bradlaugh himself. He had presented himself at the Table and offered to take the Oath, and explained the grounds upon which he made the offer. The House had refused to allow him to swear, and he had asserted his right with energy and dignity. Having done that, it was fair to ask him to allow the matter to rest for a time. He had been a very active and ardent supporter of the Government. He had repeatedly declared his unwillingness to take part in any course that would be injurious to the Ministerial measures; and it was not unreasonable, therefore, to ask him, seeing the Government were prepared to lend their aid towards legislation that would admit him into the House, to allow his claims to remain in abeyance. He did not by any means ask Mr. Bradlaugh to forego his claims; but he thought it was fair to request that he might for a few days or weeks be at least passive. He knew Mr. Bradlaugh could not make that declaration himself; but probably his hon. Colleague (Mr. Labouchere) might give such an undertaking, and with that the House would be satisfied. If matters could be so arranged that Mr. Bradlaugh would withdraw from pressing himself upon the House, and the House, in its turn, would agree to give honest and business-like consideration to a Bill that would permit Affirmations to be made by those who desired to make them instead of taking the Oath, both the Government and Parliament would be lifted out of a very unpleasant dilemma. The question at issue was a far larger one than that of Mr. Bradlaugh taking his seat. It really was the removal of all theological disqualifications for the discharge of civil duties. A man's religious opinions, or his want of religious opinions, ought neither to aid him nor hinder him in his duty as a citizen; and if they could so alter the law as to enable Freethinkers to enter the House as they entered the Law Courts they would be giving effect to this principle.

Mr. MAC IVER said, that the question of Oaths was a large one, and would require much consideration; but, he would ask, what had the constituency of Northampton done to deserve so much attention on the part of the House of Commons? What was this constituency that they heard described as a great and an important constituency? He could not help contrasting such a constituency with the constituency which he had the honour to represent. According to the Census of 1871, Northampton had a population of 45,000, and it had two Members. Now, Birkenhead, which he represented, had a population of 90,000, and returned only one Member. Was a constituency such as Northampton to delay the Public Business of the House in order that it might have the services of two Members? He did not wish unduly to press the Prime Minister; but he gave Notice that, on some day next week, he should ask the Prime Minister whether he had re-considered his decision of last Session, and would undertake to introduce a short measure, under conditions of urgency, for the partial disfranchisement of Northampton, and to give a second Member to Birkenhead? A constituency like Northampton had no right to insult the House by sending to its Bar a Member who they knew to be disqualified. He concluded by thanking the House for the patience with which they had listened to him. In saying that, he did not refer to the Gentlemen on the Radical Benches opposite, who were so anxious to have their most appropriate companion, Mr. Bradlaugh, among them.

Colonel MAKINS explained that, in blocking the Bill of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), he had been actuated only by the fact that that Bill simply aimed at enabling the hon. Gentleman's Colleague to take his seat, and did not raise the question of the desirability of doing away with the Oath as an abstract question. If the Government, on their own responsibility, gave Notice of a similar measure, the matter would assume a very different aspect; and he should hesitate very much indeed before he took the course of opposing its introduction. He congratulated the Government on the change in the tone of the debate which had been witnessed; but, at the same time, he thought it was rash on the part of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster to offer a challenge as to the Member for Northampton coming to the House untainted by any crime. He thought that remark would have been better left out. He would also remind the right hon. Gentleman, with reference to his speech of the previous night, that Roman Catholics had been excluded from that House, not because their religion was deemed false, but because it bound them in an allegiance to a foreign potentate, which was incompatible with allegiance to the Sovereign of these Realms; and that the Jews had suffered disabilities because, similarly, they had always looked upon themselves as a nationality apart—a nation within a nation. Mr. Bradlaugh's character in that House had been marked by moderation, and his remarks of the previous evening showed that he was fully sensible of the dignity of the House.

MR. LABOUCHERE, in asking leave to withdraw his Motion, said, he was not going into the rival merits of Northampton and Birkenhead, as he was sure that the latter constituency was highly intelligent, when they sent so intelligent a Gentleman as the hon. Member for that borough. He regarded the discussion which had taken place as eminently satisfactory, because it had become apparent that there was a general opinion on both sides of the House that some sort of legislation was necessary. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] He did not say a universal, but a general opinion, that legislation of some sort was necessary in order to enable Mr. Bradlaugh to take his seat without being obliged to take the Oath. It had also become apparent that the House did not wish to proceed to extremities with Mr. Bradlaugh, and that there was a desire, pending an opportunity which might be given to the House to consider whether such legislation should be accepted, Mr. Bradlaugh should remain beyond the Bar. He had not the slightest doubt that Mr. Bradlaugh would consent to that arrangement till the matter was settled. If there was to be legislation it was desirable it should take place as speedily as possible; and if the Government would consent to bring in a measure dealing with the question he need not say that he would gladly withdraw the Bill which he had prepared.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, it appeared to him that the Motion ought not to be allowed to be withdrawn without some words of explanation from the Irish Catholic Members. The Prime Minister thought fit to blame them on the present occasion, and complained that they were aiding in a movement the object of which was to embarrass the Government; and he pointed out that the natural result of that policy would be to defer, if not to defeat, the Land Bill. [*Cries of* "No!"] Well, those who heard the words of the right hon. Gentleman were ready to corroborate his opinion. At any rate, there was a general impression that was the purport of his remarks. The position of the Irish Members was exceedingly simple. They had no objection to Mr. Bradlaugh taking his seat in the House. Personally, he thought Mr. Bradlaugh had as much right to his seat as he (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) or the Prime Minister, and he believed the House would sooner or later have to admit Mr. Bradlaugh. The only question was whether it was possible that he should be admitted under present conditions? It was perfectly clear that the House would not admit him as long as the law remained as it was. It had been decided that he should not be allowed to affirm, and that he should not be allowed to go through the profanity of taking an Oath; and while it might be the duty of the Prime Minister to suggest a way of escape from the present dilemma, the Irish Members could not sanction that which they believed to be criminal. He believed to allow Mr. Bradlaugh to take the Oath would be to make themselves a party to a flagrant act of blasphemy. No matter what the opinion of the House or the Government might be, they could not sanction blasphemy. They could not assent to what they believed to be criminal. If it was necessary to secure a good Land Bill, or to secure Home Rule or anything else they desired to secure, that they should consent to the taking of the Oath by an avowed Atheist, they could not and would not consent. But the Prime Minister said the result would be to delay the Land Bill. How little the Prime Minister knew the history of the Irish people! Did he not know that for conscience sake they had put up with every kind of civil disability? If the consequence of the refusal of the Irish Members to consent to this profanity should be a return to the penal disabilities from which they had only recently emerged, it would still be their duty to refuse. The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, in his speech last night, referred to the opposition to the admission of Roman Catholics to this House. But it should be remembered that Mr. Daniel O'Connell was excluded until the form of the Oath was altered. The same thing was sought to be done with regard to Mr. Bradlaugh. At that time the House was, no doubt, technically right in excluding Mr. O'Connell. [Mr. JOHN BRIGHT: He refused to take the Oath.] O'Connell was not like the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, who had a conscientious objection to take the name of God in vain, whose conscience was so tender, and who had such a reverence for the name of God that he himself would not go through the form of the Oath. And yet the right hon. Gentleman admitted his readiness to sit in the House and listen to the Oath being taken by an Atheist. The right hon. Gentleman had tried to show that the House would not be a party to the Oath-taking if the formality were gone through; but such an argument could not seriously be entertained. The right hon. Gentleman must have known perfectly well that the House would be a party to that act, for it would have had to be done in due form, with the Speaker in the Chair and Members present, and the fact of Mr. Bradlaugh having taken the Oath would have to appear on the record of the proceedings of the House. The Irish Members must decline to barter away their consciences because the Land Bill introduced by the Government appeared to the First Lord of the Treasury to deserve the support of Irish Representatives. Sooner than act in opposition to their consciences, they would put up with the loss of the Land Bill or of any other matter.

MR. LEWIS, referring to the opinion of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) that there was a general feeling on both sides of the House that some legislation was necessary in order to enable Mr. Bradlaugh to take his seat in the House, observed that he failed to understand that there was any such feeling, and warmly repudiated participating in it. He had heard the speeches of the noble Lord the Member for North Leicestershire (Lord John Manners), and of the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin), and of several other hon. Members on his side of the House; and he had heard nothing said by any of them which justified the interpretation made by the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) and by other hon. Members on the Liberal side. His hon. Friends had not said anything about the course they intended to take in the event of the Bill referred to being brought forward. It would be a pity for the hon. Member for Northampton to proceed upon the erroneous assumption, in withdrawing his present Motion for the adjournment of the House, that there was a general concurrence of opinion that legislation was necessary for the express purpose of admitting Mr. Bradlaugh. He (Mr. Lewis) would be a traitor to his principles if he allowed any misconception to exist, as far as he was concerned, on this point. At present they had not the text of the Bill before them. Speaking as an individual, he knew of no step he would be less inclined to take than to adopt a measure which would have as its result the admission to this Assembly of a man who had in the face of the House and of the country openly proclaimed as one of the principles of his life and conduct that he believed there was no God.

MR. BLAKE expressed surprise and indignation that the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Gladstone) should have thought fit to charge Irish Members with an intention to obstruct the Land Bill, because some of them had supported the Opposition in the present controversy. He had himself voted with the majority in the recent divisions from conscientious motives only. He repudiated in the strongest terms the imputation which the right hon. Gentleman had sought to cast upon him and his Colleagues. Although he sat on the Conservative side of the House he did so as an independent Member, not bound to either Party. But he did not hesitate to say that his sympathies were with the Liberals. As far as Mr. Bradlaugh was concerned, he felt gratitude to him for his recent attitude with regard to questions affecting Ireland. He felt especially so for the able and sympathetic speech he had delivered in favour of justice to the Irish people during the debate on the Coercion Bill. That speech had excited his (Mr. Blake's) admiration; but last night Mr. Bradlaugh had fallen in his estimation, as he had not shown the courage of his convictions when he sought to take an Oath in which he did not believe. He (Mr. Blake) would never be guilty of sanctioning such a blasphemous proceeding.

Mr. WARTON did not join in the semi-chorus of congratulation that the tone of this debate had altered. It was true there had been alterations in the tone of the Prime Minister. The previous night he "could" do nothing, that morning he first "would" do nothing, and, lastly, he was "willing" to do something. There had also been a change in the style of the Chancellor of the Duchy, though he liked the right hon. Gentleman best in his original style, when, for instance, he charged them all with bigotry. In displaying the harmlessness of the dove, the right hon. Gentleman was generally actuated by the wisdom of the serpent; and that wisdom of the serpent he had shown that morning in trying to pin the House to a single point. While the Premier was ranging over such a wide extent of years that they hardly knew where he was, the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands), following the lead of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster at a humble distance, had sought to extract from the Conservatives an answer to the question—"Do you wish to exclude Atheists?" Well, he, for one, shouted, in reply—"Yes!" for he objected both to blasphemy at the Table and to the presence of Atheists in the House. Hon. Members talked about the responsibility resting upon Members on that side of the House. Where were the missing Liberal Members? He asked the shepherd of the flock where were the sheep of the Liberal Party; where were the missing 99, for more than that number had strayed from the House? He had listened with admiration to the speech of the hon. Member for Berkshire (Mr. Walter), whose remarks had suggested to him that if Mr. Bradlaugh were examined he would ask that Gentleman—"Are you not the publisher and editor of a paper which has these words on its title page—'The principles of this paper are Republican, Atheistic, and Malthusian?'" No form of words could be devised to enable Mr. Bradlaugh, the editor of such a paper as that, to proclaim allegiance to the Crown. But probably it was because there were semi-Republicans in the Cabinet that the Government sympathized with Mr. Bradlaugh. The hon. Member for Bedford (Mr. Whitbread) had reminded them that last year it was said that if Mr. Bradlaugh had come to the Table and been silent about his opinions he would have "slipped through." Well, he rejoiced that he had not so "slipped through." Hon. Members opposite would doubtless be glad to see him do so; for the idea of some of them seemed to be that Mr. Bradlaugh should get in honestly if he could, but that anyhow he should get in.

Dr. COMMINS said, that, as one of the Irish Members who voted for the admission of Mr. Bradlaugh, he wished to make a few observations on the incidents of that affair referred to so properly by the hon. Members for Waterford and Queen's County. He voted for the Motion for two reasons which seemed to him conclusive. He thought the legal arguments as to Mr. Bradlaugh's right to present himself at the Table and take the Oath, subject to such obligations as his own conscience might impose on him, were unanswered and unanswerable; and, therefore, he felt himself bound to vote for the conservation of the right which the Constitution gave him. He also voted for his admission on another ground—namely, that no matter how it might have been wrapped up in verbiage—no matter how disguised in sophistry—no matter how it might have been glossed over by professions of religious enthusiasm, the true motive which operated on the minds of those who voted the other way was a desire to impose a religious test as an indispensable condition of admission to the House. He did not care whether it was from the presence of religious conviction in the minds of those who voted against Mr. Bradlaugh's admission, or the absence of religious conviction from the mind of Mr. Bradlaugh, the desire of imposing the religious test still remained; and he, for one, never would give his approval to the principle which made the presence of religious conviction, or the absence of religious conviction, a necessary test for admission into the House. For those reasons he gave his vote for the admission of Mr. Bradlaugh, though he knew no vote could be more unacceptable to his constituents. But he was not a little surprised when told that morning that the Prime Minister had threatened the Irish Members with something like the fate of the Land Bill, because by the course many of them pursued the previous night they were helping the opposite Party to obstruct the Business of the House. He could scarcely believe that that was a correct representation of the matter. He could scarcely believe that the Leader of the House could take such an incorrect view of anything that was said or done by any Member of the Irish Party. They all occupied a kind of judicial position in this matter, and they voted according to their consciences. Therefore, he was perfectly astounded that such a false view of the position of the Irish Members could be taken by the Premier, who he learned had endeavoured to shift upon them, on utterly untenable grounds, the responsibility of any delay or mishap that might occur in the progress of the Irish Land Bill. If the right hon. Gentleman was misunderstood by the Members of the Irish Party, divided as it was, partly in favour of the Government and partly against it, he had no doubt that he would set himself right before the House; and, in doing so, he might probably facilitate the progress of that Bill which they had all so deeply at heart, and which the Irish Members wished to do all in their power to support.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I have no difficulty in answering the appeal of the hon. Member, although I did not hear the animadversion that preceded it to which he referred. I never imputed to the Irish Members any intention of obstructing the Irish Land Bill. [Dr. Commins: Co-operating with obstruction.] In the first place, I never referred to obstruction in that sense. I referred to the inconvenience, and possibly the obstruction, in a general sense, which would be the same as the possible consequence of a prolonged controversy on the subject before us. I said that even if the Irish Members, or any of the Irish Members, were prepared to encounter that inconvenience, I could not look upon that as relaxing my obligation with regard to the Irish Land Bill. On the contrary, I said I would do everything in my power to push that measure forward.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT thought the right hon. Gentleman should take notice of two facts—first, that nothing would induce that House to allow Mr. Bradlaugh to take the Oath; and, secondly, it had been conclusively shown in the course of the debate that the House would not support any measure dealing with the matter before them, unless such measure were introduced at the instance of, and on the authority of, the Government of the day. A Bill so introduced would receive fair and candid consideration from all parts of the House.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT—THE SILVER DUTIES.

STATEMENT.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I wish to ask permission to make a statement which concerns probably very few, if any, Members of the House, but which concerns deeply the members of a small but important trade in this country. In submitting the Financial Statement, I brought forward the subject of the Silver Duties, and I stated that I did not see my way to encounter the very heavy charge or drawback in the event of the immediate repeal of those duties. I said that there was another alternative —namely, proceeding by gradual abolition, which had been suggested by an eminent member of the trade before the Committee on the subject. Since then I have had the advantage of seeing deputations upon the matter, yesterday in particular, and they have satisfied me, not, I am sorry to say, that we should encounter the charge of the drawback, with regard to which it still remains in all the difficulty I formerly represented; but that in the present condition of the trade, when purchasing is very weak, and the demand very slack, to propose anything like a gradual abolition would be attended with much inconvenience, and such a considerable further slackening of the trade, that upon consideration, after consulting with my Colleagues, I have determined that it would not be wise to persevere, but to wait for circumstances of a more favourable character. I thought the House should be apprised of my intention at the earliest possible moment, and I have therefore asked their indulgence on this occasion.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Are we to understand that the idea of dealing with the Silver Duties at all is for the present abandoned?

Mr. GLADSTONE: It is.

Mr. RITCHIE gave Notice that, on the Order for the Second Reading of the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill, he should call attention to the Prime Minister's statement, with the view of showing that it was as likely to promote paralysis in the trade as his previous statement with respect to the duties.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

CHURCH BOARDS BILL.—[Bill 14.]

(*Mr. Albert Grey, Mr. Edward Howard, Mr. Stuart-Wortley, Mr. Marriott, Mr. Pulley.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. A. GREY, in rising to move that the Bill be now read a second time, said, he was conscious of the grave responsibility which he incurred by venturing to introduce to the consideration of the House important reforms affecting the parochial organization of the Church. He was, however, encouraged in his undertaking by the recollection that 10 years ago a Bill, in which the same principles were involved, was introduced into the House and warmly supported. At the outset of his observations, he wished to declare that the Bill was brought forward, not in any spirit of hostility to the clergy, but simply for the purpose of removing an acknowledged grievance; and he hoped to be able to convince his opponents before sitting down that the passing of the Bill would, while it might diminish the autocracy of the clergy, greatly increase their power of doing good. He knew of no class of which the members, by their unremitting labours among the poor, and their exemplary lives of uncomplaining self-denial, had earned so large a claim to the gratitude of the country. He believed that the Bill would strengthen the hands of the clergy and increase their influence. It was not conceived in the interests of any particular sect or party within the Church, and no sectarian purpose was intended. All that he desired and proposed to do by the Bill was to make it impossible for a clergyman to thrust upon an unwilling parish arbitrary changes in the Church Ritual, introduced at his own sole will. Whatever might be the religious tendencies of a parish, he desired them to be developed to the fullest extent within the limits of the law; but he wished to prevent the clergyman from introducing changes to which his parishioners objected. As he had said, there was no spirit of hostility to the clergy or any party in the Church. It was true that a vast number of the clergy exercised their powers wisely; but it was a fact that the parishioners, acting in conjunction with the Bishop, were quite unable to control a clergyman in regard to such changes; and it had been pointed out so far back as 12 years ago, by a distinguished clergyman of large experience—

> "That in the exercise of his office the beneficed clergyman has an almost unlimited freedom, and that this freedom is not curtailed in matters which affect the rights of others . . . that he may, in controverted matters, by his own sole will, change every feature of the church fabric and church services."

That statement was still as true as ever it was. That state of things was, of course, and naturally, made use of by the Society for the Liberation of the Church from State control. That Society put it forward as a great evil that the laymen of the Church had no control over its own public worship. It was very difficult to give an answer to statements of that character. No doubt, such a condition of things materially weakened the National Church. In such a system there could hardly be a continuity in the method of conducting the services of the Church. As things were they had practically a clerical autocracy, for the clergy exercised an irresponsible power in the management of their churches. He did not think that, however good the person might be who exercised that autocratic power, a system could command popular sympathy and support which recognized autocracy as a basis. It could not be advantageous to the

Church that that autocracy should remain unlimited, for it involved a clear loss of lay co-operation and action. There was no means of checking and limiting that autocracy except by an extension of the principle of local self-government. He wished to make the Church more of a popular institution, to bring it in harmony with the feelings and needs of a large section of the community, which it scarcely now affected at all. The tendency now was to make a few active and the great majority apathetic. He would refer to a statement made at Manchester a few years ago by Mr. John Morley, that—

> "The fact of their being in the parish a person officially charged, so to speak, with the duty of taking an interest in the humbler people, makes the gentry far less inclined than they otherwise would be to share their duty. It would have the aid, or they are apt to see that it would, of interfering with the rector's province. In this way, I believe the advantage of having one man in every parish officially charged with the performance of good works is now counterbalanced by the check which it puts upon the active friendliness of the laymen of the parish."

That evil he and his Friends sought to remedy by the Bill, which proposed to give the laity a share in the management of Church affairs in their respective parishes, thereby bringing the Church into closer contact and relation with the life of the people than it was at present. At a Church Congress at Sheffield in 1878 the principle of the Bill was fully admitted, and when once a principle was thus acknowledged it became the duty of the House to devise the means by which effect could be given to it. On the one hand, an end would be put to the autocracy of the clergy; and, on the other, the clergyman would have more time to devote to his purely spiritual duties. The justice of the principle for which he was contending had been admitted in that House 10 years ago; and four years later it was expressly recognized by the Prime Minister in one of a series of Resolutions that were brought forward in the debates on the Public Worship Regulation Bill. In 1878, also, at the Church Congress at Sheffield, to which he had referred, a large majority of speakers, lay and clerical, declared themselves in favour of parochial councils, and of such councils being legalized and not merely voluntary. He would next proceed to deal briefly with the manner in which the objects of the Bill were to be carried out. He thought he should command the support of the noble Viscount the Member for Liverpool (Viscount Sandon) for his measure, although it differed in some respects from that which had been introduced by the noble Viscount. But the end aimed at was the same. The Bill proposed that whenever a majority of parishioners, in full vestry assembled, and assembled with due notice, to consider as to the application of this Act in the particular parish, and decided in favour of the adoption of the Act, that then at the next Easter Vestry a Board should be elected by the parishioners proportionate to the number of the population of the parish, of which Board the churchwardens should be *ex officio* members, and the incumbent should be the State-appointed chairman. The number of the Board would be in proportion to the population, the rights of minorities being guarded by providing that when there were four members, no parishioner should vote for more than three; where there were six, the vote should be limited to four; and where there were 12, the voting limitation should be nine. It was a Permissive Bill; but he had no doubt that in a few years Church Boards would be very prevalent throughout the country. The Bill further proposed that Church Boards should have power, from time to time, to make changes relating to ecclesiastical affairs relating to the parish, with regard to the method of conducting the Service and in regard to ornaments and decorations; but they would not be empowered to do anything contrary to the spirit of the law or the plain directions of the Prayer Book, and such changes would not be carried into effect, unless the incumbent, in conjunction with the Bishop, should agree that they were desirable. In the event of any difference between the incumbent and the Board, the Bishop's decision should be final, and where an incumbent refused to comply with the decision of the Bishop, after due monition and warning, his living might be sequestrated, and if he obstinately refused to obey he would be finally deprived of his benefice. It was proposed also that, when such Boards were established, no proceedings should be taken under the Public Worship Regulation Act. He would now mention the chief points of difference between the present Bill and that of the noble Viscount the Member for Liverpool. The object of the Bill, as he had said, was to grant to the parishioners some check on the autocracy of clergymen, and it required no test of Church membership, such as being a communicant, from members of the Board. It would even be possible for Nonconformists to be members. Another difference was as to the method of enforcing compliance with the orders of the Bishop. He did not propose in the Bill that the Bishop should have power to decide questions of law; but, by taking away certain duties from the clergyman, it would give him more time for the peformance of those duties which were peculiarly his own. It did not in any way interfere with the spiritual independence of the clergyman. The Bill proposed that all the members should be elected by the parishioners, whereas the noble Viscount's Bill made three-fourths elective by the parishioners and one-fourth by the clergyman. He knew objection would be taken to the admission of Nonconformists; but he (Mr. A. Grey) was not afraid of any evil arising from their presence on these Boards, for he thought that such admission would broaden the foundations of the Church and make it more truly national. In fact, he would rather welcome them than desire their absence from the Board, being assured that they would co-operate heartily with the objects of the Bill. His only fear was that the co-operation of the Nonconformists in the affairs of the Church would be taken by them to be a sanction of the principle of an Established Church. He hoped the principle of the Bill would be rightly understood, which was that the laity should be admitted to a legal share in the management of the ecclesiastical affairs of their own parishes. The Church had a great work to do in contending with the vice and misery and crime of our large populations, and the wider the co-operation in such work the better would it be for the Church and for the nation. The hon. Member concluded by moving the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. MARRIOTT, in seconding the Motion, said, if the Bill should pass its second reading there were Amendments that he should like to see introduced, extending one principle which it contained, and limiting another. The principle which he would like to see extended was the one contained in the 3rd clause, and which partially repealed the Public Worship Regulation Act of 1874. For his part, he should be glad to see that Act repealed altogether, for it had only worked unmitigated evil. He had not the honour of a seat in the House when that Act was passed; but he recollected following the debates in the public papers, and when he considered that the Bill was opposed in an eloquent speech by the Prime Minister, and by the then Secretary of State for War (the present Viscount Cranbrook), and by such representative Members as the hon. Members for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn), Huddersfield (Mr. Leatham), and others, of such different views, he was astonished that it ever became law. Now that they had had the Act working for seven years, they could say with confidence that every argument used in support of it had been falsified, and every prediction had been fulfilled against it. It was said that the Act would put down Ritualism. Well, he wondered whether Ritualism was nearer being put down now than it was in 1874. Speaking to Members of that House and members of various denominations, he would not ask whether Ritualism was right or wrong, but whether that Bill was the right way to put it down? The only result was this—that serious pain had been inflicted upon a number of clergymen, and that a number of lawyers had been enriched. Two societies had subscribed large sums, and £15,000 had been thrown away in prosecutions, and £3,000 or £5,000 in defence. It seemed to him that the money would have been much better spent in building churches and chapels than in such litigation. The Public Worship Regulation Act of 1874 was also passed with an idea of producing uniformity. That had been the aim of the Church of England by Canons, Articles, Creeds, and Acts of Parliament. They had tried to produce uniformity of belief and practice among the members, and he could only say of the history of the Church during the past two centuries that these efforts had turned out gigantic failures. The Act of 1874 was in the same spirit. It proposed to secure, with an iron hand, uniformity of practice in the Church of England. At the present time, notwithstanding all the safeguards that there were, and the Act of 1874, almost every doctrine, including the tenets of the Church of Rome, was now taught in the Church of England. In some churches the clergymen taught and practised entirely what doctrine they liked. He thought, however, that the more comprehensive the Church was, and the less she tried to shackle the belief of her members, the better it was for them and the nation for which she was established. But there were cases in which this might be a grievance. He had no wish to interfere with the worship that took place in the churches of the large towns. There was, so to speak, a free trade in religious worship in the large towns. A person in London, or any of the large towns, might go to a High, a Low, or a Broad Church, and he did not see why those who exercised a choice or a preference should be interfered with. He thought most churches and chapels did more good than harm, whatever doctrines they taught; and because he did not agree with what was being taught in them that was no reason why he should be opposed to them, seeing that other people believed in the doctrines taught within their walls. But with regard to the parish churches in the rural districts of England, there was in each parish generally only one church, and there had been many cases where the Services had been altered by the appointment of a new clergyman, according to his views of practice and doctrine. Now, the question was—Was there any remedy for that state of things? By the 5th clause of the Resolutions introduced by the present Premier in 1874 it was affirmed that it was desirable that members of the Church should receive ample protection against the sole will of the clergyman. He was in favour of that principle. And the second point of it was that there should be co-operation. Almost every clergyman and Bishop would say that he desired lay co-operation. At the Church Congresses the laity were well received by the Bishops and the clergy; but what was the use of that unless the power of the laity was recognized? It was all very well to have Church Congresses to discuss ecclesiastical matters; but the laity had no power to make or prevent any change in the religious Services in their churches. Members of the Church of England were unique in this respect. The Nonconformists had, as a body, an advantage over them. In America the Church was governed by a House of Bishops and a House of Deputies in which the laity had extensive powers. Therefore, he cordially supported the Bill as far as it went in that direction. But he thought it ought to have a limit by modifying the 10th clause, which was to the effect that Church Boards should, from time to time, have power to make any regulation not contrary to Church doctrine. If the Bill were passed as it was, there were cases in which it would produce very great hardship. There should not be a power given to the Church Board to settle whether or not a certain practice should be carried out, whether the clergyman liked it or not. They should not have the power to say to a clergyman that he should put candles on the altar, or turn this way or that; but the matter was quite different when a clergyman came to a church, and found the practice one way and attempted to alter it to another way. He thought the power of the Board should be confined to a veto, so that it might have the power of saying what should not be done by the clergyman. The present Bill differed from the Bill brought in by the noble Viscount the Member for Liverpool (Viscount Sandon), who proposed that electors of the Church Boards should be communicants. That brought them to a very grave question, which he did not wish to see raised, and that was the question of Establishment or Disestablishment in this country. One theory for a State Church was that the people of this country should have a voice in her management; and every Englishman had a voice in her management by his being represented in that House. He thought that the laity should have a very considerable power on the Church Boards, and he would go so far as to support the Bill with such an Amendment as that would involve. With the limitation he had stated, he was prepared to second the Motion for the second reading of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Albert Grey.*)

Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL, in rising to move that the Bill be read a second time that day six months, said, it could not be amended in any sense that would not be fatal to its principle. He considered it so drastic, and of so violent and aggressive a character, as to be worse than the disease which it was proposed to cure. Besides, he thought that the time had passed when, perhaps, such a measure might have been necessary. The disease was in no want of the present remedy. It had got over that stage. It made a distinct attempt to buy off the opposition of the Ritualists by repealing the Public Worship Regulation Act; but that could not compensate for the ignominy of the position in which it would place the Church of England. To the principle of lay control over the Church, no one, he supposed, would altogether demur; but the proposed measure would effect a revolution unparalleled by anything that had taken place in our history since the days of the Commonwealth. It would establish the congregational system with a difference, for there was no condition that the lay control should be confined to those who agreed with the doctrines taught by the Church. He asked whether it was fair to intrust what the Church of England held most dear to those outside of her body—to a Board composed of all sorts of people, whose simple qualification was the very mundane one of having paid the Queen's Taxes? It went even further, for it placed the control of the affairs of the Church of England under the control, in many parishes, of Nonconformist ratepayers. Nonconformists, however excellent they might be, were not, he contended, the best judges of the business of the Church. But this Bill would not stop short at the intervention of orthodox Nonconformists; it would admit every shade of unbelief; and there was nothing, he maintained, in the provisions of the Bill which would prevent a man holding the opinions of Mr. Bradlaugh from being elected a member of the Church Board of Northampton, if the present measure became law; and thus they would have an Atheist controlling, or helping to control, the religious matters of his district. He was sure the members of other religious but Nonconformist Bodies would not like the members of rival bodies to pry into their affairs, or to be elected on their committee of management; and he was convinced that the orthodox English Nonconformist would care but little for the honour which it was proposed under the present measure to confer upon him. He would sooner see the Establishment perish and the theory of a national religion disappear than that such intolerable evils as those which the proposed measure would introduce should be brought into her midst.

And it being a quarter of an hour before Six of the o'clock, the Debate stood adjourned till *To-morrow.*

INDIA OFFICE AUDITOR (SUPERANNUATION) BILL.

Resolution [April 25] *reported,* and *agreed to:*—Bill *ordered* to be brought in by The Marquess of HARTINGTON and Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 140.]

MOTIONS.

SOLWAY FISHERIES (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. ERNEST NOEL, Bill for the declaration of the Law relating to fresh water fish not of the salmon kind, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. ERNEST NOEL, Mr. J. MAXWELL-HERON, and Mr. ANDERSON.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 141.]

BEER BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That the Chairman be directed to move the House, that leave be given to bring in a Bill for the better securing the purity of Beer.

Resolution *reported:* — Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Colonel BARNE, Mr. STORER, and Mr. HICKS.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 142.]

HOUSE OF COMMONS (ACCOMMODATION).

Select Committee *appointed,* "to consider the proposals for the increased accommodation of the House, and to Report to the House what use shall be made of the Rooms proposed to be given up by the House of Lords."—(*Mr. Shaw Lefevre.*)

CHESHIRE SALT DISTRICTS COMPENSATION BILL.

Ordered, That Mr. HASTINGS be discharged from attendance upon the Committee:—*Ordered,* That Mr. STORY-MASKELYNE be added to the Committee:—*Ordered,* Three be the quorum.—(*Lord Richard Grosvenor.*)

House adjourned at five minutes before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 28*th April*, 1881.

MINUTES.]—New Member Sworn—Samuel Storey, esquire, *for* Sunderland.

Public Bills — *Ordered—First Reading*—Pier and Harbour Orders Confirmation* [143].

Second Reading—Land Law (Ireland) [135]—[*Second Night*]—*debate further adjourned.*

Third Reading — Inland Revenue Buildings* [125], and *passed.*

NOTICE OF RESOLUTION.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) BILL.

Lord JOHN MANNERS: Sir, I beg to give Notice that on the second reading of the Irish Land Bill I shall move as an Amendment the following Resolution:—

> "That this House, while anxious to maintain and secure in full efficiency the customs of Ulster, and other analogous customs in Ireland, and to remedy any proved defects in the Land Act of 1870, is disposed to seek for the social and material improvement of that Country by measures for the development of its industrial resources, rather than by a measure which confuses, without settling on a just and permanent basis the relations of landlord and tenant."

QUESTIONS.

TRADE AND COMMERCE—IMPORT AND EXPORT OF WOOLLEN GOODS.

Mr. MAC IVER asked the President of the Board of Trade, If it is the case that during each of the last eight years our importation of woollen and worsted manufactured goods has steadily and progressively increased; if it is true that our exportation of such goods has, during all those years, with equal regularity diminished; and, whether there is any reason to doubt the accuracy of the Board of Trade statistics on the subject?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN, in reply, said, that the statement contained in the Question was not altogether correct. It was not true that during each of the last eight years our importation of the goods referred to had increased, as it decreased in the year 1879, nor was it true that our importation of such goods had during those years regularly diminished, because in the year 1880 it increased, and in other years, although the value diminished, the quantity considerably increased. With respect to the Board of Trade statistics, those statistics, for the years 1873 and 1874, were partly vitiated by incorrect returns made by the exporters in the Eastern ports; but, with respect to other years, he believed that they were quite correct.

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL—THE NATIVE INHABITANTS—THE PAPERS.

Mr. GORST asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether Copies of any Petitions by the native inhabitants of the Transvaal relating to the surrender of the Queen's sovereignty to the Boers, and of replies thereto by Sir E. Wood, or any other officer of Government, have been received at the Colonial Office; and, if so, whether there is any objection to lay them upon the Table of the House?

Mr. GRANT DUFF: No, Sir; no such documents have reached the Colonial Office.

CUSTOMS AND INLAND REVENUE BILL—FARM BUILDINGS.

Sir BALDWYN LEIGHTON asked the First Lord of the Treasury, with reference to Customs and Inland Revenue Bill, Whether the definition of "house," in Clause 16, sub-section 4, as comprising "offices, courts, yards, and gardens," is intended to include farm buildings or not?

Mr. GLADSTONE: No, Sir; it does not include farm buildings.

CENTRAL ASIA—THE RUSSIAN ADVANCE.

Mr. J. COWEN asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If he can give any further information respecting the alleged abandonment of the forward policy of Russia in Central Asia; and, if it is true that General Scobeleff has been recalled, and a stop put to the aggressive operation of Russia in Asia?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, the statement which I made on a previous occasion in this House was substantially correct. General Skobeleff has been recalled, and military operations have terminated. I may add that we hear that eight battalions of his troops are already on their return march.

MR. J. COWEN asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If he can lay on the Table Papers showing the communications on which he based his statement that the Russians are following a policy of withdrawal in the East?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, it was hardly possible to continue the production of these Papers one by one. He could not undertake to lay them all on the Table immediately; but the statement he had made was founded upon information supplied by Lord Dufferin, which would be found in the despatches to be laid upon the Table of the House.

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL—THE SURRENDER OF POTCHEFSTROOM.

MR. GIBSON asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether there were any casualties in the garrison of Potchefstroom between date of armistice and date of its surrender; at what dates respectively were the news of the armistice conveyed by the Boers to the other besieged garrisons in the Transvaal; and, whether, having regard to statements that have recently appeared in the press with reference to the condition of affairs at present existing in the Transvaal, he will communicate to the House any information Her Majesty's Government have received on the general subject?

MR. GRANT DUFF: Sir, in reply to the first two Questions, I have to say that no information with regard to the points mentioned has yet been received either by the War Office or the Colonial Office. In reply to the third Question, I have to say that Papers up to the 7th of April will be in the hands of Members not later than Saturday. The Commission should be opened this very day, at Newcastle, by Sir John H. De Villiers and Sir Evelyn Wood. Sir Hercules Robinson is detained at the Cape by a threatened Ministerial crisis; but he trusts by the 4th or 5th of May to join his colleagues at Newcastle. We are in communication with the Boer leaders with reference to the reparation to be made to the Treasury in respect of the occurrence at Potchefstroom; but until Her Majesty's Government can more fully estimate the effect of that occurrence upon the general state of Transvaal affairs, it would not be for the advantage of the public service that I should give any further particulars. I have further to say that in addition to the Papers to which I referred a moment ago, the Instructions to the Royal Commissioners and other Papers will be laid upon the Table not later than Monday.

MR. GIBSON asked, with reference to the first two Questions, whether the War Office or the Colonial Office had asked for information on the points mentioned, and, if not, whether they would do so?

MR. GRANT DUFF: Perhaps the right hon. and learned Gentleman will give me Notice of the Question.

MR. GIBSON: It is on the Paper.

VACCINATION ACTS—CASE OF MR. JOHN ABEL, OF FARRINGDON.

MR. P. A. TAYLOR asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether it is true that Mr. John Abel, of Farringdon, has been prosecuted thirty-four times for refusing to have his children vaccinated; and, whether he proposes to bring in any measure to limit the amount of punishment inflicted for non-compliance with the Vaccination Acts?

MR. DODSON: Sir, although I have no official information as to the exact number of times Mr. Abel has been prosecuted for not having had his children vaccinated, I have no reason to suppose that the number of times is not correctly stated in the Question. At the same time, it is right to mention that the Board are in no sense responsible for the repeated prosecutions in this case; and they have not failed to point out to the Guardians the expediency of caution and moderation in continuing frequent prosecutions. Looking to the scant encouragement the Bill introduced last year for the purpose of limiting prosecutions in these cases met with, I am not prepared to bring in a similar measure this Session.

ARMY—THE ROYAL ARTILLERY—PAY OF ARTIFICERS.

MR. BOORD asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is a fact that artificers in the Royal Artillery are paid according to a much lower scale than those holding the same rank and discharging similar duties in the Army Service Corps; and whether, if such be the case, he can hold out any hope of improving their position?

Mr. CHILDERS: Sir, in reply to the hon. Gentleman, I cannot undertake to say that the rates of pay of artificers in the Royal Artillery and in the Army Service Corps should be the same. As a matter of fact, the pay of artificers in the Artillery is in one rank greater than in the Army Service Corps. But it so happens that these rates are under revision at the present time.

CRIMINAL LAW—ABDUCTION OF ENGLISH GIRLS.

Mr. M'COAN asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the existence of an established traffic in girls under age for immoral purposes between London and the Continent, and if he purposes to take any, and what, steps to put an end to it; whether it is true that the Belgian authorities have vainly applied to the Home Office for the extradition of a man named Marx, alias Fredericks, alias Schultz, a Belgian subject, who is said to be well known to the Police as an active London agent for such traffic; and, whether he will lay upon the Table of the House any Report from the Chief of the Criminal Investigation Department upon the subject?

Mr. COURTNEY: Sir, the attention of the Secretary of State has been called to the subject; and a member of the English Bar was recently deputed to Brussels to inquire into the truth of certain alleged cases, and to watch the prosecution recently instituted by the Belgian authorities, which resulted in the sentence to fine and various terms of imprisonment of five persons convicted of participating in the abduction of an English girl. One of the principal delinquents in the affair, having absconded to France, will be tried in that country; and, as this case will form an essential part of the inquiry, the Secretary of State has deemed it expedient that Mr. Snagge, the barrister referred to, should attend this trial as well. No application has been made to the Secretary of State on the part of the Belgian authorities for the extradition of the man Marx. Mr. Snagge will submit a Report on the conclusion of the inquiry. The Secretary of State will then consider whether the Report shall be laid on the Table of the House, and what action may be required.

COURT OF SESSION (SCOTLAND)—THE VACANT JUDGESHIP.

Mr. DICK-PEDDIE asked the Lord Advocate, If it is intended to fill up the vacant judgeship in the Court of Session; and, if it is, when it is likely that the appointment of a Judge will be made?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. M'Laren): My hon. Friend is no doubt aware that there is a Bill pending in the other branch of the Legislature for reducing the number of Judges in the Court of Session. Until that Bill is proceeded with, or withdrawn, it will be improper to take any steps for filling up the vacancy in the Judgeship; and I am unable, at present, to give a definite answer to his Question.

EXTRADITION OF POLITICAL OFFENDERS.

Mr. LABOUCHERE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether any communications have been exchanged between Her Majesty's Government and Foreign Governments, in regard to the right of asylum, and the extradition of political offenders?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, Her Majesty's Government have reason to believe that communications have been exchanged between foreign Governments with regard to the right of asylum and the extradition of political offenders; but they themselves have received no invitation upon the subject.

FRANCE—THE NEW COMMERCIAL TREATY.

Mr. MAC IVER asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether facilities will be afforded for considering the Motion of the honourable Member for Paisley, in reference to the French Commercial Treaty, before any such Treaty is concluded; or, in any circumstances, if he will be good enough to give the House a definite assurance that Her Majesty's Government will not enter into any commercial arrangement binding this Country for a term of years without first giving the House an opportunity of expressing its opinion on the subject?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, the hon. Member will not be surprised when I say that it is impossible for me—or, indeed, for any Government—to give a pledge upon this subject in the terms which he has laid down. The House might have been prorogued in the month of August, and in the month of September we might have had an advantageous opportunity which might not again occur. What I wish to do, in substance, is to give to the hon. Member and the House every reasonable assurance; and I therefore say that my opinion is that, in conducting any negotiations on this subject, we shall undoubtedly have to avail ourselves of the assistance of the commercial community; and, that being so, I have not the least doubt that the general bearings of all proceedings, and of all negotiations, will be quite sufficiently known to all those who are directly interested, and will enable them to put us in possession of public opinion. I have no fear, therefore, of our being obliged to take any steps as to which there will be any serious doubt as to the judgment of Parliament or the commercial world.

CUSTOMS AND INLAND REVENUE—THE COMMERCIAL TREATY WITH FRANCE.

Mr. HERMON asked the First Lord of the Treasury, When the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill will be brought forward; and, whether the attention of the Government has been directed to a resolution of the members of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce to the effect that they would rather have no Commercial Treaty with France at all than one that contained unfavourable terms?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, I should say first that there is at present no relation whatever between the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill and the French Treaty. The Customs and Inland Revenue Bill contains no proposals respecting the duties upon articles imported into this country from France, with the exception of the rectification of the differential spirit duty, which, of course, is quite a different matter—a mere matter of regulation—and, moreover, Her Majesty's Government have no communication of a recent date with the French Government which would lead them to suppose that the French Government were disposed to press for anything of the kind, consequently the subject, so far as it is at present before Her Majesty's Government, is entirely French, and has no relation whatever to any question of duties in this country. I assure the hon. Member that the resolution to which he has referred will receive the most careful attention of the Government, and that there will be no disposition at all to force on communications, except it be with the full assurance that we are proceeding according to the general sense of the commercial community. The hon. Member has also asked when we will proceed with the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill. The Bill does not raise any question of principle new to the House, and it would certainly be convenient to take it to-night, unless there is any real objection to it.

FRANCE—THE NEW COMMERCIAL TREATY—THE SUGAR AND SHIPPING BOUNTIES.

Mr. MAC IVER asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether Mr. Kennedy, who is now in Paris on a mission connected with the Commercial Treaty, has instructions to make any representation to the French Government with reference to the Shipping Bounties?

Sir JOHN LUBBOCK asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is the case that Mr. Kennedy is now in Paris on a mission connected with the Commercial Treaty with France; and, if so, whether he has instructions to make any representations to the French Government with reference to the Sugar Bounties?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, Mr. Kennedy is at present in Paris engaged in receiving from the French officials explanations as to the changes made in the general tariff. Her Majesty's Government are awaiting the results of Mr. Kennedy's inquiries before coming to a decision as to the formal negotiations for a new Treaty of Commerce with France; and, meanwhile, they consider it advisable to defer the representations which they have determined to make, both with regard to the shipping and sugar bounties.

SOUTH AFRICA — THE TRANSVAAL (MILITARY OPERATIONS)—THE 60TH RIFLES.

Major General FEILDEN asked the Secretary of State for War, If he has received any information which would enable him to contradict the statements which were published some weeks ago in a London newspaper, as to the supposed misconduct of a portion of the 3rd Battalion of the 60th Rifles at the attack on the Majuba Mountain?

MR. CHILDERS: Yes, Sir; the hon. and gallant Member—who has such good reason to be proud of his former regiment—and the House will be glad to hear the telegram which I received a few days ago—

"April 20, Fort Amiel.

"Please contradict unfavourable reports of 3-60th on 28th February. None on Majuba. One company sent out with spare ammunition to join supporting company of 92d, and retired with it by orders from Prospect Camp, bringing all the ammunition in. Two companies posted three miles off covered retreat steadily. Am perfectly satisfied with their behaviour.

"WOOD."

PUBLIC HEALTH—SMALL-POX (METROPOLIS).

MR. PELL asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether the Metropolitan Boards of Guardians and the Vestries have replied to the letters addressed to them by the Local Government Board on February 23rd, 1881; and, if he can inform the House what extent of provision has been or is being made for hospital treatment and isolation of pauper and non-pauper cases of smallpox in the Metropolis?

MR. DODSON: Sir, almost all the Boards of Guardians and Vestries have replied to the Board's letters. Of the Boards of Guardians 14 have promised to provide some accommodation for the reception of small-pox cases of the pauper class, and 14 Vestries and District Boards have undertaken to the same effect as regards non-paupers; but I am not at present in a position to say for what number of cases accommodation will be thus provided, although, looking to the extent of the epidemic and the difficulty of finding proper accommodation, I am very apprehensive that the provision which has yet been made will not be found adequate to meet the demands on the authorities referred to. It should be added that the beds at the disposal of the managers of the Metropolitan Asylums Board, in number 968, are all full, and these are now obliged to refuse any more admissions.

FRANCE AND TUNIS—OUTBREAK OF THE KROUHMIR TRIBES—MILITARY OPERATIONS.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether any Correspondence has taken place between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of the French Republic with regard to the French Expedition to Tunis; and, if so, whether he can give the House any information on the subject or lay the Papers upon the Table?

MR. MONTAGUE GUEST asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the report published in the daily journals with regard to the bombardment of the Island of Tabarka by a French vessel of war, and the landing of French troops in Tunisian territory is true; whether any information on the subject has been received by Her Majesty's Government, and will be communicated to this House; if any measures have or will be taken for the protection of British interests in that Regency, and for the maintenance of the rights and privileges secured to British subjects in Tunis by treaties and conventions entered into between Great Britain and the Porte; whether Her Majesty's Government has yet received any official assurances from the French Government that the status quo, as established and guaranteed by such treaties and conventions, or by protocol, as regards the Regency of Tunis, will be maintained; and, whether any Correspondence has passed between Her Majesty's Government and that of Italy on the subject; and, if so, whether that also will be communicated to the House? The hon. Member supplemented his Question by stating that since he had put the Notice on the Paper he had seen in the daily journals that the Bey had issued a protest against the unwarrantable invasion of Tunisian territory by the French, and whether Her Majesty's Government had received that protest and intended to take any steps to urge on the French Government the maintenance of the status quo in that Regency?

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether Her Majesty's Government will interpose their good office to prevent, by mediation, or International mediation, the outbreak of hostilities between France and Tunis?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, no official information has been received of the bombardment of Tabarca; but Her Majesty's Government were informed on the 26th instant that the landing of French that, at the present moment, the interests troops was imminent. Her Majesty's Government have no reason to believe mentioned in the 3rd paragraph of the Question of the hon. Member for Wareham (Mr. Montague Guest) are threatened in Tunis; but a despatch boat has been sent to Goletta to keep up telegraphic communication with Europe in the event of its being interrupted, and a man-of-war is held in readiness at Malta to proceed to Tunis, if required, for the protection of British life and property. The French Government informed Lord Lyons on the 9th instant that their military operations will be confined to the neighbourhood of the Frontier and to the punishment of the lawless Frontier Tribes. Communications have been exchanged with the Italian Ambassador on the subject of sending vessels of war for the protection of British and Italian interests; but nothing further has taken place on the general question of the present French expedition. As regards isolated mediation by this country only, Her Majesty's Government will consider it, if asked by both parties; but only in that event. As regards joint or International mediation, Her Majesty's Government have just received a communication from the Bey of Tunis, in which he appeals to the Great Powers signatories of the Treaty of Berlin to mediate between the French Government and himself. There has not been time yet for Her Majesty's Government to become acquainted with the views of the other Powers appealed to, nor, as at present informed, do they know whether the action of the French Forces is likely to extend beyond the measures necessary for carrying out the object of the expedition, which is understood to be the punishment of the Frontier Tribes.

MR. MAC IVER asked if there were not 10,000 British subjects in Tunis, and what steps the Government thought it right to take for the protection of their interests?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that he believed there were 8,000 British subjects, and a still larger number of Italian subjects, in Tunis, and the two Governments were in communication on the subject.

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL (MILITARY OPERATIONS)—VOLUNTEER FORCE.

MR. GORST asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether, after disasters had occurred to the British troops and before the cessation of hostilities in the Transvaal, many members of the Volunteer Rifle Association of South Australia offered through the Governor of South Australia to go on active service to the Transvaal to the assistance of Her Majesty's troops in South Africa; what reply was returned to this offer by the Imperial Government; and, whether, in the event of a renewal of hostilities in the Transvaal, the services of Volunteers from Australia and other British Colonies would be accepted by Her Majesty's Government?

MR. GRANT DUFF: Sir, in answer to the hon. and learned Member's first Question, I have to say that the statement therein contained is quite correct. About 300 well-trained Volunteers offered their services. In reply to his second Question, I have to say that the Governor was directed to inform the Volunteers that Her Majesty's Government were much gratified at the patriotic spirit evinced by their offer; but that they did not think it desirable to accept the services of Volunteers in the Transvaal War. In reply to the hon. and learned Member's third Question, I have to say that I make no doubt that the same decision would be taken if a similar offer were again made. There is one consideration which dominates the whole policy which the present Government or any other Government must maintain in South Africa, and that is the absolute necessity of preventing the development of race-hatred between the men of British and of Dutch descent.

ARMY RECRUITS—SCOTCH RECRUITS.

SIR ALEXANDER GORDON asked the Secretary of State for War, If he will lay upon the Table of the House a Return showing the various regiments or departments of the Army to which the 2185 recruits raised in Scotland during the year 1879 were finally posted after being passed into the service, together with the number so posted to each regiment or department?

MR. CHILDERS: Sir, there will be no objection to give the information which my hon. and gallant Friend desires. If he will privately explain to me his exact object, I will settle with him the best form of Return.

LOCAL TAXATION—THE ANNUAL STATEMENT.

MR. PELL asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government, before the Budget arrangements for the year have been finally agreed to, to resume this year the production of an annual statement of local finance; and, if not, what other opportunity will be afforded to the House to consider the growth of local expenditure and debt?

MR. GLADSTONE: In reply to the Question of the hon. Member, I cannot give him the answer which he, perhaps, expects; but I wish to give him such information on the subject as lies in my power to afford him. I desire, equally with himself, that the attention of this House should be drawn as much as possible to the subject of local expenditure; and if I do not make myself a party to mixing up that subject with the national taxing Bill, it is because I feel that it cannot receive any adequate attention on that occasion. The question of the production of an annual statement of local finance cannot be conveniently considered in connection with the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill, for it would lead to the confusion of matters which, in a Parliamentary sense, are quite distinct, and there could be no complete or satisfactory discussion upon it. I will, however, promise the hon. Member that the question of local loans and expenditure shall be discussed at a period of the Session when it will be convenient for the Government and the hon. Member to take part in such discussion.

MR. PELL said, that, notwithstanding the reply of the right hon. Gentleman, he should still feel it to be his duty to call the attention of the House to this subject at the time when it would be most convenient to discuss it.

NAVY—ARMAMENT OF H.M. SHIPS.

MR. W. H. SMITH asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, What breech-loading guns will be supplied for the service of the Navy during the course of the present year; and if it is the intention of the Admiralty to send any of Her Majesty's ships to sea armed with guns inferior in respect of range, penetration, and accuracy to the new guns with which the ships of war of other countries are now armed?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, the breech-loading guns which will be supplied for the service of the Navy during the present financial year will be eight 9·2 inch 18-ton guns, four 8 inch 11½ ton guns, and 103 6 inch 4 ton guns. It is intended that, as ships come in for repair, these guns will replace guns of equivalent weight and of the present patterns. For instance, the 9·2 inch breech-loaders will be employed to re-arm one of the four ships which at present carry 18 ton muzzle-loaders; while the 8 inch and 6 inch guns will replace the 7 inch and 9 inch muzzle-loaders on such ships as the *Shah* and *Raleigh*. With regard to the heavier guns, it is intended that all ships now under construction shall be armed with the new 43-ton breech-loading gun, which we have reason to hope will be inferior in range, penetration, and accuracy to no gun of at all the same calibre which is now in course of construction in any country, and far superior to those of that calibre with which the other great Navies of the world are at present armed. The *Ajax* and the *Agamemnon*—whose armament was decided by the late Board and cannot now be altered—will be the last ships that will go to sea with the 38-ton muzzle-loader; improved, however, so as to carry a much heavier charge. The *Conqueror*, the *Majestic*, the *Collingwood*, and the *Colossus* will all carry that 43-ton gun in whose birth and progress the right hon. Gentleman has taken so keen and effective an interest—an interest which I earnestly hope he will continue to exhibit until the first of them is actually mounted in steel and iron on one of Her Majesty's vessels.

MR. W. H. SMITH: I beg to give Notice that, on going into Committee on the Navy Estimates, I shall call attention to the desirability of still further efforts being made in the direction of adopting breech-loading guns for the Navy.

COUNTY REPRESENTATIVE BOARDS (SCOTLAND).

MR. J. W. BARCLAY asked the First Lord of the Treasury, referring to the recent meeting of the Members from Scotland, and the statement made thereat by the Lord Advocate, Whether, if the next meeting which the Lord Advocate has promised to call is generally favourable to the constitution of county representative boards as the proper organization for receiving and administering such share of Imperial taxation as may correspond with subsidies in aid of local rates, he will this Session bring in a Bill to constitute such boards?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, I should not like to pledge myself absolutely to the introduction of a Bill during the present Session, until I had an opportunity of forming a judgment as to whether this can be advantageously done. All I can say is, that I am extremely desirous to promote the purpose for which the Question is put—namely, the purpose of establishing completely satisfactory county government in Scotland. I deem it of the highest importance, not only with reference to the general principle of local government, and likewise with reference to good arrangements for the portion of expenditure which consists in county subvention, and, if possible, to the material relief of the Business of this House. What I should wish to say is, that if the Scotch Members, to a large extent, see their way to progress in the general subject, I should be desirous of giving every possible facility in the power of the Government with a view to prompt and, if possible, immediate legislation.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE — LAND LAW (IRELAND) BILL.

The O'DONOGHUE asked, in the not improbable event of the discussion on the Land Law (Ireland) Bill not being concluded to-night, When Her Majesty's Government proposed that the discussion should be resumed?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, I am not able to forecast the course of Business for to-morrow; but, undoubtedly, if there should be a favourable prospect of resuming the debate on the Land Law (Ireland) Bill at a reasonable time to-morrow—that is to say, not later than 10 o'clock—I shall be glad to take advantage of it.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) BILL.—[Bill 135.]

(*Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Forster, Mr. Bright, Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland.*)

SECOND READING. ADJOURNED DEBATE.

[SECOND NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [25th April], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

And which Amendment was,

> To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "no measure of Land Reform for Ireland, however ably advised, can be considered complete or perfectly satisfactory which does not deal with the condition of the farm labourers of Ireland, with a view to ameliorate it,"—(*Mr. Villiers Stuart,*)

—instead thereof.

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Debate *resumed.*

Lord ELCHO, who had given Notice of the following Amendment:—

> "That this House, while willing to consider favourably any just measure, founded upon sound principles, that will benefit tenants of land in Ireland, is of opinion that the Land Law (Ireland) Bill, is, in its main provisions, economically unsound, unjust, and impolitic,"

observed, that in the year 1873 a Liberal Attorney General said that an object of all law was to make men certain of the tenure of their property. He thought that in considering this very remarkable Bill it was desirable to remind the House of such a saying as that, and also to remind Her Majesty's Government that the object for which they sat on the Treasury Bench was to make men certain of the tenure of their property. And he thought it the more necessary that these matters should be considered, when we had the state of things which we knew prevailed in Europe — when we had Socialism rampant in Germany, and Nihilism in Russia capable of committing atrocities such as that of which they had so lately heard, and when there was no disguising the fact that a state of things was growing up in Ireland—he did not know whether to call it Parnellism or what—

which if not Communism was practically the same thing, and when we had a Bill brought in by his right hon. Friend the Prime Minister, which unquestionably did give effect to the carrying out of the Communistic principle, for what was Communism but the expropriation of the few for the benefit of the many? His right hon. Friend did not as yet go in for Communism pure and undisguised; but they knew not how soon a light might dawn on him. They knew not how soon he might discover that he had been living under the darkness of the British Constitution, and the only true light was to be found in some such Communistic Constitution as had been elaborately drawn up and circulated throughout the country. His right hon. Friend had the great power of what he (Lord Elcho) might call protoplasmic reasoning, and he had no doubt that the time would come when they would be within measurable distance of Communism, and that it would be within the range of practical politics. At any rate, he (Lord Elcho) found in this Bill the great Communistic principle—the expropriation of the few for the benefit of the many, and he ventured to ask the House to resist that principle to the uttermost and throw out the Bill. The first part of the Resolution which he intended to move asked the House to say that it was ready to consider any measure which was founded on a just principle, and was equitable in itself, and would benefit the tenants of land in Ireland. He admitted that the Government found themselves in great difficulty, that they found they had to legislate in some form or other on this Land Question. But whose fault was it? It was through their own fault that difficulties occurred. Those difficulties arose, in the first place, from the principle of confiscation without compensation to be found in the Land Act of 1870, which gave the Irish tenant a possessing right in his holding. They arose from wild talk during the last Election. They arose from allowing the lawless agitation to go on in Ireland, and the Irish people to be armed, without taking steps to prevent that state of things. They arose from this—that when they had the power, they used it not against the Tritons of the agitation, but against the minnows of agitation. They arose also from the fact that the Government, while speaking about remedial legislation, had not the courage to tell the Irish people plainly that there was only one way for a nation to be prosperous, and that was by being law-abiding. The Prime Minister had admitted that the Land Law in Ireland was more favourable to tenantry in Ireland than it was to tenantry in England, Scotland, or any other part of the civilized world, either in Europe or elsewhere. ["No, no!" *and* "Hear, hear!"] He simply stated the fact, and those who cried "No!" must show that it was incorrect. He ventured to think that this Bill of the Government would not get them out of their difficulties with regard to Ireland. It would not improve the state of Ireland, but would simply aggravate those difficulties. He hoped he had as much sympathy for his fellow-being as any man in that House. He had no right to speak for anybody but himself; but he thought he might, without fear, say this—he was confident there was no keener sympathy for the poor tenantry of Ireland on the part of any hon. Gentleman opposite, or any hon. Gentleman who sat behind him, than was to be found on the part of Members who sat in his part of the House. ["Oh!"] That was his firm conviction. He believed, further, that what they were about to do would greatly aggravate the evils which they professed to cure. They need not go back to pre-historic times, to the Brehon Laws, or to the laws of the 16th century, as the Prime Minister had done, to account for the state of the Irish tenantry. The reasons were patent, and were much less remote than that. They were simply the result of a bad climate, precarious crops, and overcrowding. Let anyone deny these facts if he could. With all possible respect to the Government, he thought the proper course would have been to have the courage to tell this to the people of Ireland, and to point out to the people the physical fact that it was impossible in Ireland for any family to exist on five acres of land. But what was the state of the tenantry in Ireland? That out of 600,000 tenants 300,000 were said to have less than 15 acres, and he saw it stated that 150,000 were below £4 valuation; and he had read somewhere that there were 28,000 tenants who held no more than one acre of land. Well, what would legislation such as that proposed do for such a state of things? There was but one remedy, and that was the remedy which appeared in the latter part of this Bill—namely, the remedy of emigration; not the banishment of tenants, but sending them from misery in Ireland to the plenty which our Colonies were willing to offer to them. That he believed to be the true remedy. It was the remedy, at any rate, which, after careful inquiry, a scientific French economist held to be a sound remedy. Although he believed that emigration should be left to perfectly natural causes, yet he should be quite willing to support the second part of the Bill, and was also willing that the Government should try the experiment of transferring the people from the distressed districts to the reclaimed land, though he believed the money would be much better spent in improving the land already reclaimed; but what he wanted to point out was that the second part of the Bill was absolutely antagonistic to the first. The first part aggravated and perpetuated the evil by rooting the surplus population in the soil, which by the second part of the Bill they showed a desire to get rid of. Therefore, addressing himself to the first part of the Bill, he said in his Resolution that it was economically unsound, unjust, and impolitic. The first thing in considering the Bill was to find out what was the Bill, and what the Bill meant. His right hon. and learned Friend the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), in that very powerful speech of his the other day, said—and it was the only thing on which he differed from him—that this Bill was not skilfully drawn, that it was not clear. Now, it struck him (Lord Elcho) that a remarkable feature in the Bill was the skill manifested in the drawing of it, because it did not tell you plainly what it meant. He would not like to say that from his own view, but during the Recess, there was a great display of Northern Lights at Belfast, and one of those lights he saw opposite him. A speech was made by the hon. and learned Member for Tyrone (Mr. Litton), who, he was told, was reckoned in Ireland a very able lawyer. And what did he say of this Bill? He prayed the particular attention of the House to this passage of the speech of the hon. and learned Member for Tyrone, one of the Northern Lights—

> "The Government were surrounded by certain difficulties, which they sought to get rid of by the skill with which the measure was prepared. There was a strong opposition in the House of Commons, and if Mr. Gladstone had come forward with a Bill that would have said that every tenant in Ireland must have fair rent, free sale, and fixity of tenure, he would have found it impossible to carry such a Bill. He believed those were the objects Mr. Gladstone had aimed at in his Bill; and he thought, so far as he could judge, he had secured them. They were secured not in a direct way, and not in such a manner that he who ran might read; for, if it had been so framed, there would have been a measure of hostility that those who framed the measure were anxious to keep back."

So, whatever the verbage, whatever the contradictions might be, the intention of the Bill was simply to put on the Table, on the part of the Cabinet, a measure which was cast out of the House by a majority of 234 when proposed by Mr. Butt, and which amounted to what were called the "three F's;" but which had been more properly called the "one R," or simple "robbery." The present Bill, however, might be better designated as the "two R's," or "robbery wrapped-up." It meant tenure fixed by the State in practical perpetuity, fair rents, and free right of sale on the part of the tenant of that which he had never bought to the highest bidder. That was what the Bill plainly meant, and he affirmed that a Bill of that character was economically unsound, and he challenged any Gentleman on the Treasury Bench to affirm the contrary. It might be supposed that he would quote in support of that proposition Adam Smith, Bentham, Mill, Fawcett, or all those politico-economic lights who had guided the steps of the Liberal Party till the year 1870. He was not about to do that, nor would he quote in support of sound, economic views, as against those that were unsound, the doctrines expounded in such eloquent terms in 1870 by the present Prime Minister, who then knocked over the case of this Bill by arguments which could not be controverted. He would not quote Lord Selborne or other legal authorities; but he would content himself with saying that he had collected and strung together a collection of the pearls which had fallen from their lips and published them as a useful preface to the Land Bill. He would, however, on that economic question just say a word as to what fell from the Chief Secretary for Ireland the other night. That right hon. Gentleman then had a very difficult and delicate task to perform—namely, to justify on economic grounds what he could not call other than the economic apostacy of himself, of the Cabinet, and of his Party. The right hon. Gentleman did it hesitatingly, he might say blushingly. But somehow or other he got through the task of attempting to justify the repudiation of the politico-economic faith in which not only his Party themselves, but their fathers and forefathers, had been nurtured and had cherished until the fatal year 1870, when the Prime Minister brought in, to a great extent, new economic views. But what did the Chief Secretary tell them the other night? He said they gave something of value to the tenant; and, that being rather alarming, he qualified it by adding that they gave him something which he already had in sentiment and feeling. That was the new doctrine. For himself, he thought the old view was the sound view; he was still of the faith which the right hon. Gentleman and his Colleagues previously held; and he did the Chief Secretary the justice to say that, at any rate, he had not scoffed at those who adhered to the old faith. He could not say the same of the Prime Minister, who, revelling in the repudiation of himself and of what he was in 1870, had endeavoured to cast ridicule on the Professor of Political Economy at Oxford, who, on the Land Commission, thought right to state that he did not believe in the "three F's," and regarded that policy as mistaken. Here was what Mr. Bonamy Price, who was responsible for the training of their sons, said—

> "The 'three F's' ought to be condemned as false in principle, both socially and economically, as calculated to perpetuate the peculiar evils from which Ireland is suffering, and to arrest that increase of production from which alone she can hope to advance towards prosperity. No doubt Ireland is in a sickly condition; but is her cure to be effected by remedies false in their nature, and sure, in the end, to lead to a yet worse malady? For nations, as for individuals, there is one golden rule which ought never to be violated—not to start from false principles, however trifling their action may seem at first. The law of human nature decrees and enforces that their evil nature shall do its work, and develop the mischievous consequences which they contain. The remedy must be sought not from a legal interference with business, which is unnatural and mischievous, but from the training of both landlords and tenants to the understanding and the fulfilment of what each owes to the successful cultivation of the land."

His right hon. Friend repudiated that, and preferred the views of the Bessborough Commission, which rested on the ground of sentiment and pre-historic tradition. His right hon. Friend said that Mr. Bonamy Price's views were only fit for the planet Saturn. Now, he had no acquaintance with the planet Saturn, but he had a little acquaintance with the planet Earth, and the doctrines which were repudiated by his right hon. Friend were the doctrines of the planet Earth. What the doctrines suited to the planet Saturn were he could not say; but he did not think his right hon. Friend was very happy in his reference to that planet. They had been taught in their mythological lessons at school that Saturn had a habit of eating his own children; but, as far as he could recollect what he had been told of that estimable individual, his power of eating and digesting his own children was as nothing compared with the power of the present Prime Minister of swallowing and digesting, in 1881, all the political doctrines which he gave utterance to in 1870. He came back, however, from Saturn to this earth, only remarking that this Bill could be described in no better words than these—that it was a Saturnalia of economic error. If they cast themselves adrift from the sound principles of political economy, what, he asked, was to be their guide? Was it to be "the sentiment and feeling" of his right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary? Were they to have no other light to guide them but the bog-light of impulsiveness and the sentimental statesmanship which would trade for Party purposes on the predatory instincts of men? He protested against their following such guidance as that, and he thought that the House would agree with him that the Bill founded on those principles was economically unsound; that it was unsound, further, in this—that it had not even the excuse which had been put forward for the Hares and Rabbits Bill, and which would, no doubt, be the excuse for the measure which had been promised them in future in regard to the land in England—namely, the improvement of the state of agriculture, and an increase of the supply of food for the people. Would any hon.

Member venture to assert that this Bill would effect those objects? Why, they drew no distinction between the idle and the active, between the ignorant and the skilful and intelligent farmer. The tendency of this Bill would be, if it was to the benefit of mankind that two blades of grass should be made to grow where but one grew before, to stereotype all the evils of Ireland and make one blade of grass to grow where two grew before. He entered his protest against this Bill as economically unsound. If it was true that what was morally wrong could not be politically right, that measure could not be politically right which sinned against the Eighth Commandment. He ventured this further *dictum*—that that which was economically wrong could not be politically right. He asked the House to affirm, by his Resolution, that the Bill was unjust. He had heard it said that the Irish landlords were prepared to accept this Bill; but the answer one of them gave, speaking on their behalf, was that they wanted one of two things—either compensation or the purchase of their property. Failing one or other of these, they held that they were justified in resisting this Bill to the utmost. No answer had yet been given to the speech of the right hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Gibson). That speech tore the Bill to pieces. The right hon. and learned Gentleman showed that, by the operation of the 7th clause, in taking the rent into consideration, they would have to make allowance for tenant right and for disturbance and compensation where no tenant right existed, and reduce the rent in proportion, the result of which would be to reduce the rent by one-third. The Chief Secretary gave his opinion that it was not intended that the tenant right should be carved out of the rent; but in a matter of such monstrous confiscation they wanted facts, and not mere speculation. If it was not as stated by the right hon. and learned Gentleman, let them be referred to words in the Bill, and not be told that if the law was properly construed it would not be so. If they could not point to clear words in the Bill, let there be a distinct understanding that something would be put in the Bill to settle the point. At the Belfast meeting there was a speech made by a gentleman who was familiarly known in the North as "the three S's"—"sober, sensible Shaw." What said "the three S's?" In the first place, he referred to the stupidity with which the Bill would be encountered; and then he said, with reference to Clause 7—

> "The valuators go to the holding and see what is the present letting value as it stands with all improvements and put a fair rent upon it. What next? According to the subsection they deduct in Ulster the value of the tenant right and say—the land is worth 30*s*. an acre; the tenant right is so much, and we deduct that; and so with the rest of Ireland."

That was the view taken of the Bill by a distinguished authority on the question—that it was intended in fixing the rent to take into consideration the tenant right, and deduct it from the rent. [An hon. Member: From the competition rent.] Let them see what this confiscation really amounted to. It was better these things should be driven home. He had drawn up, with the help of a most able lawyer, a statement which confirmed to the letter the speech of the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin, although it was drawn up before that speech was delivered. He found that if they took a holding let on the 1st November, 1881, at £21, and if the rent was approved by the Court, the fee at 21 years would amount to £441, the tenant's interest, under Section 3, amounting to one-third of the fee. ["No, no!"] Was, he asked, the tenant's right ever sold for less? The Court would, therefore, deduct that, and fix the rent at £14. The tenant gained, and the landlord lost £7 of an annuity, which at 15 years was equal, at compound interest, at 5 per cent, to £146. If the tenant was undisturbed, the accumulating power of the £7 annuity continued to the confiscation of the fee. If the tenant was disturbed, the compensation, which was seven times £14—the fair rent—was equal to £98. Thus, if the landlord at the end of 15 years assumed possession, his loss would be—accumulated annuity, £146; disturbance, £98, showing a total of £244, or £23 more than half the value of the fee at the commencement of the statutory term of 15 years. He was only assuming this; he hoped it was not true; but it was a view which had not been directly contradicted. Was it in the Bill? He believed it was. If it was not, well; if it was, let it be struck out. He should follow it to the bitter end. Let them apply a parallel case. A tradesman sells a business under £5,000 penalty not to re-open in the same street for 15 years, nor thereafter without consent of the purchaser. He is required, nevertheless, during 15 years, and thereafter, to pay 5 per cent on £5,000. It would be better to forfeit at once and so re-open. As regarded the penalty on the landlords, if a landlord raised his rent and asked more than the Court sanctioned, what was his state? His state would be this—Suppose the tenant paid £80 for 20 years and the landlord asked £120. One member of the Court approved of £120, another thought £100 sufficient, and the third £80; but £100 was decided upon as a medium course. The landlord having asked £120, and the Court having fixed £100, he would have to pay 10 times £20 for having asked a rent one of the Commissioners considered fair. If the tenant refused to pay the £20 increase, and was evicted, he would receive four times £80, or £320, for having previously enjoyed a farm at a rent £20 below what was thought fair. If that was so, what a mockery of justice the Bill was! He hoped the Government would make this matter clear. He wished to ask the question—Was it intended that a sale or assignment made by a tenant in disregard of regulations in Clause 1 should be annulled? If not, what provision was there to give the landlord the benefit of these regulations? He thought it would be difficult to characterize the Bill in other terms than those used by the Premier himself with reference to the proposals of a section of the Irish Members—namely, "public plunder." He considered that the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) pursued a much more straightforward and manly course than the Government. Practically, the proposals of the Government amounted to the expropriation of the landlords; but they had not the courage to come forward and say that. There was no word as to compensation to the landlords. The hon. Member for the City of Cork had the same object in view; he proposed that the landlords should be expropriated and compensated. His right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland the other evening quoted a passage from Mr. Mill to the effect that "reason and experience recommended that in the case of a tenant proprietary rent should be fixed"—as he understood his right hon. Friend—"by authority." He turned to the chapter and found a material difference between the original passage and the quotation of it by his right hon. Friend. He did not say the Chief Secretary misrepresented it intentionally; but the words were not "by authority," but "in perpetuity." And for what purpose? To perpetuate small tenants in Ireland? The heading of the chapter was, "How to get rid of cottier tenantry." Mr. Mill went on, and said—

> "In this measure there would be, strictly speaking, no injustice, provided the landlords were compensated for the present value of the chances of increase they would be prospectively required to forego."

The whole passage was a most important one, and he hoped the House would allow him to read it. He agreed in every word of it. Mr. Mill said, with regard to property in land—

> "The claim of the landowners to the land is altogether subordinate to the general policy of the State. The principle of property gives them no right to the land, but only a right to compensation for whatever portion of their interest in the land it may be the policy of the State to deprive them of. To that their claim is indefeasible. It is due to landowners, and to owners of any property whatever, recognized as such by the State, that they should not be dispossessed of it without receiving its full pecuniary value, or an annual income equal to that they derived from it. This is due on the general principles on which property rests. If the land was bought with the produce of the labour and abstinence of themselves or their ancestors, compensation is due to them on that ground; even if otherwise, it is still due on the ground of prescription. Nor can it ever be necessary for accomplishing an object by which the community altogether will gain that a particular portion of the community should be immolated. Where the property is of a kind to which peculiar affections attach themselves, the compensation ought to exceed a bare pecuniary equivalent. The Legislature, which, if it pleased, might convert the whole body of landlords into fundholders or pensioners, might *à fortiori* commute the average receipts of Irish landowners into a fixed rent-charge, and raise the tenants into proprietors; supposing always (without which these Acts would be nothing better than robbery) that the full market value of the land was tendered to the landlords in case they preferred that to accepting the conditions proposed."

So much for the injustice to the landlords; but did the injustice stop with landlords? How as to the remaindermen? How as to the mortgagee? How as to those who, on the faith of Parliament, had invested millions of money in Irish land? According to Justice Fitzgerald, £54,000,000 by purchases under the Encumbered Estates Act. How as to every farmer in Ireland who had been a tenant? How as to the labourers? At the present time they could get a farm without payment. They could not do so if this Bill passed. Therefore, let the great Liberal Party fully understand this great fact, that if this Bill passed into law they would be creating, not by the action of the Crown directly, but by an Act of Parliament, a vast close corporation of the existing holders of land in Ireland, and enabling them to fix individually what fines must be paid by every man before he could be admitted to that corporation. That fact did not admit of dispute, and he commended it to the notice of the hon. Member for Chelsea (Sir Charles W. Dilke) and the hon. Member for Gateshead (Mr. James), who had an extraordinary appetite for devouring Corporations. He thought he had said enough as to the equities of the Prime Minister, who upon this question was always perorating to justice. There remained the question of impolicy. He had proved that the Bill was essentially unjust, he had proved it to be unsound, and, therefore, it must be impolitic. But he asked the House to take a wider view of its impolicy than as affecting merely the landlords and tenants of Ireland. How would the measure affect the Empire and the question of union between England and Ireland? Would it be successful for its purpose? It was said to be a measure of concession to Ireland; but what kind of a concession? Did concession to Ireland ever stop agitation? In 1833, Sir George Cornewall Lewis said Ireland only required a Poor Law—did that satisfy them? Mr. Sharman Crawford in 1843 proposed tenant right—did that satisfy them? In 1860, Mr. Cardwell and Lord Palmerston gave compensation for improvements prospectively, not retrospectively —did that satisfy them? Then came the Land Bill of 1870, which was the germ of the present Bill—did that satisfy them? What followed? Between 1870 and 1880 there were 39 Land Bills for Ireland brought it. They had in 1876 the "three F's" brought in by a private Member, Mr. Butt; but the thing was scouted. There was no question at that time of any man of influence or importance in the House, except the Members from Ireland, who for one moment would hear of such a concession. But let them go back two years or less. When Parliament separated in 1879, was there any question of legislation of that kind? Did anyone for a moment suppose then that they should have heard of the necessity of remedial legislation for Ireland to sweep away all those obnoxious landlords? No. He wished to do honour to the hon. Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell), for he was the originator of the principle. There was a bad harvest in 1879, and the hon. Member asked the Government to stop evictions in consequence of the distress. No one even took notice of his proposal. What happened in Mid Lothian? The election for Mid Lothian was subsequent to 1879; it was in 1880, only 13 months ago. Was there any question of that kind on the Mid Lothian hustings? He knew what went on at that time, and he could say there was no question on the Mid Lothian hustings of "remedial legislation" for Ireland. On the contrary, the electors of Mid Lothian and the world were told that Ireland had never been so prosperous. That was in March, 1880, and within two months of that time, that God-forsaken, still-born, Compensation for Disturbance Bill was brought in, and it contained the principle in question; and within 13 months of the time when they were told that Ireland had never been so prosperous or contented they had this Bill. Would anyone, in the face of those facts, get up and say that the Bill rested upon solid conviction — that it rested upon principle? Why, there was not a speech which the Chief Secretary made in which he did not tell the House that he was prepared to maintain the law; but they must enable him to do that by sacrificing the landlords' property. That was what it came to. And so it was as regarded the Church. Beginning with Roman Catholic Emancipation, they ended by destroying the Church. But in the end they came to this, that nothing would satisfy. No concession extorted by violence ever would; and who could deny that this was a concession extorted from the Government by the lawlessness which had prevailed and still prevailed in Ireland? It was nothing more nor less than blackmail that had to be paid. What would be the result? Would it bind Ireland any closer to this country?

If the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) accepted it, would it satisfy the labourers? Pass this Bill, and as sure as the sun rose to-morrow a Parnell of the labourers would arise. He was not sure, judging from an Amendment on the Paper, that a Parnell of the labourers was not already in the House. But, at any rate, if they satisfied the tenants by a bribery as gross as any practised in contravention of the Bribery at Elections Act, they had the labourers then to satisfy; and the hon. Member for Cork told them in the plainest language that the Bill was not a stopgap, not even a halting place, but a step in progress. The hon. Member would accept, it might be, the expropriation of the landlords; but that was with a view to get rid of the tie between this country and Ireland, and to lead to separation. ["Hear, hear!" *and* "No!"] They had been told, over and over again, that it was with a view to Home Rule—in other words, in the long run to separation. Therefore, in this attempt to conciliate Ireland they were false to their own principles, and were doing that which would fail of its object. They knew well in *Lear* how Kent, when blind, asked to be led to the top of the precipice; but here they had a Government with their eyes open walking themselves and driving the nation into the grave which was being openly and avowedly dug by the hon. Member for the City of Cork for the interment of the unity of the Empire. But the most noxious things had their uses; and this Bill, if rightly read, had its uses. He had shown that it was a gauge of progress; it was also a measure of value, for it told them of the value of the Whig securities in the Cabinet. As far as he knew, there was only one of them convertible, and he was glad to say he was a Scotchman. The others apparently were content to play the part of dumb figureheads to the ship which was driven by the two right hon. Members for Birmingham, who were stoking in the engine-room. But if it was a measure of value it was also a warning. Did any hon. Gentleman who had listened to his remarks or had studied the Bill really believe for a moment that its principles would be confined to Ireland? He well recollected that the Prime Minister had said the principles which were in that Bill, if applicable to Ireland, were equally applicable to England. [Mr. GLADSTONE dissented.] He hoped the House would pardon him if he were driven to read the passage by the shake of his right hon. Friend's head, who, like all great and modest men, forgot some of the many excellent things that he had said. These were the words of the right hon. Gentleman—

"There is another point which, I think, deserves serious attention. I cannot help pointing out that if perpetuity of tenure were really good for Ireland, it could not be bad either for England or Scotland."—[3 *Hansard*, cxcix. 353.]

That was his argument. If they consented to the principle as applicable to Ireland it would not stop there. And did they think it would stop at land? Why, there was already a house league in Dublin and elsewhere in Ireland. Did they think it would stop at houses, and not touch every description of property? This was a sop to Demos, and did they imagine that if Demos got the power he would draw any nice distinctions between property, whether in land or in money? Assuredly not. He hoped the capitalists of this country would remember that. They might depend upon it that our Brummagem Girondists were calling into play forces which they would afterwards find themselves powerless to control. In conclusion, he had only to say that if hon. Members opposite, the extreme illiberals below the Gangway, would not attach weight to his views, perhaps they would pay attention to what came from the Treasury Bench, and to a passage that seemed to have been written outside the House for the instruction both of the Front Benches and of hon. Members generally. It was as follows:—

"Unlike the Socialists of former days, those who, at the present time, are under the influence of the Socialistic sentiment are beginning to place the chief reliance upon State intervention. This growing tendency to rely upon the State is fraught with greater danger to England than to any foreign countries. The two great political sections who contend for place and power have a constant temptation held out to them to bid against each other for popular support. Under the pressure of this temptation it may consequently happen that statesmen will accept doctrines and pursue a policy against which, if their judgment was unbiased, they would be the first to protest. This is a peril which hangs over the country."

The magnitude of the peril was shown by the kind of legislation before the House; and he ventured to think that the views he had just quoted, and of which the Postmaster General was the author, contained far sounder doctrine on the subject than was embodied in the Government Bill. He had now endeavoured to state clearly the grounds of his objections to the Bill. If the Forms of the House enabled him to do so, he hoped to move his Amendment, which challenged the principle of the major part of the Bill, and pronounced it to be economically unsound, unjust, and impolitic. Wishing to resist the Bill to the utmost of his power, he proposed to press his Amendment to a division. Whatever number of Members might vote for it, the weight of authority would be found in the Lobby of the minority. And why did he say that? Because in the Lobby of the minority would be found the wise, the deliberate, the written *dicta* of all the learned political economists down to our time who had discussed this question, and who had ever been looked upon as the lights of the Liberal Party. There would also be in the Lobby of the minority the spoken statements and the public acts of all the eminent statesmen from Sir Robert Peel downwards who had had to deal with political economy subjects in the House. There would also be in the Lobby of the minority the ghosts of the opinions—the former opinions—of every man who sat upon the Treasury Bench, without any exception; and, finally, there would be in the Lobby of the minority, no matter how small the minority might be, the consciences of three-fourths of those who voted against him.

Mr. CHARLES RUSSELL said, he did not wish to enter into a very lengthened criticism of the eloquent speech they had just heard, into which he could not help remarking that a singular spirit of gaiety had been imported. It was a great pity the noble Lord the Member for Haddingtonshire (Lord Elcho) had not heard the speech of the noble Viscount the Member for Barnstaple (Viscount Lymington) the other day, who had most clearly shown that the Bill would not interfere with the real interests of the landlords, but would rather benefit and consolidate them. He (Mr. C. Russell) could not help thinking the speech they had just listened to had been delivered long beyond its time. It ought to have been delivered in 1870—indeed, he knew it had been. It was not much more than a reproduction of a speech delivered by the noble Lord during the debate on the Irish Land Act of 1870, garnished with a few meagre extracts from books. It was the old policy to "do nothing" with regard to Ireland, and to trust to rack-renting and to the Royal Irish Constabulary to carry it out. ["No, no!"] Then what was the policy? If the noble Lord really felt the sympathy he expressed with the Irish tenants, where had been his propositions to ameliorate their condition when the Conservatives were in power? In certain passages of his speech the noble Lord had been quite carried away by his eloquence; for he must have forgotten himself, when he plainly hinted that the Prime Minister had brought in the measure for purely Party purposes when his conscience went against it. Those were sentiments which the noble Lord would probably regret having uttered. There had been a time when the evil forebodings he had given vent to might have had some effect; but, at this time, the House was pretty well used to those kind of arguments. The same arguments about robbing the landlords and Communism were used in 1870; but, since that time, it was a fact that the gain of the landlords had increased. Better protection for the tenant meant better security for the landlord. The noble Lord opposite (Lord John Manners), in his Amendment, said that the remedy for the condition of Ireland lay in the industrial development of that country, and he affirmed that no legislation for Ireland was needed on the Land Question. They had heard only three speeches from the Opposition as yet, including that from his (Mr. C. Russell's) hon., learned, and, he might say, demonstrative Friend the Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton). The speech of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the late Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Gibson) had not affected the great principles of the Bill; and as for the noble Lord's speech, that ought to have been delivered in Committee. He had only raised two points going to the principle of the measure—one as to the supposed, and he could show it was not real, "exclusion" of the landlords, and the other as to the basis upon which fair rents were to be fixed. Could the existing state of things be allowed to go on? Did any class in Ireland—did the landlord class wish that it should continue? He (Mr. C. Russell) thought he was speaking their sentiments when he said that they desired the question to be settled, and, if possible, that the agitation should come to an end. He hoped the noble Viscount the Member for the County Down (Viscount Castlereagh), who represented and was connected with great and important interests, and the traditions of whose property were amongst the first, as regarded management, in Ireland, would favour his Party in that House with some of the speeches he had made out of the House, and which showed what was his expressed opinion and liberal sentiments on this question when addressing his constituency in Ulster. Now, what was the condition of things? They had, in the Estimates for the year, an item of £50,000 extra for police force, used for what purpose?—for the purpose mainly, if not entirely, of the enforcement of civil processes in reference to land. They had, he believed, as many as 30,000 troops in Ireland—as if an army were invading a hostile country. They had grave and serious crimes staining the land in Ireland, which, he would admit, had had much sympathy amongst a large class of people in the country. Side by side with the existence of that particular class of crime, they had an almost entire absence of ordinary crime. What did that point to? It seemed to him that the existing relations affecting land in Ireland had become untenable and impracticable. The Government attempted to remedy that. He did not propose to bestow upon that Bill of the Government indiscriminate eulogy; but he objected to it from entirely different views from those of the noble Lord the Member for Haddingtonshire. He (Mr. C. Russell) thought it was a Bill which should be dealt with by the House in a fair and liberal spirit. He could not but think that a good deal of the criticism of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) was microscopical, and that it savoured very much of the language of the special pleader. He hoped the Bill would be approached in a fair and generous spirit, and not in a spirit of carping criticism; for, after all, criticism was an easy task, especially on a subject of this complex nature. In consequence of the observations of the noble Lord the Member for Haddingtonshire, he (Mr. C. Russell) was obliged to make one slight reference to political economy. The noble Lord utterly misconceived the point in the passage he had quoted from Mr. Mill. Mr. Mill was there speaking of the expropriation of landlords, with the view to the creation of a peasant proprietary, and said, what he (Mr. C. Russell) entirely subscribed to—that it would be utterly wrong and unjust legislation to expropriate the landlords for such a great public object as that without fully compensating them. But that, he would say, was not *ad rem.* He would cite one passage from the late Professor Cairns on this subject. He said—

> "Sustained by some of the greatest names, I will say, by a large number of the first rank, in political economy, I hold that the land of a country presents conditions which separate it economically from the great mass of the other objects of wealth—conditions which, if they do not absolutely and under all conditions impose upon the State the obligation of controlling private enterprize in dealing with land, at least explain why this control is at a certain stage of social progress indispensable, and why, in fact, it is constantly to be put in force wherever public opinion or custom has not been strong enough to do without it."

That being so, if ever a state of things existed which should justify legislative interference, surely that state of things existed in Ireland. He was asked how came it that English Land Laws would not do for Ireland. He was not going to discuss the statement of the noble Lord that the Land Laws of Ireland were more favourable to the tenants than those of any other country. He admitted that they were in some respects; but, if necessary, he could point out some respects in which they were not. If English law was not more favourable to the tenant than Irish law, why should it not do in Ireland? The causes were far back to seek, and he was not going to treat the House to an historical dissertation; but he should like to say, in a sentence, that there were mainly three causes which had rendered the condition of things in Ireland exceptional. First, political causes, followed and marked out by confiscation and repeated confiscation, which affected not only the status of proprietors in the soil, but also that of those who claimed under them. Next, the legislation prompted by the jealousy at one time of this country against the rising trade and industrial enterprize of Ireland, and which, by depressing the rising trade, threw the population of the country upon the land. Side by side with the legislation throwing the people upon the land, there came into play a worse evil than all these—he meant the penal laws, by which was prevented the acquirement by the great mass of the population of the country—the Catholics—of any permanent interest in the land. And thus these threefold causes, principally, perhaps, created a state of things in which, by artificial means, the growth and development of those rights by which industry attempted to free itself from artificial obstacles, and the growth of those natural rights by which men acquired property in land arose. That day wanted one day short of 100 years since the Catholic could first acquire freehold property in land. It was in 1782 that the penal law was repealed which provided that at that time a Catholic could have taken 50 acres of bog and reclaimed it; but, if he improved it so as to increase its value, the landlord could deprive him of it. He could also hold one or two acres at a certain distance from any town. Even bad laws could not long shackle and control a people; but, unhappily, there were no free people in any real sense in Ireland, and causes, partly political and partly religious, prevented the formation of that healthy public opinion, in the face of which the existence of bad laws could not long maintain itself. They had the land hunger; they had no freedom of contract; they had the tenant subject to have his interest eaten up by rack-rent. A Protestant rector in the South of Ireland said last year—

> "The fact is beyond all doubt, that the effect of the existing laws regulating the tenure of land is that the people are degraded into a condition little above servitude, where every family may be harassed by estate rules; where freedom of contract is unknown; and where the self-respect of the great bulk of the community is degraded into craven fear of offending those who have the power to make or mar the tenants' fortunes."

The Devon Commission of 1845 testified that the uncertainty of tenure in Ireland was a pressing grievance, paralyzing all exertions, and placing a fatal impediment in the way of improvement. It was hardly creditable to the English Government that it was not until the right hon. Gentleman the present Prime Minister addressed himself to the task nothing was done to remove the difficulties then pointed out. What did the Irish people ask? He (Mr. C. Russell) said the Irish people, because on this Land Question the Irish people were for the first time thoroughly united. It did not follow that what was asked for should be granted; but it was, at least, important that they should understand what was asked for. Primarily, they asked that the tillers of the soil should, on just terms, be allowed to become the owners of the soil which they tilled. Secondarily, where the first could not be accomplished, that they should have fixity of tenure at fair rents, with the free right of sale of their interest in the holding. It did not seem to him that there was anything alarming in that proposition. All the Commissioners that had reported, and all the Members of those Commissions, were in favour of an increase in the number of peasant proprietors. All the Commissioners were against arbitrary rents, the abolition of which would necessitate the appointment of a tribunal to fix the rents. Five out of six of the Duke of Richmond's Commissioners were practically in favour of the "three F's;" and all the Bessborough Commissioners, except Mr. Kavanagh, were in favour of the same objects, and Mr. Kavanagh went a long way in that direction. The Bill also went a considerable way towards effecting those objects, though he (Mr. C. Russell) did not think it went far enough. An analogous system had found a successful place in many countries in Europe. For example, in Italy, Spain, and Portugal. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) said he did not object to the 3rd sub-section as the definition of a fair rent. It would completely knock on the head the Ulster tenant right, which the Motion of the noble Lord opposite professed to desire to protect. If the section were to end where the right hon. and learned Gentleman proposed, it would amount to the confiscation of the tenant right in Ulster, and of the good-will interest in the rest of Ireland. The first thing the Court had to do was to determine what a person coming on to the land for the first time should pay as competition rent, or to get at the fair rent for the occupying tenant, who and whose ancestor had spent their lives and labour in improving the holding; and, in doing that, regard must be had to the interest of the occupying tenant, and put that, to some extent, against the full rent. The right hon. and learned Gentleman said—"Take the case of a farm of 20 acres, the present rent of which is £20, but the competition rent of which would be £24, or an increase of £4, and I will suppose the tenant right would fetch 20 years' purchase. That would be £400, the interest on which at 4½ per cent would be £18, which, deducted from the competition rent, would leave only £6 for the landlord; but either £24 would be far from being the full competition rent, or that man must come out of a lunatic asylum who would give £400 for an improvement in the value to the extent of £4." The right hon. and learned Gentleman asked what they were going to do in places outside Ulster, where there was no Ulster Custom or system analogous to the Ulster Custom. He (Mr. C. Russell) maintained that by the Act of 1870 the law recognized that which had long before existed as the equitable property of the tenant all over Ireland. Although he was in the presence of the Prime Minister, he was bound to say that the language used in the Act of 1870—namely, "compensation for disturbance"—was not happy language. He recognized it as giving effect to the existence of that which, according to the practice, according to the statement, and according to the universal feeling in Ireland, had been for years recognized. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Dublin University was rather unhappy in a passage which he cited in this connection. It was a passage from a letter of Lord Dufferin, which was—

> "Why was a tenant farmer in Down, who took a 50 acre farm five years ago, to have security of tenure, because a peasant or a peasant's father in Connaught 100 years ago could claim 10 acres of bog?"

His (Mr. C. Russell's) answer was that the farmer in Down who took a farm five years ago paid to go into it, and the peasant in Connaught founded his claim partly upon the fact that he or his father had reclaimed the land from a state of nature. The Devon Commission, in 1845, which was quite a Landlord Commission, reported—

> "There has long been a practical assumption by the tenant of a joint ownership in the land with his landlord."

That was reported so long back as 1845; but what did the Bessborough Commission report?—

> "It appears to us that the conditions under which land has been held by tenants in Ireland have been such that the occupiers have, as a general rule, acquired rights to continuous occupancy, which in the interests of the community it is desirable legally to recognize."

Both the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin and the noble Lord the Member for Haddingtonshire argued as if the Court to be constituted under the Bill would be bound, or was likely, to give the maximum amount of compensation for disturbance. He (Mr. C. Russell) regretted much that the Return suggested by the hon. and learned Member for Meath (Mr. A. M. Sullivan) could not be furnished, because if he (Mr. C. Russell) was to believe all the complaints he heard, it would have shown that the scale of disturbance allowances administered by County Court Judges was meagre in the extreme. The language of the Act of 1870 said that the Court was to compensate a tenant for the loss he had sustained by reason of disturbance. The House would at once see that practically that would let the rack-renting landlord off cheaply, and visit the liberal landlord very heavily. He would respectfully suggest that the section which dealt with competition and fixed a fair rent would be well omitted by a repeal of the Act of 1870, and by inserting a clause that the Court should give compensation in respect to the just interests of the tenants themselves. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Dublin University had asked where the interest came from. Did it, he asked, descend like manna from Heaven? The present Bill was for the protection of the interest of the Irish tenants which existed and was their moral right, but which jurists might call the right of imperfect obligation. If the tenant had the interest he had endeavoured to describe, it followed incident to the right that he should have the right to realize it, because next to the right of property was the right to turn it into money. He now came to the third criticism of the right hon. and learned Gentleman. The right hon.

and learned Gentleman said the portals of the Court were closed against the landlord, and yet the Government called the Bill a just one. He (Mr. C. Russell) was quite willing that the landlords should have accesses to the Court—nay, he intended to propose an Amendment to the effect that a landlord, instead of being allowed to give notice of an increase of the rent, as he was under the Bill, should not be allowed to increase his rent until he had applied to the Court. As now proposed the onus of resisting the increase would rest with the tenant; but he denied that that should be allowed. Upon the question of pre-emption he admitted the Bill was somewhat obscure. He, however, understood the object to be—at least, he hoped it was—to prevent a landlord getting rid of the tenant, merely to have the land so as to begin a fresh career of rack-renting. There was one other blot to which he wished to refer. He thought it was left quite undefined and quite uncertain what was the compensation to the tenant, and, indeed, also the compensation to the landlord where the tenant sold his interest pending eviction. Undoubtedly, his right hon. and learned Friend was quite right in stating that, according to the general principles of law, the tenant could only sell that which was legally in him, and all that a tenant under threat of eviction had was an unexpired term of occupancy up to the date of the eviction. Therefore, if it was intended that the occupancy should not be determined by the eviction, but should be a continuing occupancy, the language of the Bill required amendment. Having so far followed the criticisms of his right hon. and learned Friend, he would be glad to be allowed to say a few words in the way of suggested Amendments on that part of the Bill. He knew it was impossible to hope to deal with the great and important subject of the Law of Settlement and Entail in this Bill; but still he hoped that Liberal statesmen would not lose sight of it, because he did not think that any fair play would be given to a scheme of land reform which had not the advantage of a reform in the direction he had pointed out. He also recommended to the attention of the Government the suggestion of the Bessborough Commission, and also the suggestion of the Land Tenure Committee, which had such men upon it as Judge Longfield and Viscount Monck — that no objection of any kind should be allowed by the landlord except with the leave of the Court. He was also struck with this difficulty. He found, if he read the Bill rightly, that when a future tenancy began, a future tenant was not within the protection of the Bill in one important respect—namely, that he could not go to the Court upon the question of fixing the rent if he found the rent was unfair. He could not understand the principle of that distinction. He thought all future tenants should come within the protection of the Bill in that respect, and have the right, as the present tenants had, of going to the Court to fix the rent if under all the circumstances it was found to be excessive. There was another point which he thought ought to be considered. The compensation for disturbance section was perpetuated from the Act of 1870, and the scale of compensation enhanced. They fixed as a maximum of compensation for disturbance seven years' rent; the Court might award much less, but, in some extreme cases, it might give the seven years' rent. He wished to know if, in a possible case of disturbance, a tenant was entitled to seven years' rent, he forfeited his claim to the amount if he had gone one year in arrear of rent? In other words, as the Act of 1870 and this Bill worked, a man might, in a possible case, be entitled to seven years' rent for disturbance; but if he was one year in arrear he lost the whole through it. And another point—the Bill, as he read it, excepted leases entirely from its operation. He could not understand why that should be so. He could not see what magic or sacredness there was in a contract in writing under seal as compared with a parole contract, as they asserted, because that was the foundation of the Bill; and if there was no real freedom of contract in Ireland, how was it that the freedom of contract applied in the case of leases and not in the case of parole contracts? He was loth to introduce names in that House; but cases had again and again been brought under his notice, and quite recently in the North, where leases, prepared in batches, printed with elaborately confused clauses excluding the lessees from the benefit of the Act of 1870, had been forced upon the tenant. In that connection he would refer to the evidence given before the Bessborough Commission by the President of Maynooth College, with reference to his own personal experience as head of that Institution in reference to one of the Duke of Leinster's leases. That lease, which he had seen, was a formal demise with the most elaborate covenants. It was a lease for one year, and so from year to year, and it contained not only the most elaborate protective clause, but it also made the tenant disclaim the benefits of the Act of 1870. There might, no doubt, be many cases of free and binding contracts; but he put the case no higher than that, and he urged that if there had been any decrees in entering upon those contracts, that the parties should at least have the right at their own risk of going before the Court to make out their case. He came now to another point, which he would respectfully urge upon the Prime Minister. He considered it of the greatest moment in reference to the future working of the Bill. He referred to the mode of dealing with existing arrears of rent which accrued due from 1877 to 1879, through no fault of the tenant, but, as had been frequently admitted, through a visitation of Providence. He asked whether it was not possible with the Bill, in order to free it from impediments, to give the Court some power in reference to deferring or reducing those arrears? Unless that difficulty was met, he was afraid there would be very serious difficulty in the working of the Bill. An allowance or abatement of rent because of the failure of crops was a principle well known in the law of many countries; and though it might reasonably he objected that parties in this country contracted upon the basis of the existing law, he maintained that the principle for which he contended was not a strained one, and he submitted that if this was to be a remedial measure under exceptional circumstances, the circumstances he had referred to were peculiarly exceptional. With reference to the constitution of the Court under the Bill, he desired to say that to be effective, the Court must be simple in its machinery, it must be expeditious in its procedure, and it must be cheap. He thought it should partake as little as possible of the character of contested litigation, and as much as possible of the character of friendly arbitration. Though he respected them greatly, and had the honour of knowing a great many of them, he had found the strongest and most unanimous feeling in all parts of Ireland that the County Court Judges would not form a tribunal which would command the confidence of the country. He had found that by letters from North, South, East, and West; and lately, in Belfast, he had found the same sentiment prevailing among the hard-headed men of the North, as they were usually called. He would therefore suggest, whether it would not be possible, taking the case of a large estate in which a large number of tenants were dissatisfied with their rents, and thought they had a fair claim to seek re-adjustment—at their own risk, of course—whether it would not be possible to deal with such cases in groups, treating them as independent acts of litigation, but not, of course, supposing that the rule for one farm should govern another, but that they should be considered according to their respective circumstances? There were several other parts of the Bill upon which he would like to observe; but, as they were matters more properly for Committee, he would put his suggestions in print. He looked with satisfaction almost unqualified to the part of the Bill which bore the honoured name of the "Bright Clauses," because he confessed that he looked upon that part as containing the real germ of the final settlement of the Land Question. In reference to that part of the Bill he would throw out for consideration, whether, in the case of corporate bodies in Ireland, such, for instance, as the London Companies, there should not be compulsory powers to take their estates, not at all upon the ground that they had been unworthy landlords—because their management contrasted favourably with some of their neighbours—but upon the ground that they did not hold their estates for public purposes, and did not represent private interests, and, therefore, no private interests would be affected by their compulsory expropriation. Next, he would suggest that estates encumbered up to 75 per cent of their value should be compulsorily purchased; because, by the principle put forth from both sides of the House, a landlord should be a landlord in an effective position, capable of dealing with his property satisfactorily, and any landlord whose estate was encumbered 75 per cent only held his title nominally, and there could be no harm in expropriating him. Then, as regarded the question of assistance to the tenant, he hoped the Government would not go behind the recommendations of the hon. Member for Cork County (Mr. Shaw) before Committee—namely, that the tenant should be advanced four-fifths of the purchase money. By such an arrangement the tenant would be given a greater inducement to persevere; by the annual payments the security to the State would be daily becoming greater, and the debt to the State would be becoming less. He thought there should be a discretion on the part of the Commissioners to extend the payment over a period of 52 years. He thankfully recognized the fact that the landlord and tenant part of the scheme would do much good; but it was to the "Bright Clauses" of the Bill that he looked as containing the real germ of a settlement of the question. He believed the Bill wisely and liberally administered would create in the course of a few years a number of peasant proprietors, who would quicken and leaven the whole country with a new spirit. It would create an unpaid army on the side of order—order followed from content, and a sense of security and loyalty followed in the wake of interest. He looked with great hope to the Bill. Up to that time Ireland had been to this country a source of weakness and not of strength; a part of the richest Empire in the world, its people were amongst the poorest. They owed it to their past misgovernment of the country to be as liberal as the utmost bounds of justice would allow, and he asked no more. He was aware that it rarely happened that legislation could do much to remedy the ills of a country; but there was one thing that it could do—it could not scatter plenty over the land, but it could remove those artificial obstacles by which plenty was made impossible. He asked the House to do it in a liberal spirit. He knew much would depend on the people themselves—upon their energy, their sobriety, their thrift, and their spirit of self-denial. He was no true friend of the Irish people who denied the existence among them of many grave faults. He claimed for his country that those faults were not inherent in it, but were in great part the creatures of conditions under which they found themselves. Out of their own country, with their hands free, and with a motive for exertion, they played their part and held their own in the race of life. He did not desire to use the language of exaggeration; but he believed Providence had endowed the Irish people with great and noble qualities. That was seen in their steadfast adherence to the faith in which they trusted, in spite of many previous temptations to the contrary; in their tender regard to the claims of kindred and friends, which they carried to the ends of the world; in the absence among them of ordinary social crime; in the marked purity of their domestic life; and it was not too much to say that in these they were an example to the world. He hoped it would not be for long that it could be truly said, as it was once, perhaps with some poetic exaggeration—

> "In a climate soft as a mother's smile,
> With a soil fruitful as God's love,
> The Irish people starve."

Mr. GREGORY considered that the definition in the Bill of fair rent, which was "what a solvent tenant would undertake to pay one year with another," would lead to great difficulty in any application to the Court for its assessment, as it would be a great deal a matter of discretion and could not be assessed on any defined principle. It was the basis of rating in this country; and anyone who had any experience of it knew the difficulty of dealing with the evidence of conflicting surveyors in case of dispute as regarded this and many other provisions of the Bill. Hon. Members ought to remember, in considering the Bill, that the whole of the relations between landlords and tenants in Ireland were left to a Land Court, as to the composition of which they had no fit means of judging. Yet that Court, as it was to be constituted, would be invested with enormous power; it would regulate all the relations of landlords and tenants throughout Ireland; it would have the responsibility of purchasing estates, guaranteeing titles, and advancing money to an unlimited extent. With respect to the construction of the Court itself which was to exercise such extraordinary powers, where did they expect to get for a salary of £2,000 a Judge qualified or willing to undertake all that responsibility, and to administer those powers? If they expected to find such men in Ireland, then he (Mr. Gregory) could only say that talent was much cheaper in that country than in England. But this was not all. These Judges or Commissioners might delegate their powers to certain assistant Commissioners, so that the landlord, who would himself have no access to the Court, would have his interests left in the hands of either one of the Commissioners, or else in those of an assistant and, presumably, a less competent Commissioner. He complained that by the Bill the approach to the Court was given to the tenant only; the landlord was to have no access to it in the regulation of his own property. Power was given to the tenant to appeal to it, but no provision was made for any preliminary communication with the landlord; in fact, the former was empowered to bring the latter into Court without any notice whatever, nor was any provision made as to the costs of an application. Now, with respect to the other part of the 7th clause of the Bill, which was of so much importance in dealing with these applications, it had been demonstrated that as it stood, and particularly in carrying the Ulster Custom to the extent which was proposed, it might lead to the most monstrous injustice. In his opinion, all that the tenant could fairly ask was a set-off as against the landlord of any benefit accruing to the latter by the outlay or improvements of the tenant. And, in dealing with this as well as the other proceedings on the application, they should bear in mind that recourse to the Court was to be a voluntary act on the part of the tenant. He might, if he pleased, remain as he was; but it was only fair that, if the landlord was brought before the Court unnecessarily by the tenant making an unjust claim, the tenant should be liable for the costs of the application. At all events, it should be in the discretion of the Court to make an order with regard to the costs in such a case. Again, it was quite evident that there would be dealing with property on which mortgages had been effected, as to which nothing had been said, notwithstanding the position of both mortgagees and owners of property would be materially affected by the operation of the Bill. In many cases mortgages were effected for the improvement and consequent increase in the value of the estates of the landlord, and as the existence of mortgages might be known in most cases—for in Ireland there was a provision for the registration of mortgages—a mortgagee should always have notice of an application to reduce the rents of property on the security of which his money had been advanced. It was but just that they should have an opportunity of being heard when a proposal was made in detriment of that security. In the Drainage and Cottage Building Acts the interest of the mortgagees was protected, and there ought to be a similar provision in this measure. He had taken some part in the discussion of the Land Act of 1870, which he always considered to be a very considerable invasion of the rights of property, converting the owners of land into mere rent-chargers, and a great discouragement to resident or improving proprietors. A very wide step was taken by that Act, which might have been necessary; but that invasion was carried very much further by this Bill, and it had not been shown to be justified. If the Bill were to be accepted as a final settlement of the question; if it were to be regarded as a boon from the hands of Parliament to the Irish people, with which they would be contented for ever, that might perhaps induce one to give the Bill a second reading; but there was little hope that it would be so accepted, and he could not help thinking it would be used as a starting point for fresh demands. It was the offspring of agitation, and he feared would be the origin of more. Now, with respect to the second portion of the Bill, this conferred unlimited power of advancing public money in Ireland. It was well known to many in the Legal Profession that there had been great reluctance of late years to advance money on Irish estates; both individuals and public companies had felt grave doubts whether they were justified in doing it. Indeed, during the last 10 years, since the passing of the Irish Land Act, it had been almost a rule with large financial undertakings not to advance money on the security of Irish property; and lately one or two companies had taken credit for not doing so. Under the provisions of the Bill as it now stood, there was, practically, no limit to the amount which the Treasury would have to give to carry them into effect. The Minister for the time being would have the Irish Vote at his back, and the House must, therefore, be prepared to have large demands made upon it. The advances contemplated by the measure amounted to three-fourths of the value of the property to be purchased; but, speaking for himself, as a professional man, he would not, nor would he advise anyone else to, advance on the security of Irish land more than two-thirds of its value. The proposal required grave consideration, and he hoped that some limitation would be put upon it. The advances might be made by the Treasury at a time when the value of landed property was high, and the State, the mortgagee, might seek to realize at a time when bad times and seasons had greatly depressed its value. In that case, what position would the State be in if it ventured to get back its instalment of principal and interest from the tenant whose security it held? What universal condemnation and clamour would be raised if the right of the State creditor were enforced. That was a state of things which they must be prepared to meet. The Bill would, in fact, induce the tenants to mortgage themselves up to the hilt, and that, too, with the money of the State, which, in many cases, they would have the greatest difficulty in repaying, and which in the end would result in ruin to them and the House must be prepared to face the risk which would arise from the steps which, in many cases, should be taken to recover the amount becoming due. If they were to advance money to enable tenants to purchase their holdings, let them do so, as trustees for English taxpayers, on sound economical principles. They were bound to make advances within moderate bounds and to confine them to legitimate objects. In conclusion, he could not help looking upon the Bill, as a whole, as one which would have the effect of enormously reducing the value of land, and cutting down the legitimate rights of the landlords of Ireland to the lowest possible point, to enable them to be absorbed by the tenants.

MAJOR O'BEIRNE said, he did not think the Bill could be regarded as a highly successful attempt, likely to produce a settlement of the Irish Land Question. All authorities, from Judge Longfield to the Members of the Bessborough Commission, were agreed that the only real settlement of the Irish Land difficulty was to give the occupier of the soil the absolute ownership. The tenure of land in Ireland was unique, as far as European countries were concerned, seeing that in them the bulk of the land belonged to the masses of the people; but, in Ireland, as much as 10,000,000 acres, or one half of the land, belonged to 721 proprietors. Therefore, he could not but regret that the Government had not regarded the creation of peasant proprietorships as the most important feature of their Bill. If they had done that, the effect would have been to do away with the Law of Entail, under the provisions of which law a greater portion of the land of the country belonged, not to the real owners, but to mortgagees. If the Government had taken the course which he suggested, and had advanced the whole of the money necessary to buy up the land, they would have been secure in advancing public money to tenants who wished to become owners of the land which they occupied. That was shown by the results of the advances by the Board of Works and the Church Temporalities Commissioners. The people of Ireland had also just cause of complaint in respect to absenteeism. It was estimated that as much as £3,500,000 was spent by the absentee proprietors every year. That evil ought to be dealt with in some way or other, as such a state of things would certainly not be tolerated in any other country. He entirely approved of the principle of the present Bill, though he could not approve of the machinery employed. He considered that a fair rent ought to be fixed by an outside tribunal; but he disapproved of the suggestion that the disputed questions of rent should be referred to a County Court Judge in the first instance. A mass of evidence was given before the Bessborough Commission on that question, and the general decision was that a tenant could not establish his legal rights without the annoyance and expense of a law suit. The litigation under the Bill would be almost endless, and he contended that the proposed system would do nothing except put money into the pockets of the lawyers. He did not believe, with the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. W. E. Forster), that those tenants who were lowly rented would not enter the Court. He believed they would do so, with the object of obtaining still a further lowering of their rents; and they had a perfect right to do so, if they had any chance of success. The machinery proposed to be employed in the settlement of rent was extremely faulty, and ought to be altered. The Bessborough Commission were of opinion that there should be two arbitrators representing the landlords and two representing the tenants, and then a professional umpire should be appointed in the person of a gentleman of the education and standing of Professor Baldwin. That would have been a cheap and expeditious way of settling the question; but, under the present Bill, he would be mulcted in at least £10 by a law suit before he could establish his rights. Further information would, he hoped, be given as to the way in which tenant right was to be computed, and the position in which mortgagees would stand with regard to the Bill. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland was extremely vague and undefined in his explanation of how for the future the tenant right was to be settled. That was a question which, in his (Major O'Beirne's) opinion, deserved to be explained in a thoroughly satisfactory manner. He was a landlord himself, and one of those who considered that if landlords' incomes were to be reduced they should be compensated for their loss. If some sort of provision to compensate landlords were not made, and unless the objections which had been raised with respect to the tenant right were not clearly explained away, he should vote against the third reading of the Bill. If he could satisfy himself that fixity of tenure, fair rents, and free sale, were given in reality, without putting the tenant to expense, and without harassing the landlord, he would support the measure; but, at present, he did not see that it did this. The only real objection against tenant right was that it saddled the tenant with a double rent. He hoped, in conclusion, that Her Majesty's Government would take all those matters into their consideration, and give a clear and unmistakable announcement with regard to how the proposed reduction of rents would affect property all over the country. At the same time, the thanks of the Irish people were due to some extent to the Government for the earnest manner with which they had taken up the Land Question; but the Bill would not satisfy the expectations of the Irish people. The "three F's" were not sufficient; but what was wanted was a peasant proprietary all over the country.

Mr. E. W. HARCOURT said, it seemed to him that the framers of the Bill had cast to the winds considerations of a practical nature. All persons who had had any experience in the matter must be aware that there was not a greater misfortune to a landlord than to lose a good tenant. At the same time, it was an equally great misfortune, both to landlord and tenant, to give the land to a bad tenant, by which he meant a man who was unable to cultivate it properly. The case of the tenant who was unfortunate through drought or too much rain should be considered; but the man who was a bad tenant was no good to himself, was no good to the landlord, and, what was of more importance, was no use to the land itself. He was aware of the difference of tenure in England and Ireland. It was true that in England, as a rule, the outlays were made by the landlord, and that in Ireland they were usually made by the tenant; but justice required that the property, whether of the landlord or the tenant, should be secured to the person to whom it belonged. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer had £10,000 to deal with in sovereigns, entrusted to him by someone, he might regard it as somewhat immoral to make them go through the process vulgarly called "sweating" before he handed them to their owner; but it seemed to him (Mr. Harcourt) that that was exactly the process which the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed to apply to the property of Irish landlords. He was not in the secrets of the Cabinet; but he very much suspected that at each of those sittings of which they had heard so much there had been an additional shake of the bag, and the residuum was now being divided amongst the tenants at the expense of the landlords. The right hon. Gentleman admitted that there were but few bad landlords in Ireland, and yet he proposed to legislate with regard to that small minority. He (Mr. Harcourt) held in his hand a reprint of a book on the system of land tenure in Ireland by the hon. Member for Rochdale (Mr. Potter). The book was reprinted at the request of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. At page 6 were these words—"The Irish farmers never were more prosperous than at the present time." [An hon. MEMBER: What is the date?] He expected to be asked that question. There was no date in the book. The Cobden Club did not favour them with dates; but the date of the right hon. Gentleman's letter, in which he requested that the book should be reprinted, was January 31, 1881. It was, however, only fair to conclude that, as the Prime Minister had asked for the reprinting of the work as one likely to be of use to the people, he approved its contents. In page 19, the author said that the complaint of high rents had lasted for more than 300 years; that there never was less ground for it than at the present moment, although in some instances the rent demanded was too high. At page 45, he said it would not be difficult to prove that a law establishing fixity of tenure would be as impolitic as it would be unjust. Such a law, he said, would wrongfully transfer property from a certain number of individuals who were now called landlords to another set of individuals now called tenants, and who would then become landlords; that the men now in possession would be able to violate their engagements, but that no future tenant would gain anything by the change. He (Mr. Harcourt) felt obliged to the right hon. Gentleman for being instrumental in circulating a book which would enable hon. Members to arrive at sound conclusions on this subject. The right hon. Gentleman was not legislating fairly or wisely. If the State became lenders, the lenders could have no heart and no compassion. The right hon. Gentleman, who would not make any arrangement for providing a single farthing in his Budget to give an insignificant sum to assist the British farmer in the matter of his highways, was, nevertheless, willing to set apart nameless sums to assist the Irish farmer in emigration. He was quite convinced that, unless great alterations were made in the Bill, and its one-sidedness was corrected before it was presented in its final shape, they would have in Ireland in future a race of rack-rented tenants and despoiled landlords, who would be for ever litigating in the dreary halls of the Court which the measure of the Government would establish.

MR. BRAND said, that the hon. Member who had just spoken (Mr. Harcourt) had not answered the pertinent question put to hon. Gentlemen opposite by the hon. and learned Member for Dundalk (Mr. C. Russell) in his eloquent and impressive speech—namely, Were they prepared to allow things to remain exactly as they were in Ireland, where the payment of rents had to be enforced by the Constabulary at the point of the bayonet? He held that that state of things could not be permitted to continue, and that a reform of the Land Laws was absolutely necessary. The noble Lord the Member for Haddingtonshire (Lord Elcho) made a mistake in not sufficiently estimating the gravity of the present issue, because he said that the difficulties which surrounded them had been created by the Government itself, and partly by the Mid Lothian speeches of the Prime Minister. Now, he (Mr. Brand) hardly thought that the most ardent admirer of those speeches would claim for them the power to create and keep up the agitation which they had recently had in Ireland. No one could be said to understand the state of that country unless they comprehended the fact that the difficulties which encompassed them had been to a large extent caused by the Land Laws of Ireland, which had created and encouraged a monopoly of land. He had asked himself the question whether it was possible to remedy those evils, and whether the Bill of the Government would remedy them without necessitating compensation in some shape to the owners of land. The hon. and learned Member for Dundalk had said that the fee simple of land in Ireland had increased in value between the years 1870 and 1880. That might be the case. It was difficult to distinguish as to the causes which had produced that increase in the value of land; but he did not wish to contest the fact. He did not rest his opposition to some of the proposals of the Government on that ground; but he thought the Bill was unjust to the landlords of Ireland in some sense, because it would tend enormously to increase litigation, and also because it would put a practical bar on the landlord ever resuming possession of the land. His hon. and learned Friend wished power to be given to the Court to remit all arrears of rent which had fallen due through recent failures of the crops. Now, it was equitable that the landlord should remit a certain portion of rent to his tenants when they had losses through bad harvests; but it was a different thing to impose that remission on the landlord by law. His hon. and learned Friend had referred to the *métayer* system in France; but, under that *métayer* sytem, the tenant and the landlord enjoyed together the profits of the good years, and they had to suffer together the losses of bad years. But his hon. and learned Friend was asking the Irish landlords to suffer all the losses of the bad years, and to allow their tenants to reap all the profits of the good ones. Having felt himself obliged to abstain from supporting the Compensation for Disturbance Bill of last year, he wished to make a few remarks on the present Bill, which, if not amended in certain important particulars, would not be of great benefit to the tenant farmer, while it would be unjust in many senses to the owners of the land. There was a point of comparison between the Compensation for Disturbance Bill and the present Bill which seemed to be greatly in favour of the latter measure. Whatever could be said against the present Bill, this, at least, could be urged in its behalf—that it did not sanction the theory that the payment of rent was not a just and legal debt payable to the landlord. It did secure to the landlord the payment, not of the full rent, but of a fair rent, though in many cases it would be a very small rent; and it secured to him, besides, the arrears of rent by means of the sale of the tenant's interest. There must be a feeling of despair in the minds of many hon. Members that they were face to face again with the claims of Irish tenants, through the failure of the Act of 1870; but that Act had failed because it was not based on principles that met the real demands of the Irish people. What, as he understood, they had always asked was that they should be, as it were, rooted on the soil of the country; that they should be secured in a joint proprietary interest, as they said they had, with the landlords; and that evictions and notices to quit should practically cease so long as they paid fair rents and observed certain statutory conditions. No reasonable man would deny that the Bill of the Government, whether just to the landlords or not, did practically meet the demand of the Irish tenants as far as regarded fixity of tenure. If he voted for its second reading, it was not from ignorance of the scope and drift of the measure. It was one involving the most tremendous consequences. Perhaps it was the most democratic Bill ever presented to the House by a responsible Government. He said that with reason. For example, it meant that if any man was the owner of more land than he occupied, or if he did not occupy the land which he owned, the Bill imposed restrictions and limitations on all dealings connected with that land. The inevitable consequence would be that all those who owned land which they did not occupy would endeavour, as far as possible, to get rid of a property of the use and enjoyment of which they were to a great extent to be deprived. The noble Viscount the Member for Barnstaple (Viscount Lymington), the other night, referred to the custom on the Earl of Portsmouth's estate. On that estate not a shilling was expended in improvements by the landlord. He believed, in fact, that the Earl of Portsmouth had accepted the position of rent-charges on his estate. Therefore, as far as the Earl of Portsmouth's case went, the Bill would not make much difference in his position. But there were some other Irish landlords who might think differently of the matter. The question, however, was, what would the tenants do? He believed that the advantages given them under the Bill would be so great that, in many instances, they would prefer to remain under the Bill, rather than to accept the latter provisions of the measure, and purchase the fee simple of the land they occupied by means of the facilities held out to them. The tenants now received compensation for their improvements, and, in addition to that, compensation for disturbance. That was practically unknown in foreign countries, and the noble Lord the Member for Haddingtonshire was right in saying that Irish tenants were in a more advantageous position than the tenants of any other part of Europe. The Code Napoleon encouraged the principle of freedom of contract, and there was no desire among the owners of land in France to depart from that principle, because the possession of land in that country was extensively distributed. The simple fact was that the agitation in Ireland was a political and social movement. Now, the reason of the prevalent discontent was that the land was in so few hands. Half the country was owned by 740 persons, and two-thirds of it was owned by only 2,000 persons out of a population of over 5,000,000, the greater part of whom were engaged in agriculture. He thought that therein lay a serious political danger. There was really what almost amounted to a revolution in Ireland, which should be guarded against, and the best way to guard against it was by extending the proprietary body. If that were carried out, instead of a desire for retrograde and reactionary legislation, they would have a desire on the part of the numerous owners of land to have all dealings with regard to the ownership and letting of land as free as air. He thought that the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) had made several points in his speech the other night which had not been sufficiently answered. He had listened to that speech with great admiration; but he thought there was one serious omission in it, for the right hon. and learned Gentleman never once expressed disapproval of the principle of the Bill, of which the fundamental principle was the establishment of a Rent Court for regulating rent, and, consequently, all the relations between landlord and tenant. He would ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman whether the time had not come for the establishment of an independent authority in Ireland for the regulation of rents? The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin, who had spoken the night before, had made some important remarks with reference to the Court to be established. The Court was to be the Civil Bill Court presided over by Judges who were barristers of 10 years' standing. From that Court there was to be an appeal, not to the Appeal Court, but to the Land Commission, which was to consist of three members, receiving a salary not exceeding £2,000 a-year, one of whom was to be a Judge. He certainly admired the courage of the Government in proposing to adjust all the relations between landlords and tenants in Ireland by means of Courts so constituted. He had carefully studied those parts of the Bill which gave in effect perpetuity of tenure, but had failed thoroughly to understand them. The first question was, whether that perpetuity extended to the present tenants alone and their successors, or to all tenants for all future time? The 45th clause dealt with that question. He gathered that the future tenant would have all the advantages of the present tenant except the right to apply under Clause 7 to the Court. What, then, were the advantages which he was to enjoy? First, he would be able to sell the tenant right, whatever that was; secondly, he would be able to claim compensation for disturbance; and, thirdly, he would be protected against the raising of his rent. To all that he had the strongest objection. If it was necessary to suspend freedom of contract, such suspension should only be temporary. It might be right to settle conflicting claims between landlords and present tenants; but he thought as regarded future tenants there should be free contract, with compensation for improvements made by them. Suppose hereafter a small owner, who had purchased his holding under the Act, wished to let it for a temporary purpose, he would be unable to do so without having all those adverse interests growing up against him. In that respect the Bill went beyond the Act of 1870, which, by the 3rd clause, provided for the exclusion after 1891 from the benefits of the Act of tenants who had taken their holdings after the passing of the Act. That was absolutely done away by the Bill. Under the Bill the present tenants would practically have perpetuity of tenure, subject to a variation of rents on revision every 15 years, as long as they paid their rents and conformed to certain statutory conditions. If all future tenants were to have the advantages of the Bill, all rights of ownership would be tied up for ever in Commission, and its operation would involve some very important consequences, which would demand very serious consideration. He should, therefore, feel it his duty accordingly to move Amendments in Committee in reference to certain points of the Bill, which, if allowed to remain in their present form, could not work advantageously. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the other night had made a great point with reference to the clause dealing with compensation for disturbance. When one tenant transferred his interest to another, there could be no disturbance. It was, he thought, perfectly just that the tenant should have, as a set-off against his rent, the value of his improvements, made by himself and his predecessors in title; but he could not understand why he should also be allowed to set-off compensation for disturbance, which was not a value in existence, and which could not be created except by the act of the landlord. Unless more guarded words were introduced into the Bill, he feared there would be great danger that the Court would have to carve the tenant's right in this respect out of the landlord's rent. The Bill went further than that of the late Mr. Butt, who only proposed that a tenant should be recouped for the actual improvements effected by himself or his predecessors in title. He thought, too, the Government had not clearly defined the right of sale, or what it was that the tenant had to sell. With regard to it the Bill was silent, whereas it ought to define clearly the interest he would have to sell. Parliament might make any law it liked respecting the regulation of rent; but it could not fix the rent, or prevent a tenant paying the full rack rent, for, do what it might, the incoming tenant would have to pay the full rack rent. He had found great difficulty in extracting a meaning out of the Bill; but from what he could gather, it was evidently to be made up out of the margin between a low rent and a fair commercial rent. From that, it would appear that the lower the rent had been, the more generous the landlord had shown himself, the greater would be the compensation he would have to pay to the outgoing tenant. He thought, therefore, that a general rise in rents on all the low-rented estates in Ireland would be the immediate result of the passing of the Bill. His own belief was that, in order to get out of the difficulties, the trouble, and the litigation which would be incident to the Bill, the owners of land in Ireland would wish to sell their land to the State; and he thought that this should be done—that the State ought to be made the purchaser in every case where a landlord wished to sell, at a price to be fixed by arbitration. The State had permitted the landlords to be practically fettered in the improvement of their estates, and there would be no harm in advancing money to the tenants to enable them to improve their condition. Surely, if the Court to be established under the Bill was to be worth anything, it might advance more than 75 per cent of the purchase money in cases where it might be thought necessary. It might be said that there would be no security for the State, and that was, in fact, a great objection to the Bill; but they must be content to risk something for the sake of the advantages which they hoped the Bill would accomplish. He believed there would be security for the State, for it was a remarkable fact that all through the late hard times the Church tenants had paid in full, with the exception of 10 per cent, all the instalments of interest due by them to the Commission. If the Bill was to be successful, the character of "thoroughness" must be attached to these proposals for the purchase of land in Ireland. The condition of landownership in that country was to his mind a grave political danger, and the surest way to preserving order was by adding largely to the number of persons interested in maintaining it.

Mr. TOTTENHAM: Sir, it is with the deepest regret that I find myself unable to support the Bill brought in by Her Majesty's Government, in consequence of some of the provisions thereof being, in my opinion, totally opposed to all the rights of property as now vested in owners of land, and, as I hope I shall be able to show, also opposed to the interests of all future generations of tenants. There are other provisions in the Bill which, had they appeared in the form of a separate measure, and unconnected with those principles which I consider obnoxious, I think are entitled to the favourable consideration of Parliament, and would have had my support. But now, Sir, before I proceed to discuss the principles and details of the measure before us, I would ask Her Majesty's Government whether there is any precedent for the second reading, or any subsequent stage of a great and comprehensive measure such as this, being put into the hands of the Whip of the Party to move, in the presence of Ministers of the Crown whose names were actually on the back of the Bill? Were they so disenchanted with the reception their production had met with from the Press and from the public during the Recess that they wish it to be classed, notwithstanding their announcement as to its character, as a minor measure? Or can it be that those other names which godfathered it into the House knew so little about it that they declined to be responsible for its introduction? Was it that the convenience of the Prime Minister prevented his leaving his home in the country, and the rural delights of Sunday readings, on the previous Saturday; or was it that he did not think it necessary to rise to a great occasion like this, and strain his muscles—I borrow the phrase from him—to catch a train an hour earlier on the day he should have introduced a measure fraught with the gravest interests to a not inconsiderable section of the British Kingdom? Was it that he was within the boundaries of this City at an earlier hour than the meeting of the House—as, indeed, I have been authoritatively informed—but that urgent private affairs were given priority to Public Business? I will not allude to other reasons for which it might have been grateful to the House and the country that the Prime Minister should have found it convenient to be in his place; but I say, Sir, that the country pauses for a reply to the question—Is this Bill, then, of so little consequence that it can be delegated to a subordinate to move, to suit the pleasure of the Minister who finds it convenient to adopt the course which he has hurled unmerited abuse and ridicule at the heads of others for even suggesting? I presume, Sir, that some explanation of this unusual and extraordinary proceeding will be given at an early period of this debate; and I shall now pass on to what did occur on Monday. The hon. and learned Member for Limerick (Mr. O'Shaughnessy), in the course of the debate on the adjournment of the House, put forward the astounding proposition that the proper course of the debate was that we on these Benches, representing those that have, should lay bare the whole of our case, in order that he and his Friends, representing those who have not, should have the fullest opportunity of pelting us after we had expended our ammunition; or, in other words, that we, who are the defendants, having been acquitted in the first State Trial by Royal Commission, but who are now being tried again on the same evidence and the same charges, should *more Hibernice* first complete our defence before the prosecution was in a position to open. I should have thought his legal training would have shown him that, however such a reversal of the ordinary rules of procedure might answer in a country where the rules of contrary are the guiding principles, it could hardly be accepted as a convenient course on this side of the Channel. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, in the course of his speech, referred in terms of admiration to the speech of the noble Lord the Member for Barnstaple (Viscount Lymington), and to the luminous and able manner in which he had treated his subject. I, Sir, heard the speech of the noble Lord, and, beyond bald assertions of theories, collected by him in an occasional shooting excursion of three days' duration, unsupported by a particle of evidence, I failed entirely to see any more point in his argument than I should have expected to emanate from such an extensive experience. One fact alone will be enough to quote to the House to upset the whole of the theories and fallacies which the noble Lord has presented to us. Any and all of his arguments are equally capable of demolition. But listen to what the noble Lord has put his signature, in an article written by himself in October last in *The Nineteenth Century*, and in a statement by him of the custom on the Portsmouth estate—

> "The landlord's interest is consulted on a re-letting at the expiration of a lease, when from one-eighth to one-fourth is added to Griffith's valuation of the land only."

He has previously stated that the leases are for 31 years. Now, the position of the tenant is that, under what he calls the Portsmouth custom, he may have 50 per cent added to his rent within a period of 32 years, and must have not less than 25 per cent. This, Sir, is the principle advocated in October by the defender of the Government policy in the following April. I am quite content to leave a comparison of the noble Lord's views with this previous statement of his to a discerning public, merely saying that, unless the right hon. Gentleman can get some more valuable references than this to bolster up his arguments, it might be as well to be saved from his friends. Well, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman also carried on a most interesting conversation, and interchanged ideas with the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold), whose wide and varied knowledge of every conceivable subject within the range of practical politics, from the steppes of Central Asia to the bogs of Central Ireland, naturally leads him to believe that he is capable of giving a thoroughly practical opinion on a subject which has puzzled and defeated many of the leading statesmen of the country, with thorough and complete personal knowledge of Ireland and her requirements. I do not, however, find that the points raised by the hon. Member had much to do with the principal and real question at issue, or that the House received much elucidation from the replies made to immaterial points and issues by the Chief Secretary for Ireland. I now come to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, and I listened with the closest attention to that speech, which purported to reply to my right hon. and learned Friend the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), and I have since carefully read and re-read that speech, and the impression formed at the time has been fully confirmed—namely, that a more inconclusive, incomplete, and lame answer, or weak argument, was never uttered with the authority of a Minister in charge of a Bill. I looked in vain for satisfactory replies to the leading and pointed questions of my right hon. and learned Friend, and found them conspicuous by their absence; with one or two exceptions, almost totally unanswered. First, as to the question of compensation, for what my right hon. and learned Friend justly termed confiscation, but no mention of which appears in the Government proposals. Now, Sir, does the right hon. Gentleman, standing there with his hand in our pockets, expect the House and the country to believe that what he and his Colleagues called expropriation in 1870 can be re-christened in 1881? Does he seriously expect the House to swallow such a dose as that without asking how and why the prescription had been altered since 1870? Did he suppose for a moment that the arguments and the denunciations against such a step used by his Colleagues in 1870, 1876, and 1877, were not going to be brought up in judgment against him? If he did anticipate such a pleasant immunity from unpleasant recollections, he will find before this debate closes that he is grievously mistaken. Does he suppose that his wild and ridiculous assertion, that no damage can be proved by the application in 1881 of the principles his Colleagues in 1870 distinctly and clearly stated were totally opposed to justice and equity, will be accepted by the country? If there is one thing an Englishman loves it is consistency, and having the courage of your opinions, and I believe the prevailing opinion in this country before this debate closes will be contempt for a Government which has thrown justice and equity overboard, and sacrificed its declared principles at the shrine of political need and expediency. The next thing that the Chief Secretary for Ireland tells us is, that the Government purposely left it open to the tenant alone to apply to the Court to fix the rent, because the landlord already had the power to do it. The right hon. Gentleman knows well that this is not so. The landlord has only power to demand, not to fix, the increased rent; and if the tenant refuses to pay it, he is driven to ejectment as a matter of course, as his only alternative to enforce a just and fair demand. The tenant may sell his interest pending the proceedings, and the purchaser, not being bound by original notice, the same process has to be gone through again. In the Bill, as now drafted, many people relying on the Prime Minister's emphatic assurance that the basis of the Bill was justice and equity, believed that this want of power on the part of the landlord was a sin of omission. But it is now shown by the Chief Secretary for Ireland that it was a deliberate act of commission, and a deliberate act of injustice to the landlords on the part of Her Majesty's Government. The 45th clause the right hon. Gentleman wisely and judiciously left to his Legal Advisers to explain if they could, and camly passed by without notice the appeal of my right hon. and learned Friend. I am bound to say, Sir, that a careful study of of those hon. and learned Gentlemen's faces, the expression of which I will not call wooden, for fear of drawing forth another of those lectures on manners and arguments which the Prime Minister has lately administered to so many hon. Members on this side of the House, but which rather seemed to say, "Oh, what a day we are having!" did not lead anyone on this side of the House to suppose that they were overwhelmed with joy at the prospect of distinguishing themselves which was being so generously unfolded to them. The principles of the Bill are founded upon the system known as the "three F's," added to which there is a compulsory fixing of the rents by the State; and though it has been sought to conceal one ugly "F" by a skilful and labyrinthine disguise of words and provisos, it is as much embodied in the Bill as either of the others. The Prime Minister, in his exhaustive explanation of the provisions on the introduction of the Bill, made a speech which, while carefully minimizing the disadvantages under which it was proposed to place the landlord, and showing, in the most attractive colours and the least objectionable form, the advantages it was proposed to confer on the tenant, made, at the same time, a great flourish about the principles of equity and justice to all classes, under which the kiss of Judas was plainly to be detected by those who had a practical acquaintance with the subject. The object and effect of the speech was to obtain for the Bill a favourable first impression before the public had an opportunity of seeing and digesting the details. These have now been placed before the public, shorn of the flowers of rhetoric under which they were disguised, and the broad fact is now patent to the most casual observer of Parliamentary proceedings that the Prime Minister and other Members of his Government have committed themselves to the advocacy of principles which in 1870, and subsequently, they went out of their way to denounce in the strongest and most unmeasured terms. The right hon. Gentleman referred to the recommendations of the Duke of Richmond's and Lord Bessborough's Commissions, and to their practical agreement on one of the three points—namely, as to the fixing of rents by the State. True it is, that the Richmond Commissioners say they are inclined to think that by the majority of landowners legislation, properly framed to accomplish this end, would not be objected to; but does the right hon. Gentleman suppose that any one of those Commissioners anticipated that the framing of such legislation would include a proposal that the Court of First Instance should be the existing County Land Courts, which have been admitted on all hands to be a failure as regards the equal administration of the existing Land Laws; or that a quorum of one Sub-Commissioner, not named in the Act, and appointed by the proposed Land Commissioners, should be the Court of Appeal? Does he suppose that those Gentlemen ever contemplated the possibility of one-sided legislation, such as is proposed by the 7th section of this Bill; or, independently of the trifling consideration of an absolute future prohibition of anything like freedom of contract in dealings between landlord and tenant, does the right hon. Gentleman believe that those who signed the Report would have done so if they had supposed it was to be the groundwork of such legislation as this? The right hon. Gentleman gave the House a few selected passages from the Reports of both Commissions which favoured his particular views—that is to say, the views he now holds. But, perhaps, the House will allow me to read one passage from the first Report which the right hon. Gentleman did not read, and which very considerably qualifies and alters the construction he sought to place upon it. In the Report of the Richmond Commission, I find the very next paragraph, on page 8, to that quoted by the right hon. Gentleman, runs as follows:—

> "With a view of affording such security, fair rents, fixity of tenure, and free sale, popularly known as the three "F's," have been strongly advocated by many witnesses, but none have been able to support that proposition in their integrity without admitting consequences that would, in our opinion, involve an injustice to the landlord."

Holding such views as these, I think it will hardly be assumed that any of the Commissioners would be disposed to endorse the present proposals. Now, let me say one word on the constitution of these two Commissions. The first one, appointed with the Duke of Richmond as Chairman, was taken from both sides of both Houses of Parliament, as well as from gentlemen outside Parliament, but representing both opposite and independent views on this as well as the other questions which were to come under their cognizance. In the result, I find that 13 out of 19 Members of the Commission agreed to and signed the Report which has been referred to, and that those included Members of both Houses of Parliament, and from both sides of each House, as well as gentlemen of opposite political views outside Parliament. In the Report signed by the minority of six Members of this Commission, in which they advocate the system known as the three "F's," there is also a remarkable passage to which I shall have presently to refer. Not satisfied with the impartiality likely to be expected from such a body as this Commission, it was determined, in July, 1880, to appoint a further one, and in order that the conditions of strict impartiality should be assured, four Gentlemen were selected with known strong views in the direction wished by Her Majesty's Government, or, to put it in the Prime Minister's own words—"A tribunal not deficient in its popular sympathies;" and in order that the exception might prove the rule, one was thrown in on the other side to save appearances. Following up the impartial system, a Secretary was appointed of still more advanced views, and an Assistant Secretary who out-Heroded him, and who was known in every Assize Court in the North of Ireland as the tenant farmers' advocate; and as upon the Secretaries of this Commission in a great measure depended the getting up of the case, it is easy to understand in which direction the tendency of their exertions would lean. The result and the Report has been precisely what was predicted at the time of the appointment of it; and, notwithstanding, they report that—

> "In Ireland it is unusual to exact what in England would have been considered a full or fair commercial rent. . . . That a tenant who pays his rent is very seldom evicted. . . . And that the credit is due to Irish landlords as a class, of not exacting all they were by law entitled to exact."

This Report has been made the basis of the Bill now before us, and the first words of the 1st clause enact that a tenant may sell that which has hitherto, except in Ulster, been considered the property of another. That is to say, that the same principle which has grown up in Ulster, and been sanctioned by custom and usage, or carelessness on the part of the owner or successive owners, and where money has been paid by the existing tenant or his predecessors for the interest in the tenancy, shall be applied to the rest of Ireland, and in every case where the tenant has paid nothing for his interest. There is not even a limit placed upon this right; but every tenant may sell to the highest bidder for the best price he can obtain. Sir, I can imagine nothing more hostile to the interests of the whole class of agricultural tenants themselves, save and except those now actually in possession; and the general result of such a legalized custom would be that, in the course of one or two generations, by the natural working out of the thriftless and unimproving tenants, you would have introduced a class of men into a large part of the country who would have come in without means or capital, which would all have been carried out of the country by the outgoer, and who would by their own act, and not by any act of the landlord, have voluntarily come into possession of lands more highly rented than they or any other tenant could afford to pay. I am not to be taken as arguing against a tenant's right to receive back every shilling that he has expended in the way of permanent improvements. As I say, he has a full right to that; but this question of tenant right, and compensation for improvements, are totally distinct and separate questions, which it is too much the custom among those unacquainted with the subject to mix up with the question of free sale. Few people in England or Scotland are aware of the extraordinary and unaccountable prices which are given by tenants in Ulster for the tenant right or goodwill of farms; and to an English or a Scotch farmer this is the most inexplicable and insoluble problem; but it is a fact that in numerous instances sums more than double the fee simple value are so given. I will illustrate this by giving the figures relating to sales of interest or goodwill made by order of the County Court in the county of Down in 1880. In the first case, the goodwill of a farm of six statute acres, held at a yearly rent of £4 7*s*., or 14*s*. 6*d*. per acre, was sold for £156, equal to £26 per acre; and the interest on this at 5 per cent will make the future rent £2 0*s*. 6*d*. per acre. In the second case, the farm was 21½ acres, and the yearly rent £22 9*s*., or £1 1*s*. per acre; the goodwill sold for £610, or £29 per acre, making the future rent £2 10*s*. per acre. There are two other cases where the letting was by the Irish acre; but one will be sufficient to trouble the House with. It was a farm of six Irish acres at a rent of £8 5*s*., or £1 7*s*. 6*d*. per acre; the goodwill was sold for £300—equal to £50 per acre—and the future rent, with which the purchaser has voluntarily saddled himself with, is £3 17*s*. 6*d*. per acre. Now, what is the practical working of this? In every case the tenant has come into possession weighted with a rent which the land was clearly incapable of bearing, and varying from 75 to nearly 200 per cent over the fair letting value. Either the purchaser had the money, of which he lost the interest by sinking it in this manner; or, worse still, he had to borrow from the money-lender, in which case the rates which are calculated at 5 per cent will be very largely over what I have stated. You are now going to introduce a custom into the whole of Ireland which has been proved by such facts as these to be vicious in principle, and unsound in policy; and it is thrown in the teeth of the opponents to it, that some of the Ulster landowners see no objection to it, though you have even evidence on the other side that many of the tenants are themselves opposed to it. You are going to establish a law which, while it prevents an addition being made to the rent on the side of the landlord, actually encourages the tenant to rack-rent himself. Of what consequence is the opinion of these few individuals who have already got the custom established, and therefore will not be so much affected by it, and who do not care, or are unable to look beyond their own selfish interests, instead of regarding this, not as an Ulster, but as an Irish, aye, and as an Imperial question. Now, Sir, let us see what were the opinions of Her Majesty's Ministers and Members of the Government on this question in 1870, and subsequent years. In his speech on the introduction of this Bill, the Prime Minister said that "Free sale was absolutely and decidedly the least objectionable of the 'three F's.'" That "the principle of free sale was embodied in ancient law;" and that he had tried to show that there was nothing "strained or of an innovating character in this principle." Turning to his speech on the second reading of the Land Bill of 1870, I can hardly conceive how even such a master of language and a rhetorician of the power of the right hon. Gentleman, can make these sentiments tally with those which he then as deliberately, and with the same sense of responsibility, sent forth to the nation as his manifesto against such subversive and impolitic proposals. He said—

> "Shall I really be told that it is for the interest of the Irish tenant bidding for a farm that the law should say to him, 'Caste aside all providence and forethought; go into the market and bid what you like; drive out of the field the prudent man who intends to fulfil his engagement; bid right above him and induce the landlord to give you the farm, and the moment you have got it, come forward; go to the public authority; show that the rent is excessive, and that you cannot pay it, and get it reduced?' If I could conceive a plan more calculated than anything else, first of all, for throwing into confusion the whole economical arrangements of the country; secondly, for driving out of the field all solvent and honest men who might be bidders for farms, and might desire to carry on the honourable business of agriculture; thirdly, for carrying widespread demoralization throughout the whole mass of the Irish people, I must say, as at present advised—to confine myself to the present, and until otherwise convinced—it is this plan and this demand that we should embody in our Bill as a part of permanent legislation a provision by which men shall be told that there shall be an authority always existing ready to release them from the contracts they have deliberately entered into."—[3 *Hansard*, cxcix. 1845.]

Sir, I say comment on these two statements is absolutely superfluous, as it would be hardly possible to put face to face two more thoroughly conflicting opinions deliberately issuing from the same mouth. I will now come down to the year 1876; and on June 29th, I find the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India (the Marquess of Hartington), thus expressing himself on the Motion for the second reading of Mr. Butt's Land Bill—

> "By the legislation now proposed, the whole of the additional price to be obtained by competition for land would go, not into the pocket of the landlord, but into that of the existing occupier. He was unable to see how the agricultural community in Ireland could benefit by such legislation, either now or in future. On the contrary, it would probably do much to unsettle the prosperous state of things which was admitted on all hands to exist at the present moment."—[*Ibid*. ccxxx. 706.]

Those were the opinions held by the noble Marquess up to five years ago, and the same opinions were held by others of his Colleagues. There is also a remarkable paragraph of a totally contradictory nature to their general recommendations contained in the separate Report of Lord Carlingford and the minority—who sided with him—of the Richmond Commission. At page 22, they say, speaking of free sale—

> "There are, indeed, objections to the unqualified application of that system to every holding, which may be thus stated—The tenant's interest might in many instances consist to a large extent in the difference between a fair rent and the low rent actually paid to the landlord, and this value, where no tenant-right payment has been made at the beginning of the tenancy, is not morally the property of the occupier. To treat it as such by legislation would be a wrong to the landlord."

This paragraph clearly shows that there were some remaining qualms of conscience in the minority who were recommending such violent changes of the law, but who could not, nevertheless, conceal from themselves that the legislation they proposed was of a confiscatory nature. I believe that, as regards the great majority of the race of tenants in future, the effect of the working of the principle of free sale, as now proposed to be conceded, will be to transfer the powers now possessed by the landlord to the hands of the money-lenders, who will advance at usurious interest to those about to purchase, and in whom the desire to possess land is so strong that they will not consider the terms they are pledging themselves to. Those money-lenders will, when the pinch comes, and the interest or instalments fall into arrear, not exercise a shadow of pity or forbearance, but sell the tenant's interest, and proceed to eviction with the utmost rigour of the law. That the operation of the Ulster custom of free and unrestricted sale does not tend to diminish or prevent the prevalence of distress and pecuniary difficulty, is amply borne out by the Returns presented to Parliament this and last year, when it was seen that Ulster stands second on the Return for 1880 with 497 evictions, against 484 in Leinster, and 387 in Connaught; and first in 1878 and 1879 with 1,215, against 1,197, as the highest of the other three Provinces. It should also be borne in mind that the area of Ulster is 600,000 acres less than that of Munster, and that the numbers of evictions have not been influenced in Ulster by the anti-rent movement; whereas they have been very largely so in two of the other Provinces. We will now go on to the second "F," which will be found in Clause 4 and elsewhere, under the new name of "Incidents of Tenancy," which is the marginal short title of it. Under this clause, with certain limitations as to breach of conditions, which are defined, the property of the owner is transferred absolutely to the occupier, so long as he continues to pay the rent hereafter provided to be fixed by public authority; and the owner assumes the new role of a rent-charger, entitled to receive a fixed rent on certain days, but entitled to nothing more, and bereft of any right to interfere for the improvement of the farm or the estate, except at the pleasure of the occupier. Truly, Sir, under such conditions as these, there will be little inducement in the future for landowners either to reside on or spend money on their estates; but there will be every inducement to seek other forms of investment, and divert money now spending in improvements to other channels. In support of this view, I may quote the opinion of the Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Law), who, on 29th June, 1876, said—

> "The property must be in someone; and if we were to secure the possession of the land, and the enjoyment of its profits to the tenant and his successors for ever, subject only to a rent, we should, in effect, no matter how we try to disguise it, transfer the property of the farm to him, and change the present landowner into a mere rent-charger."—[3 *Hansard*, ccxxx. 630.]

But, Sir, he did not stop here; he went on to give reasons against the proposal, and he said—

> "I cannot but believe that the landlords, now converted into rent-chargers, with little interest in what were once their estates, would cease to live on them. . . . . Absenteeism used formerly to be the *bête noir* of Irish politicians —and yet a measure is now calmly proposed which would tend to make every country gentleman in Ireland quit its shores, and leave his estate and its occupant-owners to shift for themselves. . . . . I must repeat that I decline to vote for the transfer of the property in the soil from the landlord to the tenants of Ireland."—[*Ibid.* 633-7.]

Holding this opinion in 1876, I shall be much surprised to hear the right hon. and learned Gentleman attempt to argue that the principles he defended in 1876 should not equally hold good in 1881, or that the principles now proposed to be made law differ one iota from those he then so strongly denounced. I shall have occasion presently to refer to the speech of the noble Marquess the Secretary for India in connection with another branch of the subject, which he coupled with this in dealing with it, and I will pass him by for the moment, merely saying that his views on this subject will be found to be fully as strong as those of his Colleagues. We come now to the opinion of the Prime Minister, who, in his speech on the introduction of the Land Bill of 1870, used these words—

> "Now, is it for the public good that the landlords of Ireland, in a body, should be reduced by an Act of Parliament to the condition practically of fundholders, entitled to apply on a certain day from year to year for a certain sum of money, but entitled to nothing more? Are you prepared to denude them of their interest in the land; and, what is more, are you prepared to absolve them from their duties with regard to the land? I, for one, confess that I am not; nor is that the sentiment of my Colleagues."

Further on, in the same speech, he goes on to say—

> "But the occupiers of land in Ireland, though they of themselves constitute something near a moiety of the people of the country, yet are not the whole people. And it would, I think, be difficult to show why, in favour of these particular persons being occupiers, the whole essence of proprietary right should be carried over from the class that now possesses it to that which, though infinitely larger, is still a class, is not the whole people of the country."

And he summed up his indictment of the proposal in these words—

> "Having urged these arguments, to which I am aware of no reply, I may, for the present at any rate, quit this part of the subject. I therefore cast aside perpetuity of tenure, as being a mode and form of remedy that we are not prepared to entertain or propose."—[3 *Hansard*, cxcix. 351-2-4.]

In common with the right hon. Gentleman, I also am not aware of any reply that can be given to the arguments he used in 1870; but there is still a further view of this subject on which the Bill is wholly and totally silent—I mean the question of compensation to the landlords from whom you propose to transfer their rights. This, Sir, is a question from which a Chancellor of the Exchequer may well shrink with alarm; and the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, influenced, doubtless, by purely economical considerations, has thought it prudent to exclude any mention of such a trifle from his proposal. Why has he in this, as in all other essential features of his proposed legislation, changed the views and opinions held by himself and his Colleagues in 1870? What becomes of these sentiments thus expressed on 15th February?—

> "Inasmuch as perpetuity of tenure on the part of the occupier is virtually expropriation of the landlord, and as a mere re-adjustment of rent according to the price of produce can by no means dispose of all contingencies the future may produce in his favour, compensation would have to be paid to the landlord for the rights of which he would be deprived. . . . . I hold that the plan is attended with the greatest practical difficulty, even were it on this ground alone. Because the question will be, by whom is that compensation to be paid?"—[*Ibid.* 350.]

That view of the question was fully endorsed by no less eminent a legal authority than the present Lord Chancellor, then Sir Roundell Palmer, who, in the same debate, said—

> "I shall not go into the argument on that subject, because the point was exhausted by the Head of the Government when he spoke of fixity of tenure, which, in plain English, means taking away the property of one man and giving it to another. My right hon. Friend said that, according to the principles of justice, if we transferred property in that way we must pay for it. No doubt, we may take a man's property, but in that case we must compensate him for it."—[*Ibid.* 1666.]

Speaking also of the general principle of fixity of tenure and valuation of rents, he says—

> "A scheme more full of objection, both as respects landlord and tenant, I cannot conceive. On the part of the landlord it is objectionable, because you would take away from him his land; and on the part of the tenant it is likewise disadvantageous, because his rent would be just as variable and uncertain as under the present tenure, and would be sure to be periodically raised in many cases in which a liberal landlord might otherwise allow it to continue unchanged. Under such a scheme you would have constantly brought in a Judge or the State—and what could be worse than the interference of the State in a matter of that kind?—to settle the terms of the holding, to value all the lands whenever the time of valuation came round—and there would be a continual conflict between landlord and tenant."—[*Ibid.* 1667.]

Sir, we all know that lawyers and statesmen may differ on questions of principle; but I have always believed that once you have deliberately formed an opinion on an abstract principle, that you should have the courage to defend that opinion against any popular clamour that might be set up against it, more especially in the absence of anything but political expediency to justify or palliate such changes as are now presented to us. Coming now to the question of fair rents, I at once accede to the general proposition that no man shall be asked or required to pay more than a fair value for his holding, or a greater rent than it will bear to carry; but when, in the face of the Report of the Commissioners that it has not been usual in Ireland to exact what would be considered in England a full commercial rent, you start upon the assumption that landlord and tenant are incapable of arranging their own business between themselves in a fair and equitable manner; when the very first clause of the 7th section opens the door to a sea of litigation of which no man can foresee the end; when the provisions of that section show it to be framed in the interests of one class alone, and preclude the landlord from similar relief to that afforded to the tenant, without the consent and concurrence of such tenant, although the Commissioners report that rents are under rather than over the value; and when you are arbitrarily going to override every contract entered into for a long series of years, at the instance of the tenant, and at the discretion of a Court composed of lawyers, and, for aught we know, of other equally incompetent State officials, then I say, Sir, you may indeed call the proposal by the name given to it by the Prime Minister in 1870 of valued rents; but the very elements of fairness will be entirely eliminated from it. I should like to know where are then the principles of equal justice claimed for the Bill by the Prime Minister in his opening speech? Now, Sir, what is the next extraordinary provision contained in this section? Why, that the Court in fixing such rent shall have regard to the tenant's interest in such holding; and it provides two scales upon which the Court is to proceed—namely, one for those holdings under the Ulster Custom, and another for those which are not subject to any such custom. It was proved in evidence before the Richmond Commission (Page 589, Question 16,982), that the average value of the tenant right on Lord Downshire's estates was over 40 years' purchase on the rental. Now, putting the owner's interest at 23 years, which is rather above the average selling value of Irish property of late years, it follows that if the Court are to act upon this direction, they must find the landlord's interest to be 17 years worse than nothing, and that he is to be the tenant's debtor for consenting to hold the land. Now, take the case of a £30 tenancy, not under the Ulster Custom. Here the Court would have the compensation scale as their basis, and in estimating the tenant's interest would have to credit him with seven years' value—of course, deducting that from the landlord, or taking from him one-third of the value of his property. To show what the view of the Land League on this subject is, let me read their Report on the proposed Amendments to the Bill—

> "We therefore propose that the words 'shall have regard to' be struck out, and that words be inserted which would make it compulsory on the Court, in fixing the rent of a holding, to deduct from the letting value thereof the annual value of the tenant's interest therein."

I may be told—perhaps I shall be, and perhaps the Chief Secretary for Ireland will say that he has already said so, but I say that he has not—that this is a *reductio ad absurdum*, and was not the intention with which the sub-section was drawn. Well, Sir, we have heard of other places besides the floor of this House being paved with good intentions; and I say if that is not the intention, why, in the name of common sense, insert a provision framed in a way that is obviously capable of such construction? If, on the other hand, I am told this is the meaning of the provision—and as it stands I defy any reasoning man to put any other construction upon it, nor have I heard that complete denial from the right hon. Gentleman which the case demands—then I say that it is the duty of every Member of this House with the slightest remaining regard for the Eighth Commandment to record an indignant protest and vote against such an iniquitous proposition. Intentions have no place in Acts of Parliament, *litera Scriptamanent*, and intentions should appear in explicit terms, which are not the characteristics of this Bill. This, Sir, is the proposal for State intervention and valuation of rents, which was thus referred to and described by the Prime Minister in 1870—

> "However, what I do wish is, in the first place, that there should be a clear manifestation of the views of the Government, and, secondly, of the House, that we are not ready to accede to a principle of legislation by which the State shall take into its own hands the valuation of rents throughout Ireland. I say take into its own hands, because it is perfectly immaterial whether the thing shall be done by a State officer forming part of the Civil Service, or by an arbitrator, acting under State authority, or by any other person invested by the law with powers to determine on what terms as to rent every holding in Ireland shall be held. . . . . The mathematical result is, that if you undertake to fix the valuation of rents by public authority, you must likewise undertake to fix the whole conditions of every agricultural holding. There is no escape from that conclusion. Well, then, are you prepared to undertake that? We say—'Give shelter to the tenant from loss by eviction, and make that shelter effectual.' This doctrine says—' Give over to the tenant a great, a paramount, a permanent interest in the land.' Am I mistaking it or not? My proposition is that if you value rents you may as well for every available purpose adopt perpetuity of tenure at once. It is perpetuity of tenure only in a certain disguise. It is the first link in the chain, but it draws after it the last. Now look at its practical difficulty. We are to value these rents. What an army of public officers are you to send abroad to determine from year to year the conditions of the 600,000 holdings in Ireland—conditions which are settled with comparative ease when settled by private intercourse, but conditions the fixing of which beforehand by a public authority would be attended with ten-fold difficulty."—[3 *Hansard*, cxcix. 1845-6.]

Passing on now to the year 1877, what do we find the opinion of the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India, speaking presumably on behalf of the occupants of the then Front Opposition Bench, and on a Motion by the hon. Member for Tralee (The O'Donoghue) in favour of regulation of rents?—

> "That Motion meant, in his opinion, valued rents, or it meant nothing at all; and a principle which involved valued rents appeared to him to conflict altogether with freedom of contract. . . . . The Land Act was not intended to upset the ordinary relations of landlord and tenant. . . . . He should be adverse to an inquiry, if it were supposed by the people of Ireland that it was intended to be a prelude to legislation on new principles for the purpose of establishing fixity of tenure and valuation of rents."—[3 *Hansard*, ccxxxiv. 97-8.]

Well, Sir, on the same date we find the present First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) saying that the Land Act of 1870 had—

> "Carried the principle of compensation to the tenant to the very verge of English ideas of the right of property without infringing them. . . . Nor, would the House, within any reasonable period, accede to either fixity of tenure or rents fixed by independent valuers."—[*Ibid.* 62-3.]

These are the words and opinions of responsible Ministers of the Crown and Members of the Government, for a change from which they have not given us a shadow of a reason. Independently of these considerations, there are others of an equally grave and important character; and foremost among these is the nature and constitution of the tribunals it is proposed to make judges of the value of land. These tribunals have already been fully tried in the carrying out of the Land Act of 1870; and it is admitted on all sides that the irregular and different working of the Courts in different counties, owing to the peculiar views and readings of the Act by the Chairman, has been eminently unsatisfactory. Who is it then proposed to make a judge of the number of cattle a farm will feed, the quantity of corn or roots it will produce per acre, or the peculiar kinds of grasses favourable to the production of milk or butter? Why, of all men in the world, a lawyer; who, however good a judge he may be of the age of mutton on the table, or the probable quantity of brains mixed up in his milk, is about the last man I should dream of going to for an agricultural opinion. Well, Sir, this thoroughly competent official is to be assisted by a nondescript animal called, for want of a better name, an "independent valuer," whatever that may mean. Is this person to be a local farmer, agent, or landlord, or a man of the expert class, such as a local engineer or professional valuator. In any of these events confidence in the award cannot and will not exist on both sides, as no man will be looked upon as a true prophet in his own country, but will be supposed to have tendencies one way or the other. On the other hand, if the independent valuer is to be a standing official of the Court, and to be appointed, having regard to his high standing or professional qualifications, and entire want of connection with the county or district to which he is appointed, I say that the opinion of such a man coming as a stranger into the district, not knowing its requirements, its actual capabilities of produce, the conditions under which the contract was made, and the consideration which may have been given or received, or last, but by no means least, having no means of testing the credibility of evidence which will, in most cases, be open to suspicion, to call it by no harsher name, would be a standard so untrustworthy that it, in like manner, would fail to command the confidence of either party. In fact, the State must, as the Prime Minister has said, "take into its own hands the fixing of every other condition of the agricultural holding," and "there is no escape from that conclusion." We will now assume that some party to a case heard by the Court feels aggrieved by its decision, and he appeals to the Court with appellate jurisdiction—namely, the Land Commission, which is out of the frying pan into the fire, and out of one lawyer's clutches into another's; and, worse still, not necessarily into the hands of the Commission itself, but into the hands of any other incompetent sub-Commissioner to whom they may choose to delegate their powers. For the reasons which I have given, Sir, I maintain that the House ought not to be called upon to affirm a principle so diametrically opposed to every acknowledged law of property, except as an extreme measure and on the basis of compensation to the landlord for what you take away; and this is demanded imperatively by every rule of honour, justice, and equity. Should the Government now undertake to submit proposals with this view, I am sure that many who are totally opposed to a measure nothing short of spoliation would be disposed to consider as favourably as they can the arguments which may be adduced in favour of expediency. There is another point which has been entirely ignored, and which it was fully anticipated would necessarily form part of any proposal for valuation of rents, and that is a proposal for the re-valuation of Ireland; but as that would be a most unpopular move among those interested in agitation, and knowing what the inevitable result of such re-valuation would be, any such proposal, which is dictated by common sense, has been carefully excluded from the Bill. The consequence of that will be that we shall still have the bugbear of Griffith's valuation being constantly raised and quoted as the standard by which rents should be fixed. It is useless trying to persuade uneducated peasants that what may be a fair valuation for taxational purposes bears no relation to the letting value of a farm. The fact will remain in his mind that the Government valued his farm at a certain figure, that he still continues to pay his rates and taxes upon that valuation, and that it was not now considered necessary or expedient to make any alteration in it. It is proposed to establish a Court for the valuation of rents; and you start them upon their work without any materials whatever for forming a judgment except this very valuation which has been condemned all round as an untrustworthy basis, and last, though not least, by both the Royal Commissions which have recently reported. The Bessborough Commission says, at Page 26, Clause 64—

> "If anything has been clearly established on evidence during this inquiry, the fact that the present Government valuation is not a trustworthy standard for the settlement of rents has been most thoroughly demonstrated. Fair as it may have been for the purposes of local taxation in the years when it was made, the evidence shows that even then it was considered as below the fair letting value of the land."

The Richmond Commission also says—

> "It is conclusively proved that the annual value, as set forth in that document, was not intended to represent, and did not represent at the date when the valuation was made, the rental value of the property."

Many hon. Members may not be aware that in the Acts authorizing that valuation, of which there were several, and the last of which was in 1852, there was a Schedule of prices of agricultural produce on which the valuation was to be based, and that the prices in that year, as fixed by that Act, were from 33 to 97 per cent lower on the different kinds of produce than they were in the year 1877, when a Bill was brought in for a re-valuation, but which was not carried through. Hon. Members will, perhaps, be surprised to hear that where, in 1852, the price of beef was fixed at 35*s.* 6*d.* per cwt., it was, in 1877, proposed to be fixed at 70*s.*, or 97 per cent higher. Butter, in 1852, was 65*s.* 4*d.*, against 121*s.* 4*d.* in 1877, or 85 per cent higher. Oats, 4*s.* 10*d.*, against 7*s.* 8*d.*, or 58 per cent higher; and so on in the case of every other kind of produce, and the general average increase in price was 61 per cent on all the produce scheduled in the two Bills. Well, Sir, we have, in addition, the testimony of Sir Richard Griffith himself, who, at page 7 of a pamphlet by him on the general valuation of Ireland, says, speaking of his own valuation—

> "If one-third be added, the result will give very nearly the full rent value of the land under ordinary proprietors."

This, then, Sir, is the only information or data on which you are going to start a Court, composed of lawyers and other incapables, to adjudicate on the value of land. Added to which the Government are going to leave a misleading and mischievous public document on record, which, as they must be aware, has already worked great and irremediable harm in the minds of the people. I say, therefore, that it is the bounden duty of the Government to provide for the immediate commencement of a valuation which shall supersede one which can only be considered as an element of discord and mischief. I must refer in a few words to the litigation which it is admitted on all hands, whether the speaker be a landlord or a tenant, a Land Leaguer or a lawyer, this Bill will produce. The day after this Bill becomes law, if it ever does become law, it will be in the power of every tenant in Ireland to apply to the Court to have his rent fixed; and who that knows anything of the country will disbelieve that there will be wanting the evil spirit, in the shape of unscrupulous attorneys or violent agitators, who will incite many to make such an application who heretofore considered they had no just grounds of complaint? One of the Prime Minister's principal objections to a clause moved by the late Sir John Gray in Committee on the Land Bill of 1870 was that it encouraged litigation; and, replying to him on the 19th of May, he said—

> "But how does the plan of the hon. Member stand that test. He states that the object of his plan is to avoid litigation, but he begins in a Court, and he requires that every landlord shall, through the medium of that Court, challenge his tenants to enter into a new state of things in order to carry out a preliminary, without which his plan can never take effect and must remain a dead letter."—[3 *Hansard*, cci. 1029.]

Well, Sir, what is the difference between the plan then proposed and the present one? Do not both begin in a Court, the difference being that the tenant here, instead of the landlord, is encouraged to challenge his landlord to enter into a new state of things, and to repudiate his contract. And does any reasoning man doubt that that will be the immediate effect of the passing of the Bill, and that feelings of hostility and bitterness, already too much aroused by the passive inaction of the Government, will be created and fomented in every direction? Let me now ask English and Scotch Members on the other side of the House, who may be disposed to think that as it is only the interests of a few Irish proprietors which are at stake, that they might be sacrificed by way of experiment, and that if a principle of legislation is admitted by which the coming race of Irish tenants are rendered hopelessly insolvent, and handed over to the mercy of the money-lender, they have only themselves and the agitators to thank for it—let me ask them, I say, whether they conscientiously believe that such legislation as this will stop short in Ireland, and whether they have no fears that this is the thin end of a wedge, which there are many in this country, aye, and some in this House, who would be glad to see driven home on this side of the Channel? Let me refer them to the words of the Prime Minister, in 1870, when he said—

> "If perpetuity of tenure were really good for Ireland, it could not be very bad either for England or Scotland. There are, indeed, peculiar features in the condition of Ireland, that, in our judgment, justify and demand peculiar legislation; but I am aware of none of those features that could by any man be held to extend to recommending perpetuity of tenure in Ireland which would not also be applicable to England or to Scotland. If perpetuity of right is to be transferred from one class to another, that would not be a bit more or less expedient on this side of the water than on the other; and accordingly, in that view of the matter, this with which we have now to deal is not an Irish Land Question, but an United Kingdom Land Question."—[3 *Hansard*, cxcix. 353-4.]

Underlying this Bill are principles and proposals which will have the effect of exchanging the patriarchal system—which has been admitted by the Prime Minister to have been upon its trial and as a whole acquitted—and old traditions of kindliness and sympathy for the stern interference of the State and the imperative demands of the money-lender. You will take away from the owner both the inclination and the power to invest any further capital in improvements. You will place the strongest incentive on absenteeism, which has been repeatedly described as one of the curses of Ireland. You are opening the door to a sea of litigation which no man can foresee the end of; and, for the sake of curbing the misconduct of the few, you are punishing that great majority, who it is admitted by all, save those whose trade and calling is agitation, have done their duty in that state of life in which it has pleased God to place them. Furthermore, you are placing the strongest weapon for further mischief in the hands of the agitators, who have announced publicly that they do not thank you for what they consider an instalment wrung from you by their efforts; and, in doing that, you will throw overboard all those principles of right, justice, and equity which in the past were so strongly declared to be entirely absent from the present proposals. Sir, I sincerely hope that before this debate is brought to a close Her Majesty's Government will recognize the necessity for undertaking to modify these objectionable principles in Committee; principles for which they have utterly failed to show any case, and which could only be justified as a penal and retributive measure, which their own Commission admitted was not deserved; principles which they would not have dared to put forward but for the state into which they have allowed the country to drift, and enable us to support, as a whole, a measure many parts of which are worthy of favourable consideration. Passing now from the unpleasant consideration of the stultification by English statesmen of the principles and opinions they paraded before the country in past successive years, and which, with one noble exception, they have not now the courage or consistency to defend, I come to those parts of the Bill which involve no principle of the plundering of any particular class, but proceed upon the recognized laws of political economy, which have always held that where any great or radical change was considered necessary for the public welfare, the costs of such legislation should be borne by the public purse, and not drawn from the pockets of any particular class of the community. Turning now to that part of the Bill dealing with the purchase of their holdings by tenants, I am bound to say that I have always looked with considerable suspicion on proposals having for their object the transforming of a tenant farmer into a proprietor. And, except this is limited to a class of holding above a £30 valuation, I believe you will only be introducing a new system of pauperism into the country. Experience has shown, and I can fully endorse it from personal observation, that lands let in perpetuity and at nominal rents are, in too many instances, the worst-farmed and most wretchedly conducted holdings in a district. It is also well known that there is no harder taskmaster, or greater rack-renter, than the small owner who has thus acquired the rights and privileges of an owner. I believe it would be the greatest possible mistake to perpetuate or enlarge, without limitation, a system such as that under which many of the tenants of glebe lands purchased their holdings from the Commissioners of Church Temporalities, a large proportion of them being under £5 valuation; and within my own knowledge some of them have been last winter in receipt of relief from public charity. If, however, Her Majesty's Government propose to place some limit of this nature on the operation of the Act, and it is considered expedient to give a further trial to this principle, I, for one, shall not throw any obstacle in the way of the responsibility which the Government will incur. With regard to the reclamation of waste lands, or for drainage purposes, though I shall be very glad to find that I am mistaken, I believe the clauses as now framed will be entirely inoperative, as, except in some very exceptional case such as I have never yet seen, it is hard to see why a baronial guarantee should be given for what would obviously be a private and not a public object; and, having some experience of baronial guarantees, I know the difficulty of obtaining them for any purpose whatever. On the other hand, if there is no baronial guarantee, the Treasury must be satisfied with the security before any advance is made; and as a company formed for the purpose of reclaiming certain lands must either acquire the lands absolutely, or the owner's rights over the lands for a specified period, it follows that, unless they have other security to offer outside the value of the lands themselves, the only security they would have to offer would be a mortgage or first-charge on lands for so far unreclaimed and valueless; and, speaking from my own experience, I know the difficulty of satisfying the Treasury of the sufficiency of security, even on works and undertakings of undoubted earning capacity. I do not, therefore, attach any real importance to this clause, which I believe will be a dead letter. The most important question in the whole of Part V.—namely, emigration, is dealt with in the most summary manner, and disposed of in a clause of 18 lines. That I believe to be the true solution of the problem of relieving many districts of Ireland, now over-crowded with a population which the land is not able to carry or support. Until this congestion is relieved, and the soil is freed from the necessity of supporting a greater number of mouths than even in the best of years it is capable of doing with comfort, I care not how you legislate, even if you went the length of completing the work you now propose to begin—namely, to entirely expropriate the landlord and instal the tenant rent free in his stead—I say, even if you went that length, you would only perpetuate and fix in the country a system of misery and ever-recurring periodical famines and discontent. This Bill unfolds no scheme for the amelioration of such a state of things. It contains a bald authority to the Treasury and the Land Commission to advance sums not named or limited, but which, in common with the other money clauses of this part of the Act, are to be governed by "prudential considerations." This, Sir, is a manner that I think so important a subject should not be so lightly treated in. The House and the country have a right to ask, What are the proposals of the Government? What are the facilities and inducements to be offered to possible emigrants? And is this proposal to include any facilities for the consolidation of the farms vacated by these families in populated districts? I say, Sir, that unless you provide for the emigration of the whole family, and if it is only proposed to assist emigration on the lines on which it is now going on, you will be doing more harm than good —as you will be assisting out of the country those who ought to be kept—namely, the young and the healthy of both sexes, leaving behind the old, the decrepid, and the weak of the family. I regret, also, that no attempt is made or suggested towards the development of the industrial resources of the country. Speaking generally of Part V. of the Bill, I believe it contains the elements of what may be amended into a useful measure; and I regret that it should have been mixed up with such principles as are contained in other parts of the Bill, which will make it impossible for me to support it—principles which, I say, no case has been made out in favour of, for which there is no demand, except that of agitation and outrage, which have been denounced in the strongest terms by those responsible Ministers who are now submitting these very same principles to Parliament, and who, in obedience to the demands of those who are the true enemies of their country, are deliberately confiscating the property of one class for the exclusive benefit of another. Sir, I appeal to the House not to endorse with its sanction such principles of class legislation, and to refuse to place upon the Statute Book of England an enactment which, in its present shape, so surely as the sun sets in the West, will be the worst blow which has ever been given to my unhappy country.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. LAW) said, he must decline to follow the hon. Gentleman who had just addressed the House (Mr. Tottenham) through all the topics upon which he had touched. It would have been quite as well if the earlier portion of the remarks of the hon. Member had been omitted, considering the somewhat unreasonable and even discourteous observations he had thought proper to make in reference to the Prime Minister, and the tone in which he had criticized the very able speech of the noble Lord the Member for Barnstaple (Viscount Lymington). He (the Attorney General for Ireland) had been trying to discover the nature of the legislation which the hon. Gentleman would apply as a remedy for the present ills of Ireland; but in that he had been altogether unsuccessful, and felt constrained to conclude that the policy which the hon. Member was prepared to recommend was to do practically nothing. Even the conversion of tenants into occupying proprietors, which appeared to meet with universal acceptance, the hon. Gentleman desired to restrict to holdings valued at £30 a-year and upwards, and thus to exclude from the benefit of any such measure five-sixths of the present occupiers of land in Ireland; whilst he objected altogether to any change in the legal relations of landlord and tenant in that part of the Kingdom. It was with this latter subject only that he (the Attorney General for Ireland) at present proposed to deal, confining his observations accordingly to the first part of the Bill, which alone seemed to excite any hostile criticism. Now, in reference to this matter, he must observe that most of the hon. Members who had addressed the House had regarded, and rightly regarded, the fixing of fair rent as, after all, the most important part of the question. The principle involved in this was really the matter which must be first determined; and, with the exception of the hon. Gentleman, all who had considered the subject appeared to think so. The hon. Gentleman, again, seemed to take a peculiar view of the Ulster Custom. He had given the House four instances of sales in the county of Down in which he alleged that extravagant sums had been paid for tenant right—the prices varying from £20 an acre in one case, up to as much as £50 an acre in another. But, in matters of this kind, without inquiry into the particular circumstances of each case, it would be perfectly idle for anyone to pronounce an opinion. One of the most important witnesses examined before the Duke of Richmond's Commission, and also before Lord Bessborough's Commission—Professor Baldwin—when speaking of what had been represented as a very extravagant sum paid for tenant right, said—"That is all very well until you come to examine the facts." He then proceeded to give an instance which had come within his own knowledge, where a man who had been paying 10*s*. a-year for his piece of land sold the tenant right for £80. Professor Baldwin went to examine the farm, and found that the tenant had obtained, a few years ago, a piece of cut-out bog, or waste, where all the surface soil had been removed, and the residue left in heights and hollows. Ten shillings a-year was the most the landlord could reasonably ask for it, for it was all it was worth; but the tenant set to work and reclaimed it, and turned it into fairly arable land; and Professor Baldwin gave it as his opinion that the man who purchased the tenant right got good value for his money. But the landlord in this case was an honourable gentleman, well known in the county to which the hon. Member for Leitrim (Mr. Tottenham) had referred—a scion of the noble house of Downshire, and one who too well respected the traditions of that house to raise the rent from the 10*s*. a-year, which was the full value of the land as he demised it. Let the House, however, look, by way of contrast, at another case mentioned by Professor Baldwin in his evidence before the Bessborough Commission, and not contradicted, in which a man got three acres of ground of a similar character—namely, cut-out bog—for which all that the landlord could charge was 2*s*. 6*d*. a-year. The tenant reclaimed it at a cost of £45, and enjoyed it for three years; but in the fourth the landlord raised the rent to £1 2*s*. 6*d*. The singularity of the view of the hon. Gentleman was that while he declaimed against the Ulster Custom as injurious, and urged that so far from being extended to the rest of Ireland it ought to be confined within very narrow limits in Ulster itself, he actually went the length of stating to the House that the Ulster Custom was in some way associated with evictions, and was, in fact, the cause of the increased number of evictions which had taken place. Though evictions might have increased in Ulster, where they could be put in force without absolute ruin to the tenant, it would, at least, be found that it had not been necessary to make any material addition to the number of the police in order to carry them out. But while the hon. Member for Leitrim protested against the extension of the custom of tenant right to the rest of Ireland, and would even like to limit its operation at home, the noble Lord the Member for North Leicestershire (Lord John Manners) had just put upon the Paper an Amendment declaring that the House was—

> "Anxious to maintain and secure in full efficiency the customs of Ulster, and other analogous customs in Ireland, and also to remedy any proved defects in the Land Act of 1870,"

as well as disposed to adopt measures for the development of the industrial resources of the country. Well, to those who remembered the way in which the smallest attempts at legislation to secure the efficiency of the Ulster Custom and amend some of the more palpable defects in the Land Act of 1870 had been received by the noble Lord and his Party during their years of Office, this sudden conversion must seem just a little suspicious. But, then, the noble Lord wanted the House to abandon any attempt to regulate the relations of landlord and tenant; and, instead of that, to pass measures for developing the resources of Ireland. Of course they knew what that really meant. It was the old story. If a particular remedy was proposed, those who objected and wished to do nothing at all were ready at once to say—"If we must do anything, let it be something else than what is proposed." Not being in Office, or having charge of the Exchequer, the noble Lord suggested a lavish expenditure on that indefinite object—the development of the resources of Ireland. Now, Her Majesty's Government thought one of the best ways to improve and develop the resources of Ireland was to define and protect the just rights of tenants and landlords alike, and effectually secure that the tiller of the soil should enjoy the fruits of his labour. Reverting, then, to the discussion of the principles of the Bill before the House, he (the Attorney General for Ireland) would address himself now to what had been called "the core of the question"—namely, fair rents, merely remarking, by the way, that they had not, during this debate, heard so much as he had expected of that old watchword, "freedom of contract." He supposed the reason was that hon. Members opposite had found out from the Reports of the two Royal Commissions that such a thing as free contract between landlord and tenant did not exist in Ireland. There might, no doubt, be free contract between a landowner and a man who had no farm at all; but where a tenant was fixed upon a particular holding, which he and his ancestors had by their labour, which was their capital, turned from waste into cultivated land, such a tenant could not be free to deal with his landlord so long as the latter had the power of evicting him, if he did not submit to pay an increased rent for the improvements he and his had effected. Under such circumstances, it was a question for the tenant whether he should abandon the home of his childhood and of his youth, with all their tender memories, resign all that the labour of himself, of his family, and of his ancestors had stored up for him in the farm, and go to America or into the workhouse, or submit to the demand and undertake to pay the arbitrary and, perhaps, extortionate rent required from him. For an Irish peasant to quit his home under these circumstances, was a far more serious thing than it was for the farmer in England to realize his capital and shift to a new farm. Probably the ancestors of the Irish peasant might have been settled on the land long before the title of the landlord arose. Well, then, might the Duke of Richmond's Commission say that, having regard to the fact that the improvements and equipments of the farms had been the work of the tenants, coupled with the liability to have their rents increased whenever they made further improvements, it was not to be wondered at that there should be some distrust and discontent felt by the Irish tenant. The Report of the minority of the Duke of Richmond's Commission stated, and he (the Attorney General for Ireland) believed the statement would be borne out by every Irish Member, that the Irish tenant would endure almost anything, or promise to pay almost any rent, in order to avert or postpone the loss of his holding and his home; so that freedom of contract could not be said in any real sense to exist between landlord and tenant so circumstanced. He desired to give the House some specimens of the cases of rent-raising which had been stated before the Royal Commissions; and would take a few instances from the poorer counties—Donegal, Galway, and Londonderry. In one case in Donegal, the holding of a tenant from year to year was valued at £38, and the rent was £46. But he put up some buildings, and, thereupon, some five years ago, his rent was raised to £60. In another case where a tenant, at a rent of £38 7*s.*, built a house and reclaimed some land at a cost of £40 an acre, his rent in 1873 was raised to £59. The tenant pointed out to the agent the improvements he had made; but the agent told him he was instructed to take the farm just as it stood. Worn out by abortive litigation, and tied to the place by illness in his family, the man at length submitted to this apparently unjust demand. This was the same tenant who, having reclaimed a piece of bog land worth 2*s.* 6*d.*, was almost immediately charged £1 2*s.* 6*d.* for his trouble. He would mention another case in the county of Londonderry, where a man purchased the tenant right for £470, the rent being £43. He spent £500 on drainage and other improvements, and £1,000 upon buildings; and thereupon his rent was raised, first to £63 15*s.*, and shortly afterwards to £73 1*s.* 7*d.*, at which it now stood. In a case in Galway, mentioned by Professor Baldwin, a small property was purchased some years ago in the Landed Estates Court, the rental being then £62 10*s*., and the valuation £52 8*s*. Could anyone imagine what the present rent was? It was £276 14*s*. The hon. Member for County Cork (Mr. Shaw) asked the witness if any leases had fallen in, and the answer was—"No leases whatever." Mr. Kavanagh asked what occurred to his honest mind—"Did the landlord spend anything on the land?" And the reply was, "Not a penny." Then, The O'Conor Don asked the witness if he did not think that proprietors of that kind were somewhat rare? And the answer was—"I am sorry to say they are not; I am compelled to tell you they are common enough even in Ulster." It was right to add that the proprietor referred to, in his answer to these statements published in an Appendix to the Report, stated that he had built a police barrack and some shops in the village. But, be that as it might, he spent nothing on the land. [Mr. Gibson: What was the name?] The name of the gentleman was Leonard. It was also shown in evidence that, on a certain estate in Donegal, 25 per cent was added to the rent on every change of tenancy from whatever cause; and Professor Baldwin stated that, on one particular farm he had visited, this process had been gone through three times in two years. That, too, was not denied, and more than justified the statement of the witness that there was a constant nibbling at the tenant's interest. Indeed, it might well be said that there was was not merely a nibbling at but a devouring of the tenant's interest, when they found that 75 per cent had been added to the rent in the course of two years. Again, Mr. King-Harman told the Duke of Richmond's Commission that the small purchasers invariably raise the rents to the highest pitch; and stated that he knew a case in Galway and Roscommon where the purchaser had never visited his estates, but had ordered his agents to raise the rents 15 per cent, because he considered that that was required in order to bring in a proper return for his money. Finally, even Mr. Bonamy Price, who had thought it necessary to write a separate Report, said—

> "It must be fully admitted that great abuses have occurred in the violent and unreasonable raisings of rent by some landowners, who have not done justice to the actual situation in which both they and their tenants found themselves. The relation of landlord and tenant implies mutual duties and reasonable considerations of existing circumstances. These are not seldom disregarded."

But what was the remedy which Mr. Bonamy Price proposed for these "violent and unreasonable raisings of rent?" He said they must only trust to the training of the landlords and tenants in the course of the time to come to bring about a proper sense of their duties to each other, and a proper fulfilment of those duties. Yes, here is a learned Professor telling us to disregard the miseries of millions of our people—to let injustice and its natural consequences run riot for some generations, resting content in the hope that after a century, or it may be two, things will come all right! And yet, curiously enough, Mr. Bonamy Price did not dissent from but, on the contrary, signed the Report of the majority of the Duke of Richmond's Commission, which suggested the idea of a proper tribunal being established to fix fair rent. The general result, therefore, was that all the Members of the two Commissions, 24 in number, including Dukes, Earls, and commoners of large landed possessions, were united upon this one point—that freedom of contract in reference to Irish agricultural tenancies was a myth, and that some impartial tribunal should be established which should judicially arbitrate between landlords and tenants as to the amount of rent which should be payable. But there was a still higher authority than even Mr. Bonamy Price. There was the authority of the Duke of Argyll, who until recently was a Member of Her Majesty's Government. He (the Attorney General for Ireland) had only seen that morning what the views of the noble Duke were upon this particular question, and he found that the noble Duke also thought that—

> "It is legitimate and expedient that the State should offer the means of judicial arbitration in all cases in which both owner and occupier desire to have recourse to it"——

[*Opposition cheers*]—He was glad that hon. Gentlemen opposite approved of that sentiment. It was not, to be sure, very much; for it did not need an Act of Parliament to enable landlords and tenants to agree to arbitration on the question of rent if they liked. That passage, however, was only introductory to what followed, and of which hon.

Gentlemen opposite would, no doubt, equally approve—

> "And also, in consideration of the somewhat exceptional circumstances existing in Ireland, this right of appealing to a Court may be given, for a time at least, to one party alone."

The Duke of Argyll, therefore, did concur in the principle of a judicial ascertainment of rent. So, too, Lord Dufferin, when asked by the Duke of Richmond's Commission what his opinion was as to this one of the "three F's," said he would welcome any means by which a solution of the question as to what was a fair rent could be arrived at in a manner satisfactory to both parties. And in a letter which the noble Lord addressed to *The Times* last December, he said that fair rent stood out from amongst he "three F's" as a principle to be welcomed by the landlord and tenant alike. He (the Attorney General for Ireland) was glad, therefore, that they had at last attained some common ground to start from. In fact, of those who had addressed the House none had been bold enough to announce that he was against proper arrangements for the judicial ascertainment of fair rent. By the Act of 1870 the Legislature had given to tenants a legal interest in their holdings—call it tenant right, or goodwill, or what they would—but, no matter what the name or extent of the right might be, they could not now with any consistency allow the landlords to confiscate and appropriate their tenants' interest by arbitrary increases of rent; and, in order to prevent that, there must be some independent tribunal to fix the rent. Well, assuming that to be the case, and he did not understand it to be contested, the question remained, what was a fair rent, and how was it to be ascertained? And here they must remember that there was a fundamental difference between English and Irish agricultural holdings. They could easily ascertain the rent of a farm in England by open competition, because the landlord provided all the farm equipments and put the farm in a condition to be worked. But they could not adopt the same course in Ireland without inflicting the grossest injustice, because the improvements and equipments of the holdings were, as a general rule, provided by the tenants. The hon. Gentleman who spoke last (Mr. Tottenham) was examined before the Richmond Commission, and in the course of his evidence spoke disparagingly of improvements effected by tenants in Ireland, saying he could not regard as improvements mud cabins or thatched roofs. Well, even these dwellings were better than none, for they gave shelter to those who tilled the soil and made cultivation and payment of rent at least possible. It would indeed be interesting to know how many mud cabins and thatched roofs paid the hon. Gentleman rent. The hon. Gentleman, to be sure, had peculiar notions on the subject of rent. He objected to lawyers being employed for the purpose of determining what was a fair rent; and when asked by the Commissioners by whom he thought the rents should be fixed, he said—"Well, land agents or professional valuators"—like Hodges and Smith, of Dublin, who had re-valued his estate some years ago. The hon. Gentleman was asked if his tenants had made any improvements, and he said they had reclaimed bog and something of that kind. "Were your valuators told," asked the Commissioners, "to have regard to those improvements?" His reply was—"No; it was no business of theirs to know by whom they were done." The hon. Gentleman followed this up by what was probably a Connaught aphorism—namely, "Better manure never went upon land than to be well salted with rent."

Mr. TOTTENHAM: Please read the whole of the quotation.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Law): That is the whole of it.

Mr. TOTTENHAM: If the right hon. and learned Gentleman will look again, he will find that I prefaced the remark by these words—"It is an old saying." I did not invent the phrase.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Law) said, he had not intended to imply that the hon. Gentleman had invented the phrase. On the contrary, he had already remarked that it was, he supposed, a Connaught aphorism. It showed, however, the sort of wisdom that was current among the landlords of the West of Ireland. They all knew that proverbs were said to be the condensed wisdom of nations, and he supposed that this was the crystallized wisdom of the Western landlords. However, he did not believe that the hon. Gentleman acted in the spirit of the proverb. He believed the hon. Gentleman was himself just in his dealings with his tenants, though he objected to their having any right to that justice. It should depend, he seemed to think, upon his good will and pleasure. He now came to the question, how a fair rent was to be ascertained? His right hon. and learned Friend the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) seemed to take it that a fair rent was a competition rent; and in his observations upon the clause of the Bill dealing with that subject there was, as he (the Attorney General for Ireland) ventured to say, no little confusion of language. What the clause meant was this. It meant to lay down that a fair rent was a competition rent minus the yearly value of the tenant's interest in the holding. That was what was intended, and anything else would be monstrously unjust. If this proposition was disputed, he was quite ready to defend it. But if that principle were not disputed, there was no use in entering now into any merely verbal controversy. He must remind the House that at present they were dealing, not with details, but with the principle of the Bill, and that, therefore, mere verbal criticism of the clause was altogether out of place. When they got into Committee, his right hon. and learned Friend's suggestions would be listened to with attention; and if they could improve the language of the very accomplished draughtsman, so much the better. The present, however, was not the time for this.

Mr. GIBSON: Does my right hon. and learned Friend give the House any construction of the words in the Bill—"having regard to the scale of compensation for disturbance provided in the Act?"

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Law) said, it was a mode of referring to the tenant's existing interest. He supposed it would not be denied that the tenant's position was improved and strengthened by his right to compensation for disturbance. If so, that was surely an element to be considered. But he must respectfully decline to let himself be entangled in a verbal discussion with regard to particular expressions in the Bill, because, however convenient such discussion might be to his right hon. and learned Friend, it would be most inconvenient to the House at that stage of the Bill. One element of confusion in the arguments of his right hon. and learned Friend was the idea by which he seemed to be possessed, that the fair rent of land should be estimated by what the landlord could get for it by competition in the open market. And yet, at the same time, his right hon. and learned Friend said he was for a fair rent as distinguished from a rack rent. But did his right hon. and learned Friend use the words "rack rent" in a legal sense, or in the Land League sense, as denoting an exorbitant rent obtained by extortion? "Rack rent" meant simply the rent which the land would bring in the open market, without taking any fine; and his right hon. and learned Friend would remember that the expression was accordingly so used in all the more concise forms of leasing powers which had now replaced the older and more diffuse ones. He (the Attorney General for Ireland) agreed in the condemnation of exacting rack rents or competition rents from tenants in Ireland, because that was making them pay for what was their own, as well as what belonged to their landlords. But this did not seem to be the view of his right hon. and learned Friend, who, whilst declaring himself "strongly opposed to rack rents," complained that under the provisions of the Bill the Court, in fixing the "fair rent," was not bound to give the landlord what he could get by competition in the open market. The Bill, however, did not exclude competition; to find out what belonged both to the landlord and to the tenant, it was necessary to have recourse to the standard of competition. His right hon. and learned Friend, indeed, when he came to the part of the clause that so greatly exercised him, passed lightly over the Ulster reference. There were some hon. Members behind him who came from Ulster, and would be the last to complain that the full competition rent was to be reduced by reference to the occupier's tenant right. The right hon. and learned Gentleman gave some imaginary instances of injustice that might, as he thought, result; but these criticisms had been fully answered by his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Dundalk (Mr. C. Russell). In the next place, his right hon. and learned Friend complained that under the Bill the landlord would not be allowed to go into Court to have the rent re-adjusted where it was too low. But this was simply because the power of the landlord to raise the rent under threat of eviction unless the tenant went into Court had been left untouched. Much of the present difficulty, in fact, had arisen because the landlord was free to raise the rent as often and as much as he pleased under a threat of eviction. The Bill now proposed to give power to the tenant, under reasonable checks, to go into Court if he thought the demand made upon him was unjust. The other points referred to by his right hon. and learned Friend had, he thought, already been disposed of. The right hon. and learned Gentleman appeared, in some respects, to have carefully misread the Bill, for it did not seem to him (the Attorney General for Ireland) that he could really have taken the meaning out of the Bill that he professed to do. With regard to the tribunals which had been so very much abused, it might be a matter for consideration when they got into Committee whether they could be improved. But let them remember that for the last 10 years all over Ireland the County Court Judges had been determining, without complaint, the question of fair rent. They had had to do this for the purpose of ascertaining whether the tenants should have compensation for disturbance or not; for the test was whether the landlords' demands of increased rent were or were not excessive. The only difference was that the Bill enabled the Court now to do directly that which hitherto had been done indirectly. The right hon. and learned Gentleman put the case of a landlord asking a pound or two too much. But could anyone suppose that the tenant would rush into Court for such a sum as a pound? He would be a very bold tenant who would do so, at the risk of having to pay the cost of the proceeding.

Mr. GIBSON : He might refuse to bring the landlord into Court.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Law) was glad that his right hon. and learned Friend had reminded him of that piece of criticism. The tenant, he had said, might compel the landlord to pay at once the penalty of ten times the amount of his mistake, and then sell at the highest price in the open market. But this was a total misapprehension. In such a case the tenant must first sell before he made any such demand, and selling was the last thing he wished to do. Again, the right hon. and learned Gentleman said it was a very common thing to take a dairy farm for a year certain, and complained that under the Bill such a contract would be turned into a yearly tenancy, and enable the tenant to apply to have his rent reduced. But this, also, was a complete mistake. If it was a non-residential pasture farm, it was outside the Bill altogether; and, indeed, for that matter, the case he instanced was not a letting of land at all, but was a letting of the cows upon it. He had now done with the somewhat minute objections of his right hon. and learned Friend; and he came, at length, to consider the effect of the Bill. The broad effect of the measure was this. It dealt with existing tenancies which were, or might be, injured, or, to borrow a word from the hon. Gentleman the Member for Leitrim, "salted" by excessive rents. It enabled an existing tenant to get relief from an unfair and unjust rent. Did anyone object to that? He took it for granted that the House would agree with the two sets of Royal Commissioners that this should be done, and that the only way in which it could be properly done would be by having the question, what was a fair rent, determined by a Court. It was their duty to secure that the present tenants should not have their interests nibbled up or devoured by rapacious landlords; and whether the rapacious landlords were many or few, there were, it was plain, quite enough of them to keep the country in a state of disturbance. One bad landlord in a county was sufficient for that purpose; and, if they believed even Mr. Bonamy Price, there were a great many more than that. Reference had been made to the Bill introduced by the late Mr. Butt. The difference, however, between this Bill and the Bill of Mr. Butt was great. The present measure left future contracts free, whereas Mr. Butt's Bill transferred the fee simple to anyone who at any time might happen to be the occupier of the land. Her Majesty's Government were of opinion that that was unjust and would be mischievous. They left parties free where they could—where freedom of contract existed they left it untouched. Those who might, in future, have lands in their own hands to let, and farmers who would take such farms, they desired to leave free; but in the case of the tenant already in occupation, who had his capital sunk in the cultivation of the soil, they contended that he was not free to accept or refuse the landlord's demand of an increased rent. Moreover, they did not think that the mode of ascertaining the rent of land proposed by Mr. Butt was fair or reasonable. His proposal was that the rent should be ascertained by a jury of the district, or by the arbitration of three neighbouring farmers. The Government did not think that that was exactly the tribunal which ought to be entrusted with determining and settling the amount of the landlord's rent. Their desire was to have a tribunal fully qualified to ascertain a fair rent justly, and, if possible, satisfactorily to both parties; and such a tribunal they proposed to establish by the present Bill. If the composition of the Court could be made more satisfactory, that, as he had already said, could be done in Committee. It appeared to him, and he believed it would also appear to others, when they came to understand it, that the real principle of this Bill was the same as that on which the Land Act of 1870 was founded —namely, that the class of small occupiers constituting the great majority of the tenants of Ireland were not free; and, therefore, that it was desirable the Legislature should protect them against disturbance at the mere will of the landlord. He believed that, either before 1870 or since, no large number of purely capricious evictions had taken place. The evictions had not been to gratify the mere caprice of the landlords, or for the punishment of tenants, but to put money into the pockets of the landlords by enforcing higher rents. The Government had, therefore, now proceeded again on the same principle that the mass of the tenants were not able to protect themselves; and the Bill accordingly sought further to protect them against unreasonable conduct on the part of their landlords. Quotations had been made on the other side from the older part of the essay of Dr. Longfield. But in the recent part of that very essay it was stated that the Act of 1870 recognized the fact that the tenant was unable to make a fair bargain, and that the principle of that Act now seemed to require a judicial settlement of rent and a qualified fixity of tenure. They had heard nothing like that from the quotations of 10 or 11 years ago, which had been given to the House by the hon. Member for Oxfordshire (Mr. E. W. Harcourt); and the present opinions of the author were of most importance now. There were 10 chapters of the essay which belonged to the period preceding 1870, while the three closing chapters belonged to the present time. It appeared to him (the Attorney General for Ireland) that security of tenure—to give it that name—followed as an absolutely necessary consequence from the fixing of the rent. If it was proper, and it seemed to be so admitted by all, that there should be an impartial tribunal to fix a fair rent, would any hon. Gentleman tell him what use there would be in that if they left the landlord at liberty to slip out of the arrangement by dispossessing the tenant as soon as he chose? It would be found that whilst the Duke of Argyll received the principle of a judicial arbitration in regard to rent, he went on to say, in the seventh paragraph of his propositions, that all decisions so arrived at should have the effect of holding good for a definite time, and should be attended by all or some of the conditions of a lease. That was exactly what the Government had proposed. The fixing, in short, of a fair rent involved two things — the amount of the rent, and the fixing of the time during which the arrangement should continue. It would be worse than useless to establish a rent tribunal and put the parties to the inconvenience and cost of resorting to it to fix the rent unless the interval was also fixed during which the arrangement so made should not be disturbed. He did not stop to discuss what the term should be; but there must be a certain definite time during which the rent so arrived at should not be called in question. That involved another consideration. If the tenant was to be fixed there for a certain time, it must be on certain definite conditions; and accordingly the Bill next laid down what those conditions should be. The tenant, for example, must pay his rent at the appointed time, and he must not do certain objectionable things. These conditions seemed, indeed, to have been somewhat misunderstood. The hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), speaking the other day at a meeting in Dublin, appeared to think it would be an improvement to amend the Bill by expressly declaring that the rent must be paid within six months of its becoming due. But the mode by which advantage was to be taken of the breach of the statutory condition as to payment of rent was by ejectment for non-payment, which could not be brought until there was a year's rent due, and this, in effect, gave the tenant a year to pay. His right hon. and learned Friend also urged another objection to this clause of the Bill. He said it was a monstrous thing that the landlord should have no protection against the wilful and outrageous waste of his tenant; and, observing that the Bill was remarkable, not only for the statutory conditions it contained, but also for those which were omitted from it, he went on to say that the tenant might pull down the offices, level the fences, and use the mines and minerals on the farm, and yet not come under the Bill. The end of the sentence was the only part of it that was in any sense correct. The offender would not indeed be punished or even proceeded against under the Bill; but he would under the Common Law. Did his right hon. and learned Friend imagine that this Bill was to replace all law in Ireland? Did he think that the power of the Courts to issue injunctions would be stopped by the Bill, or did he imagine that the Bill was an attempt to codify all the Statutory and Common Law bearing, however remotely, on the relation of landlord and tenant? He should be exceedingly surprised to find his right hon. and learned Friend advising a tenant that he had power to do these things; and could not help thinking that this was an opinion merely thrown out under the stress of debate, and one which they were not likely to see on paper with his right hon. and learned Friend's name at the foot of it. However, he would pass on. A point, he thought, had now been reached at which fair rents and some amount of durability of tenure must be admitted. A man having a durable interest—even though not a perpetual interest—in his farm, an interest which was worth some money, it seemed to him to follow as a necessary consequence that he ought to be at liberty to sell it if he so desired. It was not proposed that it should die with him. No one objected to his disposing of it by will. Was he not, then, to be at liberty to assign it in his lifetime? All the restrictions upon free sale and transfer were the inventions of modern times, restricting the Common Law right. It was curious, too, to note that although the landlords had long had power by certain statutes to prohibit assignment, they never troubled their heads about the matter, and the result was the indefinite subdivision of land that was now so loudly spoken of. But, in truth, people who had a valuable interest could not reasonably be prevented from selling it, for the ability to make this use of property constituted half its value. How would landlords like to be restricted in the transfer of their estates? Did they know that there was a time when the consent of the tenant was required to any such transfer on their part? If they inquired, they would find that at Common Law the landlord could not effectually sell and transfer his interest without the formal concurrence of his tenant, whose "attornment" was necessary to complete the transaction. That rule of law, no doubt, was done away with in the reign of Queen Anne, as being inconsistent with common sense and justice; but he submitted that what was reasonable and right in the case of the landlord was just as much so in the case of the tenant. No one asked for absolutely free sale, in the sense of sale, without any reference to the just interests of the landlord. But what earthly harm could assignment of the tenancy do to the landlord if he had the power of objecting on proper grounds to the proposed change being made? Surely the only objection a landlord could reasonably make was to the admission of an improper tenant; and if that were secured what right had he to demand more? Did they wish to recognize the Irish tenant's property in his farm only in the sense of the guinea given to Olivia by the Vicar of Wakefield—to be kept in her pocket and never changed? This principle of free sale, indeed, was what the Duke of Argyll so much objected to, truly saying that the partnership argument would not do to justify it. But his Grace should remember that one of the so-called partners—the landlord—claimed and enjoyed the right to sell, whilst a corresponding right was to be denied to the tenant. Dr. Longfield, to whose opinions hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite had so frequently appealed in this debate, had written thus in one of his latest chapters—

> "When a tenant, by any means, acquires a valuable and permanent interest in his holding, it is only reasonable and just that he should have

> the power of selling it. This 'F'—free sale—is useful and almost necessary to him, and it does no harm to anybody."

That, in short, was one of the principal uses of property. Now, in providing, by the 1st clause of the Bill, that the landlord might object to a new tenant on showing reasonable ground for so doing, Her Majesty's Government had done all that justice required. That was precisely the way in which the case stood in Ulster at the present moment, and it had never created any difficulty there. Probably, the right of objecting to a purchaser was seldom exercised; but that was because there was generally no need to exercise it. There was this remarkable testimony borne by several witnesses to the effect of free sale—that there never was a change of tenant by sale, but the landlord got a better tenant in place of the old one. If the new tenant had made money, he was an industrious and thrifty man, and if he inherited it, he had probably still more to spend; while as to the paternal argument that the new tenant would injure himself by laying out too much of his capital in buying the holding, that, to borrow an expression of his right hon. and learned Friend at a late Conservative gathering, was a little too "goody goody." They had the evidence of Mr. Roberts, for 37 years agent to the Portsmouth estates, that he had always found a new comer had sufficient capital; and, after all, what was the capital of the small tenant farmer? Not money, but his bone and sinew. It was said that the great object of legislation ought to be to bring capital to the land. True; but the best way of doing this in a country of small holdings was by giving the tenants such security of tenure that their own strong arms, without money payment, would do the work required. Mr. Roberts' evidence was that the purchaser was always the better man, and more wealthy than the man who left. There must be, in short, some defect in the man who did not succeed in farming just as was the case as to ill-success in other callings. They had the evidence also of Major M'Clintock, given before the Richmond Commission. This gentleman was the agent for the great Downshire estates in several counties of Ireland, and his experience was the same as that of Mr. Roberts. The tenant who sold his interest, paid his debts honestly, paid the landlord all his arrears, and had something in his pocket with which to start again. He did not leave with the bitter feelings of the tenant of the South or West of Ireland, who was turned out, without house or home, to die by the road-side, or take refuge in the workhouse. Another striking fact, too, was stated by Major M'Clintock—namely, that the average rent of land on the County Down estate was 18*s*. an acre, whilst the land brought only 16*s*. an acre in the King's county, and 15*s*. an acre on the Wicklow estate. He was naturally asked if the land in County Down was not much better than in the other estates; to which he replied that the land was not better, but it produced more than the land in the other counties where there was no tenant right. It was, therefore, a delusion to suppose that the value of the tenant right came out of the landlord's pocket. It came from another source. It was taken out of the fruitful lap of mother Earth. There was better farming in Ulster because there was greater security to the tenant; there were better crops because there was better farming, and better farming because of this security. He would quote again from Dr. Longfield, who said—

> "All experience shows as a general rule, with very few exceptions, that when a tenant sells his farm the change is an improvement."

He would ask right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite were they all paupers who entered the Army under the Army purchase system? Nay, was it not one of the chief objections to that system that wealth and not merit governed all promotion? Finally, let the House bear in mind two great advantages attending the tenant's right of sale. In the first place, it powerfully tended to ensure the good cultivation of the holding, because the tenant was thus certain to reap all the benefit of his labour and improvements; and, in the next place, it secured the landlord against loss of his rent, as any arrears of this were always paid out of the proceeds of the sale. Then, again, under the provisions of the Bill the landlord was declared entitled, as now in Ulster, to a right of pre-emption at the selling value of the holding, to be ascertained by the Court if necessary. There was another point to which he would refer. The evidence taken by the two Royal Commissions showed not only that inferior land in

Ulster brought a higher rent than better land brought in the South and West of Ireland, where there was no tenant right, but that estates in Ulster sold for a greater number of years' purchase than elsewhere. This, he submitted, confirmed what he had already stated, that the value of tenant right could not be rightly regarded as a deduction from the landlord's property. But he must forbear to pursue these matters further. There were, indeed, a number of small objections made to the clauses of the Bill dealing with the Land Commission and Assistant Commissioners, which he would not stop to answer now. They would be fully considered at a future stage of the Bill. It appeared to him to be generally agreed that they must have a judicial ascertainment of fair rents; and that involved, as a necessary consequence, all the rest—namely, security of tenure, constituting a valuable interest that the tenant could sell if he pleased. Her Majesty's Government believed that by this measure they would do something towards giving security, and therewith contentment, to the Irish people. They felt that without this security they could not expect the Irish tenant to cultivate his farm in such a way as would be beneficial to the country or to himself, or even to the landlord; for no man would venture either his labour or his capital unless he was assured that its fruits would be his own. The measure might or might not allay the excitement and agitation that had too long prevailed in Ireland; but it was hoped that it would secure the Irish tenant against injustice, whilst leaving intact all the just rights of the landlord, and thus do much towards realizing a better system of land tenure in Ireland. In these hopes Her Majesty's Government presented this Bill for the acceptance of the House.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned." —(*Mr. W. H Smith.*)

MR. GLADSTONE: I was going to appeal to my hon. Friend the Member for Waterford (Mr. Villiers-Stuart), whose Amendment is before the House, to withdraw that Amendment. The effect of the withdrawal will be advantageous to the House, because the way will then be open for dealing either with the Amendment of the noble Lord the Member for Haddingtonshire (Lord Elcho), or the Amendment of which Notice has been given this evening. As those Amendments deal with the principle of the Bill, I think it will be of great advantage for the House to be occupied with them instead of with a collateral Amendment.

MR. VILLIERS-STUART said, that in deference to the appeal of the right hon. Gentleman, and in view of the sympathy which the Chief Secretary for Ireland had expressed with the Irish labourers, and of his promise to consider any practical Amendments on their behalf in Committee, he begged leave to withdraw his Amendment.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR felt it necessary, before the Amendment was withdrawn, to say that it raised points of the first importance in regard to the Bill; but, gathering from the Prime Minister that another opportunity would be afforded for discussing those points, he would not interpose further.

MR. W. H. SMITH: I withdraw my Motion.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question again proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned." —(*Mr. W. H. Smith.*)

MR. HEALY wished to know whether the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster could twice move the adjournment of the debate?

MR. SPEAKER: The Motion was, by leave, withdrawn; and, therefore, the right hon. Gentleman is perfectly in Order.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

PIER AND HARBOUR ORDERS CONFIRMATION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. CHAMBERLAIN, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under "The General Pier and Harbour Act, 1861," relating to Cart, Crarae, Folkestone, Girvan, Leven, Lochaline, Pittenweem, Ramsgate, Shanklin, Stornoway, Weston-super-Mare, Weymouth, and Whitby, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. CHAMBERLAIN and Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 143.]

House adjourned at a quarter before One o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 29*th April*, 1881.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*Second Reading*—Customs and Inland Revenue [136]; Bankruptcy and Cessio (Scotland) [81].

Report—Local Government Provisional Orders (Bath, &c.)* [131]; Local Government (Highways) Provisional Order (York)* [132]; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law)* [130].

Third Reading—Married Women's Property (Scotland) [128], and *passed*.

NOTICES.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) BILL.

The O'DONOGHUE gave Notice that on Monday, May 2, he would ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If proceedings for recovery of rent by writ, followed by the sale of the tenant's interest, deprives such tenant of the right of applying to the proposed Land Court to fix the judicial rent, which right it is the object of the Land Law Bill now before the House to confer upon him; and, if so, whether it is not the duty of the Government to interfere to put a stop to any attempt to defeat the intentions of the Legislature?

Lord ELCHO said, that the Amendment which had stood in the name of the hon. Member for Waterford (Mr. Villiers-Stuart) having been withdrawn, he believed he should be in Order in moving the following Amendment to the second reading, and he therefore gave Notice of his intention to do so:—

> "That this House, while willing to consider any just measure, founded upon sound principles, that will benefit tenants of land in Ireland, is of opinion that the leading provisions of the Land Law (Ireland) Bill are in the main economically unsound, unjust, and impolitic."

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL gave Notice that on Monday he would ask the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, in the event of the Land Law (Ireland) Bill being read a second time, he will be prepared, before asking the House to go into Committee on the Bill, to state the names of the persons who are to compose the Land Commission referred to in the Bill?

Sir HERVEY BRUCE gave Notice that, on going into Committee on the Land Law (Ireland) Bill, he would move—

> "That it be an Instruction to the Committee to insert clauses for the better protection of labourers in Ireland."

Sir JOHN HAY gave Notice that on Monday next he would ask the First Lord of the Treasury, If he will lay upon the Table a Statement of the liabilities to be incurred under the provisions of the Irish Land Bill?

QUESTIONS.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881 — MR. JAMES DALY, A PRISONER UNDER THE ACT.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY (for Mr. Parnell) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Mr. James Daly, editor and proprietor of the "Connaught Telegraph," and now imprisoned in Galway gaol under the provisions of the Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, has been refused facilities for carrying on his profession as newspaper editor?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I have no information on the subject of this Question; but I may observe that Mr. Daly is arrested under a warrant which set forth that he had been guilty of inciting to disaffection, and so long as he is detained under the Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act he cannot be allowed to continue the prosecution of such incitement.

THE JURY SYSTEM (ENGLAND)—LEGISLATION.

Mr. BROADHURST asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether it is the intention of the Government to bring in a Bill during the present Session of Parliament to remedy the defects and inconvenience connected with the present Jury system?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James): I can assure the hon. Member that the Government are fully alive to the many inconveniences resulting from the present state of the jury law; but the matter is a very complicated one. There would be great difficulty in carrying a Bill on the subject; and I am afraid I can hold out no hope of such a Bill being introduced this Session.

PEACE PRESERVATION (IRELAND) ACT—ARREST OF MR. RICHARD HODNETT.

MR. PARNELL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Mr. Richard Hodnett was arrested under the provisions of the Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, on a warrant charging him with being reasonably suspected of maliciously assaulting and breaking into a house and assaulting and beating a person therein; whether he was arrested at four o'clock in the morning by a dozen policemen, who broke open his bedroom door; whether Mr. Richard Hodnett is chairman of the Schull Board of Guardians and chairman of the Dispensary Committee of that Board; and, if so, whether he will give directions to the police when arresting respectable men under the provisions of this Act in future, who are not in any way evading arrest, to effect such arrest at reasonable hours, and in a more seemly and less violent fashion?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: Yes, Sir; Mr. Hodnett was arrested under the Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, on reasonable suspicion of breaking and entering a dwelling-house, and committed to prison. He was arrested at 4 o'clock in the morning by a sub-inspector of police and 10 men. The police had to force open his door in order to effect his arrest. With regard to the early hour of his arrest it was due to the circumstance that the people of the place had refused cars to the police, and it was necessary to convey the prisoner to Skibbereen and to catch the 5 o'clock train at that place. They had to march to Skibbereen, and lost the train in consequence of a delay of three hours, which was caused by the refusal of Mr. Hodnett to get up and dress himself. He was informed that Mr. Hodnett was Chairman of the Schull Board of Guardians, and Chairman of the Dispensary Committee of that Board.

HIGHWAY ACTS—SURVEYORS OF HIGHWAYS—THE ACCOUNTS.

MR. E. STANHOPE asked the President of the Local Government Board, If he has yet been able to modify the inconvenient forms of account hitherto required to be filled up by highway surveyors in country districts?

MR. DODSON: I am glad to say that I have been able to see my way to modify considerably the forms of accounts required to be kept by highway surveyors in country districts, and the necessary order for that purpose was issued on the 10th instant.

ENDOWED SCHOOLS—HULME'S CHARITY — THE COMMISSIONERS' SCHEME.

MR. SUMMERS asked the Vice President of the Council, Whether there is any probability that the scheme drawn up by the Charity Commissioners for the administration of the Foundation known as Hulme's Charity will, either in its present or in an amended form, be carried into effect within a reasonable period of time; and, whether he can state to the House the reasons for the delay that has taken place in carrying out recommendations that were made nearly two years ago?

MR. MUNDELLA: The scheme for the Hulme Charity received immediate attention on our accession to Office. It is one of great importance and of considerable difficulty. It has been the subject of nine deputations and of lengthened negotiations, and it has now been remitted to the Charity Commissioners in order that certain alterations may be made in its provisions. It is impossible, at present, to say at what time the scheme will become law; that depends upon proceedings over which the Education Department can exercise no control; but should the amendments we have suggested be accepted by the parties interested there is no reason why the scheme should not take effect this Session.

SOUTH AFRICA — THE TRANSVAAL (MILITARY OPERATIONS) — THE ACTION AT MAJUBA HILL—THE 15TH HUSSARS.

MR. GILBERT LEIGH asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the telegram published in the "Daily News" of March 2 concerning the 15th Hussars is true, namely:

> "The chief cause of the disaster was the ammunition running short. When the troops retreated the Hussars were sent out with eight mules carrying ammunition to cover the retreat, but on reaching the Nek under the Hill the Hussars were taken by surprise. They then dismounted and commenced firing, the horses

taking fright and bolting. The Hussars therefore retired, losing ten men and all their ammunition;"

and, if not true, whether he will, in the interest of the regiment, officially contradict it?

Mr. CHILDERS: In reply to my hon. Friend, I have to state that I have received no letter having special reference to the telegram in *The Daily News*, and that, for the reasons I gave some weeks ago, I am unwilling to telegraph for reports upon newspaper telegrams, unless the interests of the Public Service should render it necessary. But I have read a private letter from the officer in charge of the ammunition on the occasion referred to by my hon. Friend, in which he said that all the ammunition, so far from being lost, was saved, except two boxes, which were on a mule that was shot. Only four men of the 15th Hussars were killed, wounded, or prisoners. Perhaps I may add that the despatches about the Majuba action will be published in *The Gazette*, and that they will be accompanied by excellent maps.

ARMY—STAFF APPOINTMENTS—CAPTAINS OF CAVALRY AND INFANTRY.

Mr. MOSS asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether captains of cavalry and infantry now holding staff appointments, and who may be promoted on the 1st July next, will be allowed to retain such appointments?

Mr. CHILDERS: In reply to the hon. Member, I have to state that, under the present Warrant, a seconded captain, on promotion to a majority, is required to join his regiment, unless the appointment for which he was seconded be again granted to him in the higher rank. This appears to me a sound rule; but suggestions for its modification, when promotion to majorities are made on the 1st of July next, are being considered by a Committee at the War Office.

THE PUBLIC OFFICES—WRITERS AND COPYISTS.

Mr. RITCHIE asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether a Petition from the Temporary Writers and Copyists, on the subject of their remuneration, was received at the Treasury in July 1880; and, if so, whether the matter had received or was receiving the attention of the Lords of the Treasury, and when the memorialists might expect to receive an answer to their petition?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH: The Petition referred to was received, and its receipt acknowledged on the same day. The subject of it had been carefully considered by the Treasury under the late Government, and their decision was communicated in 1877 in reply to a similar Memorial. The present Board of Treasury see no reason for departing from that decision. The present Memorial contains no new facts, and it is obviously not for the advantage of the Public Service that controversies of this kind should be encouraged.

INDIA—THE MADRAS IRRIGATION COMPANY.

Mr. RITCHIE asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether he has any objection to laying upon the Table a statement of the terms upon which the undertaking of the Madras Irrigation Company has recently been purchased by the Government, and also if the purchase will require the sanction of Parliament?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: The terms upon which it is proposed to purchase the undertaking of the Madras Irrigation Company were contained in a letter from the Under Secretary of the India Office to Mr. Bouverie, the Chairman of the Company. There will be no objection to lay that letter on the Table, and placing the House in possession of the proposed terms. Proceedings are in progress in the Courts of Law for the purpose of winding up the Company; and it is hoped that those proceedings will result in the adoption of the terms contained in the letter which I have mentioned; but it is not yet known whether it will be necessary to obtain powers from Parliament or not.

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL—THE NEGOTIATIONS.

Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the statement, that there was a secret understanding between Sir Evelyn Wood and the Boers to the effect that Her Majesty's troops would not occupy a portion of the Queen's territory in Natal called Lang's Nek, is correct?

Mr. GRANT DUFF: There was no secret understanding, but a distinct public agreement announced to the Colonial Office by a telegram which arrived on the 22nd of March, and was communicated to Parliament in the South African Papers, marked 2,837, where the hon. Member will find the statement exactly as made to us by Sir Evelyn Wood upon page 29.

INDIA (FINANCE, &c.)—OPIUM TAXATION.

Mr. J. W. PEASE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether Her Majesty's Government have received the views of the Government of India as to the arrangement proposed in Sir Thomas Wade's Despatch of 31st January 1881; whether Her Majesty's Government have yet received from Sir Thomas Wade those observations on the subject of Opium taxation which, in that Despatch, he proposes to forward to Lord Salisbury in a "Separate Despatch;" whether Her Majesty's Government can, without disadvantage to the public Service, lay upon the Table any further Papers relating to the ratification of the Chefoo Convention, especially those relating to the manner in which the "Likin" would be collected by the different provincial Governments, and as to how far the term of five years, alluded to by the Prince of Kung in his Despatch of the 14th January 1880 to Sir Thomas Wade as the period for the trial of the arrangements, has been agreed upon; and, whether any date has been named for "putting the plan in operation," as urged by the Prince of Kung in his Despatch of 20th November 1879 (contained in the Paper, "China," No. 2, 1880?)

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: It is true that Sir Thomas Wade in his despatch of January 31, 1880 (China, No. 2, 1880) promised a further Report on the opium question, and that this promise was repeated in a telegram dated May 6, 1880. On July 31 we inquired by telegraph whent his Report would be forthcoming, and Sir Thomas Wade replied, on the 11th of August, that it was still incomplete, and would, when finished, contain little new matter. On the 19th of August we telegraphed again to know if any new objection had arisen to the five years' arrangement, as assented to previously, the nature of which is fully explained in China No. 2, 1880. Sir Thomas Wade answered by telegraph on the 30th of August that it would be necessary to obtain the assent of the other Treaty Powers to the proposed arrangements, and that he feared that this assent would be withheld "unless the Chinese Government relieved foreign trade from undue taxation inland." In view of this great delay it was proposed by the Foreign Office in two letters to the India Office, dated September 21 and November 30, that an effort should at once be made to obtain directly from the various Treaty Powers their assent to the five years' arrangement. India Office replies were dated January 8 and January 27, and in these the Foreign Office was informed that after communication with the Indian Government they had no objection to the plan, provided satisfactory information could be obtained on certain details in regard to "likin" barriers. A telegram was addressed to Sir Thomas Wade on the 5th of February requesting him to furnish at once the required details. Upon the 19th of March he replied by telegraph that the points in question had been discussed with the Chinese Government, who were engaged on inquiries which would enable him to return an exact answer by telegraph. The observations which Sir Thomas Wade promised have not yet been received, and Her Majesty's Government cannot take any steps to put the plan referred to in operation until the further information recently called for from him has been obtained. Sir Thomas will, however, be instructed by telegraph to press the Chinese Government to furnish the information required, and Her Majesty's Government will lay additional Papers on the Table as soon as they properly can.

PUBLIC HEALTH—SMALL-POX (METROPOLIS).

Colonel MAKINS asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether it is a fact that the authorities of the Fulham Smallpox Hospital, or the parish authorities, are erecting a temporary wooden building for the reception of smallpox patients on the surface and extending to the whole width of the Imperial Road leading to the River Thames from the Fulham Road;

and, if so, by what authority such an erection is placed upon a highway dedicated to the use of the public?

MR. DODSON: The Local Government Board have no information as to the erection of any such accommodation at Fulham for the reception of small-pox patients. The only two authorities over whom the Board have any jurisdiction in relation to the provision of hospitals at Fulham are the managers of the Metropolitan Asylums District and the Guardians; and from neither of these bodies have the Board received any intimation of an intention to adopt a course so extraordinary as that of setting up a small-pox hospital upon a public highway.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS—FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE.

Mr. LONG asked the Vice President of the Council, Whether he is aware that cattle disease has been conveyed to animals by the use of manure brought from yards where diseased animals have been slaughtered; and, whether he can suggest any means of preventing the use of manure brought from such yards, either for the purpose of manufacturing artificial manure or any other object; and, also, whether he is aware that the disease has been transmitted by the carriage of the hides of cattle which have died from disease, or been slaughtered as a consequence of their suffering from it?

MR. MUNDELLA: With regard to the carriage of hides I believe there are no regulations; but I will make inquiry on the subject. No doubt, foot-and-mouth disease can be conveyed by the improper use of the manure of diseased animals; but we have no report of any outbreak from this cause. The Animals Order, Article 22, requires the local authority to cause

> "All litter, dung, or other thing that has been in contact with or used about such animals (*i.e.*, a diseased animal) to be disinfected, burnt, or destroyed."

And Article 54 of the same Order forbids the movement of any such manure, except under a licence from the local authority granted upon the certificate of an Inspector, certifying that it has been disinfected. We are unable to suggest any means more effectual than these, and it is for the local authority to see that they are effectually carried out. If they are properly carried out, I believe they will be found sufficient.

THE CONVERSION OF TERMINABLE ANNUITIES.

SIR JOHN HAY (for Mr. J. G. HUBBARD) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, At what rate of interest the annuities terminable at 1885 are to be converted into stock, and existing stock converted into annuities terminating in 1906, and what amount of stock is to be so converted; and, whether he will, previous to the discussion of the Budget, lay upon the Table of the House a statement showing for each of the ensuing twenty-five years the reduction proposed to be effected in the National Debt, distinguishing the amounts resulting from the operation of the terminable annuities, and the amounts estimated to result from the sinking funds?

MR. GLADSTONE: We have not thought that the time was yet come to determine the rate of interest at which the Annuities terminable at 1885 are to be converted into Stock, because I am not prepared to bring in a Bill for the purpose until the Budget Bill is out of the way. I therefore think it will be better for me to postpone the explanation until the introduction of the Bill; but the necessary information will be in the hands of hon. Members before that time. The second part of the inquiry of my right hon. Friend refers to two subjects. The first is as to the reduction expected to be made in the National Debt by the operation of the Annuities and the Sinking Fund, distinguishing between each. I confess I would rather be excused from expressing any opinion as to the amount of reduction likely to occur in a series of years, as I am asked to do. It was done in the time of the late Government, but, as I think, rather in deference to the opinion of my right hon. Friend than out of any distinct approval of such a course. There is this strong objection in my mind to such a course, that it appears in the face of the world to bear the appearance of a promise on the part of the Chancellor of the Exchequer that there shall be a surplus—a promise which it is out of the question for any man in his senses to make as applying to a series of years. I therefore think it is better to avoid even the appearance of making such a promise.

STATE OF IRELAND—LAND LEAGUE MEETINGS—SPEECH OF MR. DILLON.

Mr. LONG asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been called to the following observations made by Mr. Dillon at the Land League meeting on Tuesday last:—

> "He (Mr. Dillon) would mention a case which occurred in his own county, Tipperary, the other day, but which has not appeared in the newspapers. It was a case in which forty police were brought to assist in putting a man out. They found the front door barricaded. The priest stood by and said he would not interfere, but thought it right to inform the police that the first blow they struck the door would result in five or six of them being shot by the men who were inside with loaded rifles. The police held a consultation, and then decided to return to Thurles;"

and, further, he (Mr. Dillon) said that—

> "If thus sought on any large scale to carry out evictions, the people were prepared to offer resistance, and would do so, and he certainly should say that the next time a man was shot in Ireland for refusing to leave his house, possibly the verdict would be, if he was not very much mistaken, one of wilful murder, not against the policeman who may have shot him, but against Gladstone and Forster, under whose orders the police fired;"

and, whether he intends taking any steps thereon?

Mr. SEXTON said, that before that Question was answered, he wished to know, having presided at the meeting in question, and having heard the speech, whether the Chief Secretary had read a full report of the speech; and whether, if he had done so, it did not appear from it that the hon. Member for Tipperary was only fulfilling a public duty in stating by way of warning facts which had come to his knowledge; and whether it did not further appear from it that he was urging upon the Government the duty of maintaining order, and of preserving peace in Ireland during the period that must elapse before the passage of measures of reform by preventing the intolerable hardships which must arise from such a cruel exercise of the powers of the agrarian law as it stood?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: The Question of the hon. Member was only put on the Paper last night, and, as I have not had an opportunity for communicating with the Executive in Ireland on the subject, I will ask him to repeat his Question on Monday.

RUSSIA—CENTRAL ASIA—RECALL OF GENERAL SKOBELEFF.

Mr. E. STANHOPE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, What is the date of General Skobeleff's recall; and when Her Majesty's Government first received authentic information of it?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: The first information of General Skobeleff's recall was received on the 22nd ultimo, and was confirmed by a despatch from Lord Dufferin of the 26th ultimo, which appears in the Papers laid before Parliament (Central Asia, No. 3.) I am unable to state the exact date on which the orders for General Skobeleff's return were despatched from St. Petersburg.

STATE OF IRELAND—ALLEGED OUTRAGE AT MUCKROSS.

Mr. THORNHILL gave Notice that on Monday he should ask a Question of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland as to an outrage said to have been committed on the agent of Mr. Herbert at Muckross Abbey in the county of Kerry, Ireland, whose ears were said to have been cut off by a band of men who broke into his house in the night time.

PARLIAMENTARY OATHS ACT—LEGISLATION.

Mr. GLADSTONE: My hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General has a Notice to give this evening with respect to the procedure of the House, and I am anxious to introduce the subject without delay to the House. We have made such inquiries as we could with respect to the probabilities of our passing, without serious difficulty, a Bill for the alteration of the Parliamentary Oaths Act, as we thought there appeared to be a very widely-spread acquiescence, if not concurrence—[Mr. Warton: No!]—I did not say it was unanimous—a very widely-spread acquiescence in the idea that that was the only method in which a question, otherwise somewhat menacing to the dignity of the House, could be dealt with. My hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General will give a Notice to that effect to-night. I trust, and indeed I think I may take it for granted, that the House will be desirous to have the Bill in their hands as soon as possible; and, therefore, I shall assume that there will be no opposition to bringing it in for the purpose of printing and laying it on the Table on Monday evening. Then, assuming so far, we should propose to proceed with it at a Morning Sitting; and as the Bill will consist of only a very few lines, we should propose, in the interest of all parties, to take that Morning Sitting on Tuesday, if that be agreeable to the general view of the House. But if it be not agreeable to the general view of the House, if I should learn between this and Monday, or on Monday, that it would be desirable to take it on a later day, we would then postpone the Morning Sitting. I wish to observe that a discussion on the introduction of a Bill could not be taken at a Morning Sitting. A Morning Sitting is for disposing of the Orders of the Day, and such a discussion could not conveniently be taken, except in the shape of an adjourned debate.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I did not quite understand when it is proposed that leave shall be asked to bring in the Bill?

Mr. GLADSTONE: On Monday night. Notice will be given to-night, and leave asked on Monday night.

Mr. NEWDEGATE hoped that, if the course proposed to be taken were adopted, he would not be precluded from proceeding with the Motion of which he had given Notice on the subject. He begged to ask when the Prime Minister anticipated that the Bill would be placed in the hands of hon. Members?

Mr. GLADSTONE: No doubt the Bill will be placed in the hands of hon. Members on the first morning after leave has been given to introduce the measure. The Bill is not a long one, and has been already drawn; but we cannot place it in the hands of hon. Members until leave has been given to introduce it.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL gave Notice that if the Motion for Leave to introduce the Bill were not made before half-past 12 o'clock on Monday night he should oppose it.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY.—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

Mr. Gladstone

POWER OF REPRESENTATIVES (ABROAD).—RESOLUTION.

Mr. RICHARD, in rising to move—

> "That the power claimed and exercised by the representatives of this Country in various parts of the world to contract engagements, annex territories, and make war in the name of the Nation without authority from the Central Government is opposed to the principles of the British Constitution, is at variance with recognised rules of International Law, and is fraught with danger to the honour and true interests of the country,"

said, it appeared that, of all nations in the world, it was most necessary for this country to keep the action of its Representatives abroad under efficient control, inasmuch as we had so enlarged the boundaries of our Empire, and were so much engaged in commerce in all parts of the world, that we were constantly coming into contact with men of all races and of every shade of social and political condition on the globe. Again, our scientific men and our missionaries, fired with a zeal beyond our control, penetrated into the most remote lands, and they were followed, almost as a matter of course, by our national official Representatives, who felt bound to undertake the task of defending their persons and watching over their interests. Unfortunately, also, ships of war belonging to this nation were found wandering in every sea, and their officers, anxious to relieve their tedious and monotonous life, were only too ready to lend their services on small provocation, and sometimes to enterprizes of a very questionable character. To that must be added the masterful and domineering temper of the men of our race; for there seemed to be an inborn conviction at the bottom of the hearts of all Englishmen that no felicity could be so great to any people as to be subjugated and governed by us. Very rigid regulations, therefore, were necessary to restrain these arrogant assumptions on the part of our Representatives. In order to make good his first proposition, that our Representatives were too prone to exercise their power of making war without the authority of the Central Power, he need only refer to what had passed within his own memory. Unhappily, the evidence in support of that proposition was only too voluminous; and, therefore, all he had to do was to make a selection of it to lay before the House. The origin of the second Burmese War had been stated with great force by Mr. Cobden in a pamphlet he had written on the subject. In 1851, Lord Dalhousie, who was Governor General of India, sent Commodore Lambert with a small squadron to Rangoon, in order to collect a claim of £950 due as compensation, or alleged to be due, to two British captains for some wrong that had been inflicted upon them. The instructions given to Commodore Lambert with regard to his force were most express. No act of hostility was to be permitted, although the Governor should be unfavourable to the demand made. The Commodore was also furnished with despatches to the King of Burmah, and instead of applying to the Governor of Rangoon he went to the King of Burmah, who promised to comply with the demand, and to recall the Governor of Rangoon. But when the new Governor came to Rangoon, Commodore Lambert chose to take offence regarding a miserable piece of etiquette in reference to his sending his acknowledgments to the Governor General of India without waiting for instructions. Without communicating with the King of Burmah, in less than six hours after the alleged act was committed Commodore Lambert undertook to declare war against the State of Burmah. A ship was seized, and when an attempt was made to resist its being taken from the river, he fired upon the people, inflicting great slaughter upon them. So began the second Burmese War, which grew into very large dimensions; and the employment of Englishmen on Easter Monday in the year 1852 was the firing of red-hot shot into the large and populous town of Rangoon; and after slaughtering large numbers of the Burmese and expending immense sums of money, he ended by annexing the Province of Rangoon, which was as large as the whole of England. He was not going to discuss the merits of that second Burmese War. What he wished to call attention to was this—that here they had a subordinate officer, of his own mere will, making war with the Queen's ships upon the Kingdom of Burmah, without any authority from the Home Government, without going to the head of the Government of Burmah and asking for explanations, and in direct defiance of the instructions of the Governor General of India. His second illustration was the Chinese War of 1857. That war was begun by Sir John Bowring entirely on his own responsibility. That war was condemned by a vote of the House. The whole Conservative Party in the House joined in that condemnation. Lord Grey, Lord Russell, Mr. Sidney Herbert, Mr. Cobden, and almost every man of distinction unconnected with the Government in both Houses disapproved of that war. There was no reason why the question of the *Arrow*, which was a mere legal question, should not have been referred home, and if it had been there would have been no war. They should have been spared the spending of £6,000,000, they should not have exasperated the Chinese, and they should, above all, have been spared the shame and guilt of appearing before the world as using their strength to oppress a weak and an unoffending people. He now came to doings in South Africa in our own time. The complications in that country were owing, in a great degree, to the assumption of our Representative there in pursuing a policy which he had no right to pursue. The acts which had brought us so much inconvenience and dishonour were not the acts of the nation at all. Take, for instance, the annexation of the Transvaal. In his opinion, it was a mistake to authorize Sir Theophilus Shepstone to use his own discretion as to the annexation of that country. He was instructed to inquire and report to the Queen, and if an emergency seemed to require it, he was to administer those territories in her name, provided the inhabitants thereof, or a sufficient number of them, were favourable to that course. Those conditions were not fulfilled. On the lapse of six weeks Sir Theophilus Shepstone, without consulting the Government at home, or Sir Henry Barkly, then Governor at the Cape, peremptorily annexed the whole of the territories of the Transvaal to the British Crown. Nor was this done with the consent of the inhabitants. There was not a shadow of a doubt that even then there was evidence that the great body of the people were averse to the transaction; and in consequence of Sir Theophilus Shepstone having departed from his instructions, and acting in this high-handed way, we were involved in difficulties from which we had scarcely yet escaped. He came to another instance of the same sort in South Africa. He referred to the Zulu War. As soon as Sir Bartle Frere arrived in South Africa he assumed the attitude of an absolute Monarch, and was ready to snub and lecture anyone who presumed to interfere in any way with his supremacy. Sir Bartle Frere, he asserted, began the Zulu War, not only without the authority of the Colonial Office, but against express instructions given to him not to do so. Notwithstanding, however, this strong expression of opinion, Sir Bartle Frere of his own mere will plunged the country into a war which led, in the first instance, to disaster and defeat, and afterwards to many bloody engagements, in which at least 10,000 Zulus were slaughtered, and so desolated their country that since that time they had been told that hundreds of the people had perished from famine. In that war £5,000,000 of the money of the people of this country were squandered. But the extraordinary thing was that the man who did this in the teeth of the instructions from the Government at home was retained in his office. He came to another still more recent instance on the West Coast of Africa. The Ruler of the town of Batanga had been nick-named King Jack by people who frequented it. The inhabitants captured a person entitled to British protection, and carried him into the bush. He was detained for seven weeks, and then escaped, having, according to his own acknowledgment, been treated very kindly, or, at least, without any undue harshness. But a man who desired to magnify his own office called a meeting of the European inhabitants of the town, and they unanimously decided that the case called for the application of force. Who were those European residents? They consisted of four men, two of whom might be Englishmen, but two were Germans; and the British Consul thought he had a right to call on the commander of Her Majesty's ships to act as Protector General of all the commercial adventurers who went to that coast, to whatever nationality they belonged. The commander on the station did not seem much enamoured of the task he was invited to perform, and he demanded proof that the man who had been wronged was a British subject—proof which was never forthcoming; and he reminded the Consul that the Government did not profess to afford protection to British subjects who chose to establish themselves among savage tribes remote from our stations. Commodore Richards' scruples, however, were allayed, and he went with British vessels to the spot and gave instructions to Commander Romilly, of the *Boadicea*, to carry into effect the vote of the four European residents. Commander Romilly proceeded accordingly to the town of King Jack with a party of 140 officers and men; no opposition was offered to their landing. The exploit was described in Commander Romilly's Report to the Admiralty. The town comprised 300 well-built huts, some with two storeys, and forming a quadrangle. The town was burned down, many canoes were destroyed, the banana trees cut down, and the crops also destroyed. Not satisfied with working this amount of havoc, a detachment was sent three-quarters of a mile along the coast to burn down another village. The Admiralty telegraphed to ask the reason for the burning down of that village, and it was alleged that the people there had been concerned in the seizure of a man who had been taken prisoner. Now, in his opinion, the act was a piece of wanton Vandalism. The hon. Member then referred to another case in which Acting-Consul Easton wrote to the senior naval officer on the station asking for a gun-boat to be sent to help him in chastising the Natives of Oonitcha. The officer in command of Her Majesty's ship *Pioneer* unfortunately listened to the Consul's views, and went to inflict the punishment which the Consul deemed to be demanded. The town consisted of five villages, with a short distance between them. When the boats arrived rockets were thrown into the town and it was entirely destroyed, besides the crops and property to a large amount. The place was completely levelled, including all the factories. In *The African Times* an extract was published from the letter of a correspondent on the West Coast of Africa, probably a missionary, which characterized the destruction of Oonitcha as a cruel and wanton act, which merited the severest reprobation, adding that the mischief which had thus been done could not for a long time be repaired, such being the revengeful character of the Natives, that for many years to come they would hate all civilized persons and watch for the opportunity of doing them harm. The scene where these things had occurred had been a centre of missionary activity as well as of commercial operations; but now the work of 22 years, during which the Church of England Mission had been established there, was brought to a dead-lock. He was bound to say he had read the records of those transactions with the strongest feelings of shame and humiliation. Commander Richards, in writing about them to the Admiralty, said that was an ignoble kind of war. In fact, it was not war at all. There was no resistance offered in either of those instances; for what resistance could the ill-armed or the unarmed savages of the coast of Africa offer to a force wielding the tremendous weapons which science had furnished to civilized and Christian nations for the destruction of their enemies? They heard of exploring expeditions and enterprizes for the improvement and elevation of barbarous races; of Missionary Societies established to carry the Gospel into the interior of their country; but he contended that ships of war and bombshells were but sorry agencies for the spread of Christianity and civilization in Africa; and that the resources of our Navy ought not to be placed at the disposal of any set of commercial adventurers who went there to stir up quarrels with the unfortunate Natives, and then invoked the strong arm of the Navy to inflict wholesale and indiscriminate vengeance upon them. With regard to the collisions to which he had referred them, he had, on a previous occasion, put a Question to his hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, who subsequently brought the matter before the attention of both Lord Granville and Lord Northbrook, and he was happy to see that they had taken it up bravely, and that a Minute on the subject had been issued both from the Foreign Office and from the Admiralty. He had read that Minute with considerable satisfaction, and he thanked the Government for it, for, while approving of the action of the officers—that was the unfortunate language always taken by officialism—they spoke deploring the recurrence of warlike preparations against Native Tribes, whose progress in civilization it was their desire to see, and enjoining them, if possible, in every case to refer, in the first instance, home for instructions. Similar instructions had been sent to all the officers and commanders on the West Coast of Africa. In stating, as he did in his Resolution, that making war without authority from the Central Government was contrary to the British Constitution, he knew that he was using a very vague phase. So far as he knew, according to the theory of the Constitution at the present time, the power of peace or war was vested in the Sovereign—that was to say, in the Cabinet practically. There were many who believed that this was a dangerous departure from former, and, in this instance, better times. He felt greatly obliged to Her Majesty's Government for these steps they had taken, which he hoped would operate as a check on such reckless and wanton proceedings as those he had described. His Motion stated that the practices he deprecated were opposed to the principles of the British Constitution. He was aware that the phrase "British Constitution" was very vague, and referred to a thing that was not very easily defined. But he supposed that, on the matter now before them, the theory of the Constitution, as at present generally understood, was this—that the power of peace and war was vested in the Sovereign, which, under their system of Government, meant, practically, the Cabinet in Office for the time being. There were many who believed that even that was a dangerous departure from the precedents and practices of former and, in that respect, better times. There was a time, beyond all doubt, in their history, when the consent of the "Great Council," and afterwards of Parliament, was necessary to a war, or a Treaty. Mr. Freeman, in his *History of the Norman Conquest*, speaking of Anglo-Saxon times, said—

> "Every act of Government, of any importance, was done, not by the King alone, but by the King and his Witan. The Great Council of the nation had its active share in those branches of government which modern Constitutional theories mark as the special domain of the Executive. . . . . The King and his Witan, and not the King alone, concluded treaties, made grants of folk-land, ordained the assemblage of fleets and armies, &c."

In a remarkable publication issued some years ago, by Mr. Toulmin Smith, entitled *The Parliamentary Remembrancer*, there were many cases, cited from the ancient records of the nation, showing that at a time when the Sovereigns were supposed to be less subject than they were now to Constitutional checks, they were obliged, or, at least, they were accustomed, to consult the Council and Parliament on questions of peace and war, and other questions connected with foreign policy. Would the House bear with him if he mentioned a few of the instances he adduced to illustrate that? In the fifth year of Edward III., the King's Chancellor, addressing Parliament, said that he

> "Summoned the Parliament . . . . in order to make peace or other issue to the discussions between the Kings of England and France."

To use the language of the Rolls of Parliament—

> "The said Bishop of Winchester, Chancellor, on the part of our Lord the King, asked of . . . . all the Barons and great men then assembled whether the King should take the way of arbitration (*procés*)"

—he was happy to find that even in those early days they were not quite strangers to arbitration—

> "as the King of France had proposed, or should make war. The Prelates, Earls, Barons, and other great men counselled, as the best that the King should make a friendly Treaty with the King of France on the aforesaid matters."

In the 17th year of the same reign (1343) a Parliament was holden at Easter. The cause was this—the King while prosecuting the war in France, which had again broken out, had received a message from the Pope, in which he besought him to make a truce with the view to the conclusion of an honourable peace. Whereupon he sent Sir Bartholomew de Barghawk to attest all the facts to Parliament, and asked of it permission to make peace.

> "The said Sir Bartholomew said, on behalf of the King, that because this war was undertaken and begun by the common consent of the Prelates, Lords, and Commons, the King did not wish to treat of peace, nor to accept of peace, without their common assent."

The two Houses replied that they approved of the truce. In the next year the King informed the Parliament that France had broken the truce, and requested their counsel as to what he was to do in so great a necessity. Both Houses replied that the war must be carried on, and they voted Supplies, only, however, on condition "that the money be spent in the business shown to them in this Parliament." In the 28th year of the same King, Parliament was informed that negotiations for peace had been proposed, but that the King "would not make peace without the assent of the Lords and Commons;" thereupon he inquired if they were willing. Reply in the affirmative having been made, the Chancellor again put it to them—"Then you will assent to the Treaty of perpetual peace, if it can be made?" And the Commons replied, one and all, "Aye, aye;" on which it was resolved that there should be a public record thereof. In the reign of Henry V., the King summoned a Parliament, assigning as reason that he had, "with the assent of all the estates and commonalty of the realm," gone to France to prosecute the war; and, having gained great and decisive victories, he asks again "the gracious aid and counsel of the Lords and Commons" as to his further proceedings. And when the actual peace arrived, the Rolls state that, by a provision in the Treaty itself—

> "The said peace needs not only to be sworn by the said Kings Henry of England and Charles of France, but also to be allowed, accepted, and approved by the three Estates of each Kingdom."

He might cite many other instances, coming down to much later periods of their history. But at present not only did the Executive Government do all those things without the assent of Parliament, but small, irresponsible officials in all parts of the world seemed to think they were at liberty to do them, without even the consent of the Executive. His Motion also declared that such a course was at variance with recognized rules of International Law. But surely it was scarcely necessary that he should prove that; for common sense told them that, if every private officer of a Government was permitted to take questions of peace and war into his own hands, the relations of States would become a universal chaos, and they would have no Law of Nations at all. He would content himself with giving one passage from Vattel. He said—

> "It would be too dangerous to allow every citizen the liberty of doing himself justice against foreigners, as in that case there would not be a single member of the State who might not involve us in war. And how could peace be preserved between nations, if it were in the power of every private individual to disturb it?

A right of so momentous a nature—the right of judging whether the nation has real grounds of complaint—whether it is authorized to employ force and justifiable in taking up arms—whether prudence will admit of such a step, and whether the welfare of the State requires it; that right, I say, can belong only to the body of the nation, or to the Sovereign, her representative. It is doubtless one of those rights without which there can be no salutary government, and which are therefore called rights of majesty."

And, finally, he alleged that that assumption of authority, on the part of their Agents, was fraught with danger to the honour and true interests of the country. Was it necessary that he should say one word in illustration of that? The question really was, whether that great nation was to be master of its own destinies, or whether every petty officer, dressed in a little brief authority, was to be at liberty to pledge the blood and treasure and moral responsibility of 32,000,000 of people, to any extent, at the impulse of his own pride, resentment, or caprice. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, in the eloquent speech he delivered last Session, on his (Mr. Richards') Motion for the Reduction of Armaments, used these words—

"Nothing can be so ruinous to a country, nothing so mischievous as to its progress and the formation of a just civilization, as to be in the position which we have too often witnessed in the case of the inhabitants of our own Colonies in later times, of having the privilege of provoking wars for which they were not called upon to pay."—[3 *Hansard*, ccliii. 103.]

But if the possession and exercise of such a power, on the part of one of our Colonies, was so mischievous and intolerable, how much more so that it should be left in the hands of individual officials in all parts of the globe, plunging the nation into unlimited expenditure, and into crime, and blood-guiltiness, and then presenting the bill for them to pay, not only in money, but in character and reputation, who had never had a word to say as to the policy they pursue. He thanked the House for the kind attention with which they had listened to a speech which might have, perhaps, too long tried their patience. But the question was a very large one. He felt that he had dealt with it only imperfectly, but he had done what he could; and he now respectfully commended his Resolution to the favourable consideration and unanimous acceptance of the House.

Mr. RATHBONE seconded the Resolution.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "the power claimed and exercised by the representatives of this Country in various parts of the world to contract engagements, annex territories, and make war in the name of the Nation without authority from the Central Government is opposed to the principles of the British Constitution, is at variance with recognised rules of International Law, and is fraught with danger to the honour and true interests of the Country,"—(*Mr. Richard*,)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, the field opened by the Motion of my hon. Friend is, indeed, as he has justly observed, a very wide one. I have not listened to the speeches of my hon. Friend upon subjects of this kind without a great deal of sympathy with most of the particular opinions they convey, and especially with the general aim and purposes which he has in view. Those purposes are always in the main those of justice, humanity, and philanthropy. But, Sir, at the same time, I am bound to say I do not think that this is a Resolution which could be with safety or advantage adopted by the House; and I will give the House, as well as I can in a moderate compass, the reasons on which I found myself in delivering that opinion. In the first place, if such a Resolution were to be adopted by the House it would be necessary to follow it up with more positive measures. The mere general declaration against the exercise by the Agents of this country abroad of power to contract engagements, annex territories, and make war in the name and without the authority of the Central Government would require a great deal of development and a great deal of application in order to enable any Executive Government of this country to know how to act upon the general principles of its duty. Let me look a little more carefully into the terms and purposes of this Motion. We have had raised on former occasions very interesting debates about the powers exercised by the Executive Government without the direct authority of Parliament; and my hon. Friend has gone back to the records of the 14th century or thereabouts, in which he was delighted to find that he was not original in the notion of an appeal to arbitration, but that our forefathers were beforehand with him at so remote a period. I know this is a matter of some surprise to my hon. Friend; but I may go a little further than he did, and say that in reading the records of those times I am struck in the main with the extreme good sense and practical turn of mind displayed by the chiefs of Government in those days—so struck that I often ask myself whether, upon the whole, notwithstanding the great progress we have made in many respects, so far as the essential quality of good sense is concerned, and that I take in its largest application, in which there are very considerable and higher elements, such as those of justice and humanity—whether in these vital particulars the advance made by our race is as great as we sometimes suppose it to be? The hon. Member has referred to a class of cases not involved in the general scope of the Motion, in which the controversy is between the right of Parliament and the practice of the Executive Government, and he has quoted with approbation precedents of the direct intervention of Parliament in regard to the making of peace or war. Upon that subject I am free to confess that the development of this Empire and the changes that have taken place in our Constitution, though, on the whole, in favour of popular liberty, have by no means tended in every case to the increase of the control of Parliament over the administration of public affairs. Without doubt, in former times, and down to a period as late as the last century, Parliament had much more to say in matters of peace and war, and particularly in matters of Treaty engagements, anterior to their absolute conclusion, than it now has. But we must recollect what the Parliament was in those days; it was virtually an Assembly meeting with closed doors. The people of this country were not cognizant in detail, from day to day, or even from week to week, or month to month, of the proceedings of Parliament; and Parliament could be used by the Crown as a Council to a considerable extent without incurring the tremendous inconvenience of disclosing to the whole world what you were about, and, therefore, of defeating in any way the power to use our means and resources. But the augmentation of Empire, and the increase in the number of territories for which we are responsible, have entirely altered our position in that respect, and, above all, the opening of the doors of Parliament to the people of this country and the communication of its proceedings, from moment to moment, to the whole world have disabled Parliament from doing that which in former times it might justly do, and which it was habitually, to some extent, called upon to do. You cannot manage an Empire which is practically discontinuous — an Empire some part of the shores of which is washed by every sea on the surface of the globe—with the facility, or in some respects the efficiency, with which you can conduct the administration of States more limited in their extent and less complex in their machinery of government. We must be content to encounter many inconveniences, and the question is how they can be reduced to a minimum? The case to which the hon. Member last referred was a case with regard to which, I think, his reference was not altogether unsatisfactory to himself. He referred to transactions which did not take place in the time of the present Government; but which were brought under the review of the central authority during the time of the present Government. The scene was the coast of Africa, and the transactions were at an end, and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs turned them to the best account, endeavouring to do what any man of sense ought to do—namely, to use what had occurred as a ground for taking precautions that might govern persons similarly circumstanced in future, by laying down rules that would tend to prevent the undue and rash exercise of independent judgment by an Agent abroad in matters that might tend seriously to commit the country or be followed by very serious consequences. I do not think my hon. Friend is much dissatisfied with what was done by the Central Government. The case was turned to account, precautions were taken, and rules were laid down, which, no doubt, will be useful in the future. Coming more closely to the question raised by my hon. Friend, he has referred to many instances, in several of which I agree with him, that the power of the country has been rashly or improperly used by our Agents abroad. I think, however, he has not examined with proportionate care and accuracy the further question how far there would have been a remedy for these mischiefs if there had been the facility of intervention by the central authority which he desires? Has the central authority generally disapproved of these proceedings of our Agents abroad, which I am assuming to have been improper for the sake of the argument? I am sorry to say, upon looking back upon a long personal experience, that the central authority were as much to blame from the point of view of my hon. Friend, and to a considerable extent from my own point of view, as were the Agents abroad. The hon. Member began by referring to what may be spoken of as Lord Dalhousie's wars and annexations. Lord Dalhousie was a noble example of a patriotic statesman; he was endowed with great abilities, which he used unsparingly for what he thought to be for the honour and benefit of his country, and to the great abbreviation of his own valuable life. At the same time, I must own that the exact colour of his policy in India is not that which approves itself to my mind. I am not aware that it ever fell under the general disapproval of the people of this country. I think that this case is not one which is strictly relevant to the matter in hand, because Lord Dalhousie was a servant of the East India Company at the time when there was not, in regard to this class of case, that close relation between Parliament and Indian responsibility which there now is. I pass on to that from which I think we may draw a lesson, but from which I think it is difficult for my hon. Friend to draw a direct argument in favour of his Resolution, if we are to consider it as one for our adoption rather than as an expression of opinion. That is the case of the Lorcha War, in 1857. In that case Sir John Bowring went out to China with the reputation of a great peace politician, and it was with no small surprise that I, for one, found in what his mission resulted. He made a war which I thought at the time, and I think now, to have been deplorable. It was reported home, and it was at once challenged. I say it in honour of the late Lord Derby that he was the first person to challenge it in a public form in the House of Lords; and he made that challenge, not upon Party grounds, but on account of his strong conviction that the war was iniquitous and ought to be condemned. But what happened? Lord Derby was beaten on the Motion he made in the very Assembly whose confidence he usually commanded, and whose votes on almost every other occasion he secured. That is a case of central authority. What happened after this? Mr. Cobden, undismayed by the defeat of Lord Derby, made a somewhat similar Motion in this House. He had a very favourable rally from various quarters against the Government of Lord Palmerston—so formidable that we succeeded in defeating the Government and condemning the war by a majority of 16 or 20. But this was not the end of the matter. We are all sent to take counsel with that which, after all, is the central authority; we went down, full of indignation against this unrighteous war, to appeal to our constituencies; but they entirely sympathized with the Government, and, by a triumphant majority, supported Lord Palmerston in his approval of the war. It is difficult to found upon a state of facts like that any conclusion that Sir John Bowring mistook the feeling of the country. It may be said the country would have judged differently if they had the power to judge in the first instance. In the first place, that is an assumption difficult to prove; and, in the second, it is obvious that if you have an Empire dispersed over the whole world, it was then, to a much greater extent than now, a matter of absolute necessity that decisions be taken upon the spot for the protection of Her Majesty's subjects. These responsibilities must be assumed; and, undoubtedly, I am compelled to confess that in those particular cases, where I think they were assumed very wrongly and wrongfully, a most emphatic approval was given first by the Government and then by the nation. My hon. Friend has referred to what has taken place in South Africa. There was the case of Sir Theophilus Shepstone and the Transvaal, and there was the case of Sir Bartle Frere and the Zulu War, and a great many other transactions which distinguished the time of the late Government. Let me do justice to the late Government in this respect. I have never known a proceeding of theirs which appeared to me to be exceptionable which there was the slightest disposition to check, much less reverse, on the part of the authority to which my hon. Friend referred—namely, that of Parliament. That was a Parliament of a very different composition and tendency from the present; but it derived its authority from the same source, and, although I may say I abhorred a great deal of what it did, that Parliament had just as good a right in a Constitutional sense to do all it did as we, the present House of Commons, have to act in conformity with our own convictions. I must go a little further. In justice to the late Government, I will say that I do not recollect one single instance in which a majority of that Parliament showed the slightest disposition to check the late Government; but I do recollect various instances in which they showed a disposition to urge on the late Government to do more than it was engaged in doing. Though I should have said that the control of the late Parliament was no control at all in reference to the proceedings of the late Government, I must say I felt on various occasions obliged to the late Government, because they did not do all that the late Parliament wished them to do. There are many other cases. My hon. Friend does not like annexations; but, I am sorry to say, annexations in many instances were forced on the Government by the action of Parliament. I do not recollect any instance in which annexations made by the Government have been disapproved by Parliament. When the North-Western Frontier of India was enlarged the emphatic approval of the House of Commons was given to that enlargement. When the Island of Cyprus was in a certain sense acquired by proceedings as to which I have a decided opinion, which it is not necessary to utter, it was thoroughly and cordially approved by the Parliament that represented the people, and was elected under the same charter as we have been. I might go further back. During the time of the Government before the last there were some of the most benevolent and philanthropic agencies in this country that from time to time exhibited a very great disposition to press annexations on the Government. There was the annexation of the Fiji Islands. I was accustomed once a year to be beseiged in this House by those who insisted on it. Going further back, the annexation of New Zealand was not due to any proceedings of the local Representatives of this country—it was not due, unless my memory deceives me, to statesmen of either Party in either House of Parliament, but to an action strictly popular, forcing it on the attention of the Government. I will take another instance—one which always seemed least justifiable of all the proceedings carried on in the British name within the last half century, and that was the destruction of the fleet—it was called the piratical fleet—of the Rajah of Sarawak by Sir James Brooke. But it was challenged in Parliament by Mr. Hume, who received a sort of isolated support from Mr. Sidney Herbert and some others, acting on a strongly conscientious conviction; but he was met by a very large majority indeed. It was one of the most unauthorized proceedings; and, if Parliament had been so disposed, it could easily have disavowed it. My memory may have failed to take up other instances that may have occurred; but I must say during the last 40 years I can only recollect one proceeding of the character my hon. Friend reprobates as having been effected in a distant portion of the world by the Representatives of this country which was seriously and generally disapproved at home, and that was the annexation of Scinde. Scinde was annexed by Lord Ellenborough, under Sir Charles Napier, the Commander-in-Chief of the Army on the Indus. That country was rapidly conquered and annexed; but the annexation was unanimously disapproved by the Conservative Cabinet of that day. I know not whether I speak without prejudice on the point; but the policy of annexation and aggression was at that time more uniformly and strongly discountenanced by the Conservatives than even by the Liberals. That, however, was an instance deemed generally by the country to be unjust, and certainly it was so deemed by the central authority. Besides, it could not be reversed without producing a greater amount of mischief than was involved in the recognition of the act. But now, having thus far been rather tragical in the picture I have drawn, I wish to suggest one topic for the consideration of my hon. Friend. Such a case as that of Scinde cannot occur again. It is impossible, and that which has made it impossible is not so much the fact that Parliament has taken under its own control the management of that vast East Indian Empire, which was formerly under the superintendence of the East India Company, but, in an infinitely greater degree, to the invention and the use of the electric telegraph. No such transaction can now be carried into effect without the concurrence and action of the central authority. If we take the proceedings of Lord Lytton, on which I give no opinion, they were proceedings certainly, as far as there was an opportunity of judging, which were approved by the Executive Government of the day; and the House of Commons of the day, when challenged, likewise approved of them in a very solemn manner. But you have now got undoubtedly, notwithstanding the complexity of your Empire, the control of the central authority enormously increased. The responsibility of the central authority is, of course, increased also. I will not say this is an unmixed good, because, unquestionably, proceedings of a very complex nature, conducted from week to week amidst the other abstractions of Government through the medium of the telegraph, are more liable, I think, to miscarriages and mishaps than where the communications are of a more deliberate and regular character; still, upon the whole, there is an enormous balance for good, and my hon. Friend may rest satisfied that the risk is diminishing in a very great degree indeed. I will not say it is infinitesimally small; but the risk is diminishing to the greatest degree in which local administration by our Representatives abroad may involve us in consequences of serious national difficulty. The case on the West Coast of Africa last year, to which my hon. Friend alluded, is one of those cases in which the control of the telegraph was not applicable; but then the theatres of action, not within the immediate reach of the telegraph, are comparatively very limited; so that, upon the whole, my hon. Friend may rest satisfied with the knowlege, at any rate, that the control of the Central Government is now immensely increased by the action of the telegraph; almost from every principal centre of British territory abroad intelligence is transmitted in a time that may be counted by hours, instead of by weeks, and in some cases by months. With reference to the contracting of engagements without the sanction of authorities, I have in 1878 and on other former occasions stated, I think, very clearly, what I conceive ought to be the guiding principles of the Executive Government in these matters. I think the Executive Government are bound in general terms to contract no Treaties except such as they can contract compatibly with certain assurances on their own part—first of all, of course, that they deem the engagement to be for the advantage of the country; and, secondly, that they deem it to be one sufficiently within the knowledge and expectation of Parliament. With regard to the annexation of territory, I must say that no annexation of territory performed by an Agent abroad is a valid or binding act; it is mere waste paper, until ratified at home, unless it was done in pursuance of authority from home, and if so done it has the seal and the stamp of the central authority. With regard to making war in the name of the nation, I am afraid it is impossible to take adequate security; but you have in recent years immensely increased the security. But the main moral I want to infer from the useful speech of my hon. Friend is this—what you really want is not merely the improvement of the machinery by which the central authority controls its extraneous agents, it is the improvement of the central authority itself, the formation of just habits of thought; it is that we should be more modest and less arrogant; it is that we should uniformly regard every other State, and every other people, as standing upon the same level of right as ourselves. It is that in the prosecution of our interest we shall not be so carried away by zeal as to allow it to make us for one moment forgetful of the equal claims and the equal rights of others. That is a very grave question indeed, and one upon which I am bound to say I believe the central authority is quite as much in need of self-discipline and self-restraint as its extraneous agents. In these circumstances, I hope my hon. Friend will not be dissatisfied with me for saying that I am not willing to see the House committed to the formal declaration which he invites us to make. I think he will see that when I say that it is not on account of any fundamental difference in purpose or in view from him, but from the feeling that it would not be wise that we should take any step whatever tending to the alteration of Constitutional traditions without being very clear and distinct indeed as to the extent to which we should go, as to the limits in which we should move, and without being perfectly certain that we are not going to cripple those whom we send abroad to represent the nation, and put them in a position in which they might find themselves incapable of performing their primary and elementary duties. I hope we shall at this moment be just in this matter. It is very easy for us who are a majority of the present House of Commons, generally, I think, possessed of uniformity of view in regard to the policy, the overseeing policy, of the Empire, it is very easy for us to express a desire that the views which we entertain may prevail; but it is fair to recollect that it is there the responsibility lies. I must own I think it would be a mistake if we were to adopt a Motion which, even irrespectively of other difficulties and objections, would imply that the main and fundamental defect in our present arrangements is a want of due control by the central authority. I think I have shown that it is impossible to bring forward a single instance in which anything liable to disapproval has occurred in consequence of the want of that control. I am entirely in favour of maintaining that control as regards the relations between the House of Commons and the Government. The more effectual the control maintained over Agents abroad the more effectual will be the control of the House of Commons over the Government, and I am as anxious for the one as for the other. But this purpose, to which I lately alluded, of studying, each for ourselves and in our own sphere of personal influence, whatever it may be, to promote the extension and the prevalence of the principles of justice and philanthropy is, after all, where we come to the root of the matter, and unless we can hope that this nation will in the gradual progress of its education make from time to time progressive advances in these views, which lie at the very root of civilization, the merely mechanical changes in the control of the central authority over its Agents abroad would do little, in my opinion, to attain the objects which my hon. Friend has in view.

Mr. RATHBONE said, he was sorry the right hon. Gentleman had not been able to give an assurance that greater control would be exercised by the central authority over its agents abroad. From the present practice, which had gone on from generation to generation, had arisen many evil results. Anyone who read the history of our policy in India and abroad must have been ashamed of various acts which, had it been known beforehand that it was intended to commit them, would not have been tolerated by the conscience of the nation. We sent out a Governor General to India who was always told never to annex territory, to go to war, or to use his authority in the oppression of nationalities. But when he annexed territory, the nation confirmed the annexation and rewarded the man for what he had done. If he succeeded he was rewarded; if he failed it was said we must support our Agents and condone the offence, however iniquitous. So long as the practice was carried on by statesmen on both sides, we should have a continuance of the evils which the hon. Member for Merthyr (Mr. Richard) had pointed out. When we talked of other nations we were very clear-sighted. We thought Russia very unwise in making wars right and left; but she did exactly as we did. She sent out officers, ordered them not to make war or annex territory, and when they did both the one and the other she gave them decorations. A Russian official had proposed the other day that when an officer was sent out and the Government bound him not to make war, they should give him all the decorations he could acquire by the most successful career, and for every war or annexation if he disobeyed they should take away one of his decorations. The great danger to this country was in extending its responsibilities beyond what we were able properly to discharge. This was not merely a financial question. He had never known a nation perish from want of finances; it perished rather from want of power to perform the duties it undertook. He appealed to right hon. Gentlemen on both sides whether they were not sensible of the enormous danger arising from that cause. It was difficult, if not impossible, for a Government to follow the acts of their Representatives in all parts of the world; and if that were so, could they not devise some sort of moral court martial before which an Agent who had acted contrary to their orders should be put upon his defence? However, it would be impossible to devise any punishment for an Agent who led his country into wrong doing until the nation preferred to condemn, rather than to reward, an immoral policy.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL supported the Motion, and concurred in the feeling of the hon. Member for Carnarvonshire (Mr. Rathbone), that he would have preferred to have something more positive from the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister had said we must look to ourselves; we were, in reality, at the bottom of all the evil there might be in the matter. But he ventured to suggest that it was because the people of England were so excitable, so prone to war, and to lording it over other races of the world, that it was indispensably necessary that the Government should exercise strong and vigorous control over their Agents abroad. Undoubtedly, there were many cases in which the Government and the country would not have gone into war but for their Agents having acted rashly. The country had been excited, and the Government had supported them. It was because we were sitting, so so speak, over a powder magazine of feeling in this country that our Agents should be checked by strong measures. The hon. Member for Merthyr (Mr. Richard) had made out a very strong case, that was greatly supported by the frequency of small wars during the last six years. It was all very well for the Government to issue general instructions to our Agents to be cautious; but there was reason to expect that a Government such as the present Government should do something more than former Governments had done to check and control our Agents. Of the necessity for this there was a recent striking instance. Nothing could be more complete than the caution issued to the late Sir George Colley. He was cautioned in the strongest terms to avoid bloodshed; but he, being our Agent abroad and a military man, disregarded the caution, and plunged us into another war and another disaster. His (Sir George Campbell's) consolation was not only that of the Prime Minister, but in the fact that in regard to the Transvaal the Government had at last shown that they had the courage to do right even after defeat; and their conduct in that respect, for which he gave them all due credit, satisfactorily discountenanced the old idea that a British Agent, no matter how unjust his actions might be, was to be applauded if he succeeded, while, in the event of failure, only one course was supposed to be open in order to remove the stain upon the honour of the nation.

Mr. RYLANDS regretted that the House did not appear to take in the subject an interest at all commensurate with its importance. The action of our foreign Agents, unless it was checked in some way, might in the future, as it had done in the past, involve the country in very great obligations and great crimes. It was to be regretted that the Vote for some small sum of money often excited greater interest with some Members than a question involving considerations of such magnitude and interest as this. It was difficult to induce Gentlemen to realize a question of this nature which was not constantly before their attention. He believed, from the statement of the Prime Minister, the present Government was anxious to take every step in its power to check action on the part of its officials which involved such serious consequences; but there was an unsatisfactory element in the case. Within a recent period there had been a Government in power under whose auspices action had been taken by our Representatives abroad, involving this country in great responsibilities, great expenditure, and, he thought, great crime; and the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister said that the late Government had the support of the House of Commons, and, therefore, the Motion submitted to-night would have no effect. But there was all the difference in the world between action taken before and after an event; and if by any possibility the power of Parliament, or the Central Government could be brought to bear to prevent the occasion for an ebullition of public feeling, which, when war occurred, was so often found to prevail, it would be well. No sooner did a Representative of England engage in some transaction, however unjust, which led to the employment of a British force, than it was accepted as a *fait accompli.* It was thought that they could not disturb it however much the Government disapproved of it; it was accepted as an accomplished fact, and very likely, if the Government had sympathy with a so-called Imperial policy, it would very probably endorse engagements entered into without its previous approval, but involving the country in serious expense and responsibility, and would give encouragement to the official who brought on the difficulties. The Prime Minister alluded to a circumstance which was in the memory of all who were in political life at that time. He meant the Dissolution of Parliament on the China Question. He remembered, as though it occurred last week, the great debate upon the Motion of his distinguished and illustrious Friend Mr. Cobden. He recollected the majority went against the Government; and he remembered reading over the Division List, and seeing that in the majority there were some of the greatest minds and most independent statesmen in the House of Commons. The majority defeated Lord Palmerston, and he dissolved and went to the country, and he carried the country before him, and many distinguished Gentlemen lost their seats. But, in considering the circumstances which then occurred, it should be borne in mind that when the intelligence of the high-handed proceedings of Sir John Bowring first reached this country, there was a very general condemnation of his conduct —the newspaper Press, in most cases, disapproved of it—and it was not until it was found that Lord Palmerston endorsed the policy of Sir John Bowring that Party feeling was excited, and all considerations of justice and reason were swallowed up in the bitter excitement of political controversy. That scarcely supported the contention of the Prime Minister that they could do little or nothing in transactions of this kind, because Parliament controlled the Executive, and the people controlled the Parliament. He thought substantial reason had been shown for placing some check upon the action of the Representatives of Great Britain abroad. The Prime Minister seemed to be afraid that there was no means of giving effect to the recommendation of his hon. Friend, and suggested that often the Central Government was as much to blame as the officials abroad. He thought, however, that something might be done towards carrying out the views of his hon. Friend. In the first place, a rule might be laid down that an official who committed the country to a war contrary to the orders of the Central Government should be punished for disobeying instructions. Again, officials ought to be cautioned as strongly as possible against committing the Government in any transactions of this kind. When the Liberals were on the other side of the House, they joined in condemning the conduct of Sir Bartle Frere by a Resolution of the strongest character. The present Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs proposed that Resolution, and called on the Government of the day to recall Sir Bartle Frere. It was true that the late Parliament supported the late Government; but an appeal was made to the country, and he believed the people were roused to a sense that a policy had been adopted which was contrary to justice and morality. The Liberals came into power; but nevertheless Sir Bartle Frere was not recalled, as many of the Members of the Party expected he would be. It thus appeared that officials who acted in a manner to entail on this country great difficulty, loss, and very often heavy responsibility by acting either without orders or contrary to instructions, did not, as a rule, receive the condemnation they deserved. Sir Bartle Frere was allowed to remain for some time in the position he occupied, and no satisfactory evidence was given that the existing Government entirely condemned his action. The House must bear in mind that at the fringe of our extended Empire there were numerous barbarous tribes with whom at any moment an indiscreet or violent official might carry us into war, to be followed by further aggressions of territory; and it was to be hoped that the interesting and important speech of the Prime Minister in connection with the present discussion might assist in educating public opinion to discourage the actions of ambitious pro-Consuls in promoting unjust aggressions abroad.

MR. LYULPH STANLEY said, that, much as they must all agree with the speech of the Prime Minister, he could not help thinking that some more positive assurance might have been given as to the future action of the Government in censuring public servants who had exceeded their instructions and thus involved the country in a needless war.

So long as our public servants saw that they could gamble with the National Forces, and that if they succeeded they would receive honour and promotion, whilst if they failed they got no punishment, so long should we have great danger in our remote Dependencies. It was true that the electric telegraph had brought our officers more under the control of the Home Government; but, on the other hand, the publicity given to their proceedings by the newspapers encouraged public servants to bid for popularity and reputation outside the circle of their superiors. This made it necessary that the Government should keep a stricter hand on its subordinates. The Perak War waged in the Malay Peninsular some years ago was unwarrantable in its origin and most trumpery in its nature. Yet the officers who served in it asked that a medal should be granted to the troops, and the concession was ultimately wrung from a somewhat reluctant Government. This was an illustration of the temptation there was for persons to engage in these insignificant wars for the purpose of obtaining reputation and distinction. In reference to this subject of the Perak War, he would appeal to the Government to consider the case of the Malay Chiefs, who were deported to the Andaman Islands, and who still remained there. He hoped they would be set free as a token that the Government were willing, at least, to do a remnant of justice to those who had suffered. This discussion would show, at any rate, that the sense of the House of Commons, which reflected the feeling of the country, had made considerable progress upon previous years, and that there was a desire not to be led astray by false appeals to what was called the honour of England. The late General Election was the first instance of an appeal being made to the country against a blustering and aggressive foreign policy, and of a favourable verdict being given by the country in answer to the appeal.

MR. WARTON said, it might be presumptuous in him to say anything after so much had been said on the other side of the House, but all in the same strain, in favour of the Amendment of the hon. Member for Merthyr; but he could not allow the debate to close without saying a word in favour of that fine old English spirit which seemed about to become extinct. He would not refer to a quotation made in "another place" about blushing; but he could not refrain altogether from blushing. Hon. Members opposite seemed to forget the history of their country — the glorious times of Drake, Frobisher, and Hawkins, when our fleets swept the seas, and our campaigns in India, when every act of annexation strengthened our Empire. They had heard from the Prime Minister, with a grandeur of language and sublimity of moral sentiment, which, he feared, was used as a mere cover for a cowardly policy, that which made those who had the honour of England at heart regret that the honour of England had fallen into such hands. He should be sorry in any way to hurt the Prime Minister's feelings; but he did think he traced in some of his phrases an undercurrent of feeling, as if he were condemning the proud policy of him whom Queen and country now mourned. He (Mr. Warton) could not help feeling keenly that great loss; but if the sentiment he referred to was present in the Prime Minister's mind, he was sorry for it. There was no mistake as to the sentiments which fell from the hon. Member for Carnarvonshire (Mr. Rathbone). The hon. Member and others threw every obstacle in the way of Lord Lytton, though his policy was dictated by a due regard for the honour of his country; but if the present wretched Government had not undone, as far as they could, the work his Lordship had accomplished in Candahar, we would have found for many years to come that our Empire had been very much strengthened. The Government should not mix up with their professions of morality a profession of being statesmen. When did great Powers begin to decay? When their fighting spirit went down. Hon. Gentlemen opposite, who reckoned up their pounds, shillings, and pence, ought to remember that, even from a commercial point of view, a brave policy was the best, for the moment a nation began to care more for money than honour its doom was sealed.

Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 72; Noes 64: Majority 8.—(Div. List, No. 188.)

Main Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

INDIA AND CHINA—THE OPIUM TRADE.—OBSERVATIONS.

MR. J. W. PEASE rose to call the attention of the House to the present position of the negotiations between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of China in relation to the Duties affecting Opium, and the position of the Indian Revenue in relation to the moneys received from the cultivation of, and duties levied upon, this drug. The hon. Member said: As a rule, I am not at all in favour of annual Motions; but I would prefer to leave questions already decided until the altered circumstances of the case, or an alteration in the composition of the House, would warrant their re-introduction. But the debate which took place last year was most unsatisfactory—unsatisfactory, I venture to think, to the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, unsatisfactory to my noble Friend at the head of the India Office, whose views have been the subject of much comment, and unsatisfactory also to those who join with me in thinking that the present position of this subject is eminently unsatisfactory; and I have therefore resolved to take as early an opportunity as I could of bringing it forward again. When I brought forward the subject last year, the Prime Minister took part in the debate, and the right hon. Gentleman made use of an argument which I think justifies me in bringing it on again at an early day. My right hon. Friend, towards the close of the debate, said—

> "I entertain the sincerest, the most earnest desire, and so does my noble Friend, that it may be in our power, safely and with justice to the people of India, to take steps for the gradual withdrawal from connection with this traffic; but I cannot give a promise upon it until I see the means by which that process is to be effected. Therefore, let it be understood on the part of Her Majesty's Government that, while we resist this adjournment on account of the construction that has been put upon it, it is simply upon that ground that we desire to reserve to ourselves the free and deliberate examination of this question. I have no doubt that my hon. Friend opposite the late Under Secretary of State for India would wish himself to take his stand upon the same ground. What he said was perfectly consistent with such a view. None of us, I hope, in this House view this matter with indifference. I am certainly of opinion, as I said at the close of the last Parliament, that this opium revenue, instead of being a sound and solid, is a slippery and dangerous, part of our Indian Revenue. India cannot be economically safe as long as she is dependent upon it."—[3 *Hansard*, cclii. 1280.]

As long ago as 1878 the right hon. Gentleman, in an article which he wrote in *The Nineteenth Century Review*, enumerates, in a foot-note, several of the unredeemed pledges of the Liberal Party. The seventh of them is "The Opium Revenue," and the right hon. Gentleman says—

> "In not a few of these the mischief amounts to positive scandal. I do not add those subjects which are at present only pressed by a section, though often a very large section, of the community."

Now, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman was perfectly correct in the view that this subject is pressed not only by a section, but by a very large section, of the community. In the course of the four weeks which have elapsed since I placed my Notice on the Paper, Petitions have been poured into this House from all sections of the community in favour of it. I have had the honour of presenting a very large number of Petitions to the House, one of which is rather a remarkable one, which I will call attention to by-and-bye; it is signed by Cardinal Manning, and by nearly the whole of the Roman Catholic Bishops of England and Wales. There are also Petitions from the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of England, consisting of 500 ministers and elders. At a meeting held in Newcastle on the 26th of the present month, from the Baptist Union, which passed similar resolutions, only the other day; from the Convocation of the Province of York, with the Archbishop of York in the chair, when a similar resolution was unanimously and sympathetically passed; from the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland; from a meeting at the Mansion House in Dublin, with the Lord Mayor in the chair; from the Society of Friends; the Primitive Methodists; the Congregational Union; the Wesleyan Conference; the Unitarians and the Positivists. All of these bodies have passed resolutions in conformity with the views which I entertain upon the subject, and which I am about to submit to the House. In addition, I have also had resolutions forwarded to me from various Chambers of Commerce, who think the relations between China and England, as regards legitimate commerce, are very much prejudiced by the opium traffic. The Secretary of State for India challenged those who supported me in the debate last year with having adopted a kind of philanthropy which was cheap, and which did not affect our pockets, but only affected the pockets of the people of India. The people of England have accepted the challenge of the noble Lord; and they are willing, if the condition of the Indian finances require it, to give their aid and assistance. I should have placed Resolutions upon the Table in a more definite form if the Rules of the House had allowed me. The challenge which I put forward to Her Majesty's Government is one which, to a certain extent, has been raised by the debate which has just closed—namely, that we should treat the people of China as if they were on a level with ourselves; that by fair treaty, and not by compulsion, China should be at liberty to have those articles of commerce from us which she desires, and those things which she refuses to us we should not press from her. Hitherto the diplomacy of England has all been used to force the Chinese in a way we should not have attempted to force any other civilized country with whom we are on terms of friendship. The language of the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India (the Marquess of Hartington), in the debate on this subject which took place in June last, was somewhat strong. He said—

> "Morality of this kind is extremely cheap; and we should, perhaps, hear less of the immorality of this traffic, and of the expediency of putting an end to it, immediately or prospectively, if these speeches had to be accompanied with a demand made on the English taxpayer for the £6,000,000 or £7,000,000, or some part of it, which it is proposed so lightly that India should surrender."—[*Ibid.* 1259-60.]

Now, Sir, I do not think that the people of this country have been accustomed to "cheap morality." It is only about a generation ago—a period which even I can recollect — when our forefathers put their hands into their pockets and paid out £20,000,000 sterling to the West Indian slaveholders for the abolition of slavery. The people of this country looked upon slave-holding as an immoral trade, and I think I shall be able to prove that the opium traffic with China is in the same position. In that case, was it a cheap philanthropy? I believe the money was spent in doing that which has conferred lasting honour on the people of this country; and, beyond that, I think I can point out another country which, not able to take as straight and bold a line on the slavery question as we did, because they dared not look the moral iniquity in the face, the profit being too much for them, at last found themselves compelled to face it, and to face it by accumulating £700,000,000 of debt, and the loss of nearly 1,000,000 valuable lives. I believe all these immoralities are certain to bring their day of retribution. If the noble Lord and the Indian Government are not able to meet these immoral transactions now, depend upon it a day of retribution will come upon India, perhaps not to the same extent as it did in the case to which I have alluded; but it will come upon the people of that country, and may make us regret that we had not earlier looked to the finances of India with a view of doing that for India which would produce a revenue from more legitimate sources, and more in accordance with the dictates of justice and morality. I now propose, as briefly as I can, to review the relative positions of England and China, and also the position of India in relation to the revenue derived from this source; and I shall then conclude by offering a few observations to the House as to the way in which it seems to me to be open for the Indian Government to withdraw from the trade. If I can prove my 1st Resolution, that the trade is opposed to Christian and national morality, I believe the latter portion will be conceded —namely, that it ought not to be continued in its present form. If, without going deeply into questions of Christian or moral ethics, I could show that this trade in which we are engaged produces the moral degradation of thousands of the Chinese; that it is forced upon them, the weaker people, by us, the stronger people, and that we force it upon them in spite of their entreaties, I think I shall have proved that it is opposed both to Christian and moral ethics. It appears, also, that we stand in the way of the Chinese people even in arresting the flow of the trade, by declining to allow them to raise their municipal duties upon the drug when it goes into their country. My right hon. Friend the late Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Bourke) told us in one of these debates that he had never heard anyone say aught in favour of this trade from a moral point of view; and I believe that my right hon. Friend stated that which everyone feels who is in any way connected more or less directly with it. There were several very curious arguments used in its favour in the debate of last year. Some hon. Members told us that it was a very useful drug. I admit its usefulness in damp and malarious climates; and I do not deny that in such cases it may be used with comparative impunity; but if it is used very long as a daily sedative it has a wonderful faculty of overcoming the man who makes use of it. I think it is Mr. Fortune, the celebrated Oriental traveller, who says in his travels that in China he found evidence that it might so be used; but he also found abundant and clear evidence to show that it could not be used long with impunity. My right hon. Friend the Postmaster General (Mr. Fawcett) brought a new line of argument forward. He told us—

> "They had heard a great deal about the immorality of their traffic with the Chinese; but, for his part, he could not see that there was much difference between raising a revenue from opium and raising £26,000,000, as they did in England, to a great extent, from the intemperance of the people. No one was more opposed than he to many of the proposals for temperance legislation brought forward in that House, although he was as much a friend of temperance as any man could be. But he had no hesitation in saying that in Ireland, or even in the back slums of Glasgow, he could find as great immorality traceable to the traffic from which the spirit revenue was raised, as they could find in China produced from opium."—[*Ibid.* 1272.]

Now, I say that that argument is not like one of the arguments of my right hon. Friend the Postmaster General, who is generally clear-headed in his arguments. Does he mean to tell us that £26,000,000 is raised on the degradation of the people? I believe that by far the greatest portion of the revenue raised from drink is raised from those who use it, it may be as an article of luxury, but as a beverage which they enjoy without abusing; and it is raised in an entirely different manner from the revenue upon opium. My right hon. Friend knows very well that we legislate for opium as a drug; that no one can buy and sell opium without restriction; that no one can buy it from the merchants or sell it to the public without registering that which he receives and that which he sells. The £26,000,000 which we raise from alcohol we raise from our own people; but in India the revenue we derive from opium we get from somebody else—namely, from the Chinese, on whom we press the opium. Therefore, there is no analogy between the two cases. The one is a drug, and the other is a beverage, in regard to which we license both the maker and the seller. In one case the revenue is raised from other people; and in the other case it is raised from our own people. If the Government could come here and say that this was a useful and refreshing drug, and that the revenue was raised from those who use it, I should not have a word to say against cultivating and supplying it, much as I think the Government is best out of a business of this kind; but, as I have said, it is a contribution in aid of the Revenues of the Indian Government, which is entirely raised from strangers whom we compel to admit it at tariff duties. The next argument to which I wish to allude is one which was used by my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister. He says that by this means you avoid smuggling. Now, Lord Salisbury, when he opposed the ratification of the Chefoo Convention in the House of Lords which we have been endeavouring to press for the last few years, he said that if it be ratified it would put an end to smuggling. But the question of smuggling is not our question; it is a question for the Chinese. It is for them to choose whether they will have prohibition and much smuggling; high duties and smuggling; low duties and no smuggling. What did the Chinese do in 1857? They determined to put an end to smuggling; and how were they backed up by the Government of this country? They were backed up in the way described by the right hon. Gentleman in his observations to-night when speaking of the China War—namely, a way "that was deplorable." Smuggling is a question for the Chinese, and not for us; but let me read to the House, and especially to my noble Friend, what Mr. Aitchison, the Chief Commissioner in British Burmah, says. Writing on the 30th April last, Mr. Aitchison says—

> "The difficulties we have in any case to contend with in preventing smuggling are so great that an addition to them would not be a very appreciable burden. Anyhow, smuggling even on a considerable scale would never lead to the universal consumption of this drug, and the evasion of the Revenue is not to be compared with the gradual demoralization of the people. The question has altogether passed beyond

the stage at which Revenue considerations predominate."

That is a statement from our principal Agent in British Burmah, in reporting to the noble Lord on the Papers which the noble Lord was good enough to allow me to have the other evening, in which Report Mr. Aitchison goes into the question of smuggling as the result of almost total prohibition in that country. But, suppose we take the smuggling argument and apply it to the French or the Germans, in reference to the duties on their tobacco, which we charge at high duties, and which is consequently smuggled into the Thames, and forfeited, and annually destroyed; or suppose we distilled gin, and they refuse to admit it on any terms; and then suppose we were to send our Fleet over to France or to Germany to bombard their ports in order to compel them to take the commodity from us at a tariff duty, the parallel would probably hold good. All he said with regard to China was, that we had opposed prohibitive duties on her part, and by the steps which we took in 1840, 1858, and 1860, we have forced a contraband article on the people until it has now been included in a positive tariff. If we sympathize with them in their endeavour to keep out of their country an article which all, I think, hold to be destructive to the prosperity of the country, we are met by the argument raised by my hon. Friend the Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell), who says that if the people of China are to be poisoned—and very probably they would be poisoned either by Persia or by their own home-grown article—it was much better that we should have the profit of poisoning them. My hon. Friend's words were—

> "If the Chinese must be poisoned by opium, he would rather they were poisoned for the benefit of our Indian subjects than for the benefit of any other Exchequer. ['Oh, oh!'] He was by no means in favour of their being poisoned; but he repeated that if they must be poisoned, he would rather it was for the benefit of the Indian than the Chinese Exchequer. He agreed with his hon. Friend that it was very desirable that the Indian Government should try to free themselves from dependence upon this traffic, as it was very precarious, and political events might bring it to an end. But, taking this opium revenue as a mere transit or export duty, he did not think it a source of revenue which the Indian Government should divest itself of so long as the Chinese took it."—[*Ibid.* 1249.]

The same argument was used in the Slave Trade times. It was said that if English ships and Englishmen were not employed in the Slave Trade, then we should have the French and Dutch and the Danes building ships and going into this large and prosperous trade in our place. I regret that my hon. Friend is not in his place, because I desired to offer to him some lines from one of our poets which describe the condition of the boy who, when asked to join in an excursion for robbing an orchard, said—

"'Poor man! I would save him his fruit if I could;
But staying behind will do him no good.'
His scruples thus silenced, Tom felt more at ease,
And went with his comrades the apples to seize.
He blamed and protested, yet joined in the plan;
He shared in the plunder, but pitied the man."

My hon. Friend uses much the same argument in reference to our opium trade with China. It must be recollected that my hon. Friend the Member for Kirkcaldy has governed a large portion of India; and he says that it is better, if the Chinese people are to be poisoned, rather than give the profit of poisoning them to some other people, that we should poison them ourselves. There is one other argument still more important than most of those which I have already alluded to—namely, the desire of the Chinese to put down the trade, and their ability to deal with the home-grown supply. Now, this is an important branch of the subject, to which I propose to refer a little further on. I think it is known pretty clearly that the Chinese are able to put an end to it if they be not hampered by the action of England. I find, as I have spoken from place to place on this question, that people have got hold of the idea that there is little difference between the immorality which arises from the use of drink and the use of opium; but let me remind the House of the quotation which I made last year, but which I feel I must repeat, because it is one of the things constantly urged in favour of this traffic. Sir Thomas Wade, in a Memorandum of the revision of the Treaty of Tientsin, writes thus—

> "It is to me vain to think otherwise of the use of the drug in China than as of a habit many times more pernicious, nationally speaking, than

the gin and whisky drinking which we deplore at home. It takes possession more insidiously, and keeps its hold to the full as tenaciously. I know no case of radical cure. It has insured in every case within my knowledge the steady descent, moral and physical, of the smoker, and it is, so far, a greater mischief than drink—that it does not, by external evidence of its effects, expose its victim to the loss of repute which is the penalty of habitual drunkenness. There is reason to fear that a higher class than used to smoke in Commissioner Lin's day are now taking to the practice."

The same evidence is given by Dr. Hirschberg, Medical Superintendent of the Chinese Hospital, Morrison's Hill, Hong Kong, who says—

"It is irrational, and very unfair, to compare the practice of opium smoking in moderation with the use of intoxicating beverages in moderation; it would be rational, and no more than fair, to compare the opium smoker—whether he be a moderate or immoderate one, a beginner or an inveterate one—with the man who drinks with the fixed intention of getting intoxicated. The primary, and mostly the sole, purpose of the opium-smoker is, that he may fall into a trance or ecstacy; the secondary, is to forget misery, to allay pain, hunger, &c."

Dr. Little, who occupied a similar position in Singapore, says of the power of a smoker to inhale a mouthful or two, and, before his quantity is expended, to cry, "Hold—enough!"—

"I have never seen it; and I have searched everywhere for one who, with money, stopped short of partial insensibility. . . . Many drink, but do not abuse it; many smoke opium, but all abuse it."

Now, Sir, I wish to show to the House, from authorities which no one can dispute, what the actual effect of this drug is upon the people of China. Mr. Cooper, the traveller, says—

"I think the effects of opium smoking in China are worse than the effects of drinking in England."

M. Carné, after his travels in China, writes thus in *The Revue des Deux Mondes*—

"I do not believe there has ever been a more terrible scourge in the world than opium. The alcohol employed by Europeans to destroy savages, the plague that ravages a country, cannot be compared to opium."

A Chinaman, writing in 1876, says—

"No language can describe the evils which opium begets in China. Thousands—yes, millions—of families have been ruined by it. It leads to a way of life which we Chinese describe as living in a second hell."

It is calculated that 160,000 opium suicides take place annually. Mr. T. T. Cooper, whom I quoted before, in his evidence before the Indian Finance Committee in 1871, says—

"I think that the men who smoke opium look upon themselves as morally criminal."

I received an interesting letter the other day from a gentleman who has been for 16 years in China. He says—

"My experience for many years has been that they become emaciated in body and mind, ruined in individual, family, and social life—in fact, utterly worthless characters. Not only so, but recovery is the rare exception. It seems to me that no description of the evils of the habit ever published is too strong."

Another gentleman, a missionary of the London Missionary Society, who has returned after having been for 14 years out there, told me—

"The effects of opium smoking upon the Chinese generally has again and again been depicted to the British public in strong and earnest language; but never, I think, too strong, and certainly never too earnest. No language can fully picture to others the deplorable consequences of opium smoking which I have myself seen in China, even in the case of some of my own Chinese acquaintances."

Mr. Cooper says—

"It is a very common thing to see half-naked men lying dead, simply from want of opium. It leads to crime in every way. Men will sell their children, their wives, their mothers, their fathers, to get opium."

Sir Rutherford Alcock was asked by the Finance Committee, in 1871—

"Can the evils, physical, moral, commercial and political, as respects individuals, be exaggerated?"

His answer was—

"I have no doubt that where there is a great amount of evil, there is always a certain danger of exaggeration. It is difficult not to conclude that what we hear of it is essentially true, that it is a source of impoverishment and ruin to families."

But, Sir, the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India has, I think, furnished me with the best weapon I can use this evening. In a paragraph in the Report of Mr. C. V. Aitchison, Chief Commissioner of British Burmah, he says, speaking of opium smoking among the Burmese—

"The habitual use of the drug saps the physical and mental energies, destroys the nerves, emaciates the body, predisposes to disease, induces indolent and filthy habits of life, destroys self-respect; is one of the most fertile sources of misery, destitution, and crime; fills the gaols with men of relaxed frame, predisposed to dysentery and cholera; prevents the due extension of cultivation and the development of the land revenue, checks the natural growth of the population, and enfeebles the constitution of succeeding generations."

The Memorandum of Mr. Aitchison is filled with extracts from Reports containing evidence as to the demoralizing effects of opium smoking in British Burmah, which, however, I am afraid I shall not have time to lay before the House. Colonel Browne, Commissioner of the Pegu Division, says—

> "As an incentive to crime among a Burmah population, drunkenness is insignificant when compared with opium smoking."

While Mr. Aitchison puts in a paragraph for the benefit of the Chinese population of British Burmah, who, he says, use this drug with moderation, he admits to the full, and the Report teems from end to end with evidence of it, the evil effects of the use of the drug. The noble Lord and his Government, or perhaps the Government of India, have taken strong steps with regard to the opium traffic in Burmah. The increase of crime was general, the difficulty of obtaining labour was general, the opium trade was increasing, and at last the Indian Government, out of 68 shops that existed in British Burmah where opium was at one time sold, had closed 41, leaving 27 only in existence. At the same time they have increased by 20 per cent the lowest price at which opium was allowed to be sold in these shops. Mr. Aitchison, or the whole of the Indian Council, would hardly be able to establish that opium smoking, which is a curse in Burmah, is a blessing in China. What was bad for the one cannot be good for the other, and that which enfeebles and demoralizes the people of Burmah cannot be good for the population of China. All I ask of the noble Lord is that he will allow the Chinese Government to follow the excellent example the Indian Government have set in India. The question will probably be asked to-night, whether it is the fact that we are forcing the traffic upon the Chinese? I think there cannot be a question that, although it is by means of a tariff duty, we are practically forcing the opium trade upon China. In 1834 the Chinese Government made a decree against the use of opium. In 1839, although acting somewhat in excess of the ordinary usages of civilized countries in regard to contraband articles, they seized the opium then in the possession of the merchants and destroyed it; and in 1842 we made them pay for it. I find that Sir Henry Pottinger endeavoured then to induce the Chinese Government to allow opium to be received as an article subject to a tariff duty; but he failed. What did he do? He immediately published a declaration warning the merchants and traders that the British power would no longer be exercised in behalf of the smuggler; that those who went into the trade did so at their own risk; and that the British Fleet and British arms would no longer be used to protect them. I come now to the Treaty of Tientsin, to which reference has already been made to-night in the previous debate. No one who reads a sketch of the life of Lord Elgin will fail to be impressed by the greatness of his character; but by the Treaty of Tientsin Lord Elgin forced upon the Chinese a tariff duty for that which had hitherto been contraband. There has been an interesting correspondence in the newspapers between Dr. Legge on the one side and Messrs. Oliphant and Lay on the other, in which the two latter gentlemen say that opium was not one of the questions brought prominently forward at the Treaty of Tientsin. But opium was made a special article of tariff. It was the beginning of the war and the end and the result of the war. The Nobleman to whom so much honour was paid yesterday (the Earl of Shaftesbury) in the Guildhall of London brought the question before the House of Commons years ago, when the revenue derived from the opium trade only yielded £1,000,000 instead of the £6,000,000 or £7,000,000 which it now affords. In 1854 it had only risen to £2,800,000. What is the history of the transaction by which Lord Elgin made the drug for the first time an article of tariff? Mr. Oliphant says that the Chinaman, more in joke than in earnest, asked that the duty should be 60 taels, or £20 per chest. At length he came down to 40 taels, and ultimately to 30, "at which," says Mr. Lay, "I had fixed it in my memorandum;" 30 taels per chest, or £10, was accordingly laid down as the duty. And what has been the result? The Chinese were so alarmed that while a revision of all the other Articles in the long Schedule attached to the Treaty was stipulated for every 10 years, the Chinese asked that the opium duty should not be subject to revision, not because they were afraid of its being raised, but because they were afraid of its being lowered, so little confidence had they in us. By the Treaty the Chinaman stopped our going inland with opium. No foreigner can go into the interior with it, and no passport is given to the opium trader. Let us see on what terms the Treaty was obtained. In one of the foot-notes to Mr. Oliphant's very interesting account of Lord Elgin's Embassy to China, he gives a letter received from the two Commissioners who negotiated the Treaty, which says—

> "When the Commissioners Kwei and Hwa negotiated a Treaty with your Excellency at Tientsin, British vessels of war were lying in that port, there was the pressure of an armed force, a state of excitement and alarm (literally, weapons of war were constraining; there was a state of crackling fire and rushing waters), and the Treaty had to be signed at once without a moment's delay. Deliberation was out of the question, the Commissioners had no alternative but to accept the conditions forced upon them (literally, could only bend and give consent. *Bent* generally implies the employment of undue violence.") — [*Oliphant's Elgin's Mission to China*, vol. 1, page 276.]

The Correspondent of *The Illustrated London News*, writing on the state of Canton in July, 1858, says—

> "In a very short time this busy suburb, which a very short time before was teeming with life and an industrious hard working population, presented a scene of really awful desolation—nothing but gutted and broken shells of houses remained, from which presently large heavy masses of rolling smoke began to ascend. . . . . I believe, in a short time, Canton will be burnt down entirely. . . . Do you think the thousands of houseless shopkeepers will ever remember John Bull or *Vin Ordinaire* with love or respect? I think not."

I was struck by Lord Elgin's own account of the state of things. He says, in a letter dated June 29—the Treaty having been signed on the 26th—

> "We went on fighting and bullying and getting the poor Commissioners to concede one point after another until the 25th, when we had reason to believe that all was settled."

And thus we achieved that great feat of our diplomacy—the Treaty of Tientsin. The Chinese Government and Lord Elgin were never of one mind in the matter. Mr. Wade—now Sir Thomas Wade—in May, 1869, wrote to Lord Clarendon, as follows:—

> "We are generally prone to forget that the footing we have in China has been obtained by force alone; and that, unwarlike and unenergetic as we hold the Chinese to be, it is in reality to the fear of force alone that we are indebted for the safety we enjoy at certain points accessible to our force. . . . . Nothing that has been gained, it must be remembered, was received from the free will of the Chinese; more, the concessions made to us have been, from first to last, extorted against the conscience of the nation."

Sir Rutherford Alcock came to exactly the same conclusion. He was examined by my late hon. Friend, Mr. J. B. Smith, and he was asked—

> "We force them by Treaty to take it from us? To which he replied, "That is so in effect."

He was next asked—

> "The only way they can escape is by war?" And he replied, "A war or a declaration that they are ready to go to war rather than submit to it any longer."

I think, Sir, I have shown not only from contemporary history, not only from the accounts of the Commissioners, but from the accounts of our own Ambassadors themselves, who have been long in China, that there is but one feeling—namely, that we did force, originally in 1857, 1858, and 1860, by that Treaty of Tientsin and its subsequent ratification, this pernicious drug upon the Chinese people, at the rate of duty at which it now stands. And now, Sir, it will be asked, have not the Chinese quietly submitted to the obligations which we imposed upon them? I say that there is distinct evidence that they have been constantly protesting against what we have been doing. Sir Rutherford Alcock, when before the Finance Committee in 1871, was asked—

> "Do you believe that the Chinese Government were perfectly sincere in their desire to put an end to the consumption of opium?" His answer was, "I believe they are."

In answer to another question, he said—

> "My own conviction is firm that there is that at work in their minds that they would not hesitate one moment—to-morrow, if they could —to enter into any arrangement with the British Government and say, 'Let our opium revenue go; we care nothing about it. What we want is to stop the consumption of opium, which we conceive is impoverishing the country, and demoralizing and brutalizing the people.'"

That is our Ambassador's evidence before the Committee on Indian Finance in 1871. The Prince of Kung, writing in 1869 to Sir Thomas Wade, who negotiated a good deal of this Treaty, says—

> "That opium is a deadly poison, that it is most injurious to mankind, and a most serious provocative of ill-feeling, is, the writers think, perfectly well known to his Excellency; and it is therefore needless for them to enlarge further on these points. The Prince (Prince Kung) and his Colleagues are quite aware that the opium trade has long been condemned by England as a nation, and that the right-minded merchant scorns to have to do with it. But the officials and people of this Empire, who cannot be so completely informed on the subject, all say that England trades in opium because she desires to work China's ruin, for, say they, if the friendly feelings of England are genuine, since it is open to her to produce and trade in everything else, would she still insist on spreading the poison of this hurtful thing through the Empire? The Chinese merchant supplies your country with his tea and silk, conferring thereby a benefit on her; but the English merchant empoisons China with pestilent opium. Such conduct is unrighteous. Who can justify it?"

Then, in a letter dated in the month of February in the present year, the present Chinese Ambassador in London, the Marquess Tseng, writing to the Secretary of the Anglo-Oriental Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade, London, says:—

> "These considerations being borne in mind will, I trust, prevent anyone from falling into the mistake of considering that the Chinese Government has ceased to view the consumption of opium by its subjects otherwise than as one of the most grievous evils which ever befell a nation.—I have the honour to be, Sir, your most obedient, humble servant,
>
> "Tseng.
>
> "To the Secretary Anglo-Oriental Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade, London."

We have, therefore, in 1860, 1869, 1880, and 1881, proofs of the way in which the Chinese people have been always protesting against the opium trade. In 1880 the United States of America made a Treaty with China. The United States have had little to do, compared with ourselves, with the opium trade, although they may have done something as far as the transit of opium was concerned. But one of the Articles in that American Treaty distinctly states that the opium trade is forbidden, and that no American ship shall become an opium trading vessel. I think that shows, at any rate, that the Chinese are still honest in their desire to induce this country to discontinue the trade. And now I come to the last proof; and I have to remind the House that in 1876 Sir Thomas Wade made that Treaty—called the Chefoo Convention—in regard to which questions have been repeatedly asked in this House. My hon. Friend the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) and others have asked, over and over again, why that Treaty has not been ratified. That Treaty consisted of three sections. The first had reference to the settlement of the Yunnan' case; the second to official intercourse; and the third to trade. By the 3rd section of the Treaty Sir Thomas Wade entered into the following agreement:—

> "3. On opium, Sir Thomas Wade will move his Government to sanction an arrangement different from that affecting other imports. British merchants, when opium is brought into port, will be obliged to have it taken cognizance of by the Customs, and deposited in bond, either in a warehouse or a receiving hulk, until such time as there is a sale for it. The importer will then pay the tariff duty upon it, and the purchasers the *li-kin*. In order to the prevention of the evasion of the duty, the amount of *li-kin* to be collected will be decided by the different Provincial Governments, according to the circumstances of each."

In May, 1879, Lord Salisbury, replying to a Question of Lord Carnarvon, in the House of Lords, why the Treaty had not been ratified, gave an answer to which I have already referred. He said—

> "The *li-kin* is not the ordinary taxation of the country; it is a species of *octroi* levied at the boundary of every Province; it is levied very much at the discretion of the Provincial Governors; they can raise it or lower it as they please; but there is always this security for the foreign trader—that as long as the collection of the duty is left in the hands of Chinese officials, smuggling, when the duty becomes high, is not a very difficult matter; and, therefore, there is a natural check upon these Provincial Governors which prevents them raising *li-kin* to an extravagant amount. With respect to opium, this Convention proposes what, undoubtedly, would be a very drastic remedy—that the collection should be placed in the same hands as that which collects the Customs—that is to say, European hands. In that case smuggling would be absolutely barred, and the tax upon opium might be raised to any amount Provincial Governors pleased. That would be a result which, practically, would neutralize the policy which hitherto has been pursued by this country in respect to that drug."—[3 *Hansard*, ccxlvi. 6-7.]

It was stated in January last that certain regulations have been imposed upon the opium imported under the stipulations of the Treaty of Chefoo; but I would ask in what position have we been upon this matter during the last five years? The Chinese agreed to give us an entrance into four ports—Ichang, 900 miles up the Yang tsi Keang; Wuhu, 200 miles up; Wên-Chow, South of Shanghai; and Pakhoi, South of Canton. When we examine these localities on the map, I think we must arrive at the conclusion that they acted in a most *boná fide* manner towards us. They are at an immense distance from any other ports to which we hitherto had access. We accepted the Chinese portion of the Treaty, and since 1876 we have acted upon it; but up to this very moment—the moment at which I am now speaking—we have never ratified that Article of the Treaty of Chefoo, which gives power to the Chinese Government to alter the duties on opium, and which, practically, would have placed restrictions upon the trade. We have asked again and again about the ratification of this Treaty, and in June last we were informed by the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs—

> "We have proposals made by the Chinese Government and by Sir Thomas Wade; and I have reason to suppose that the French mail, which left Shanghai on the 19th of May, will bring to this country a compromise Agreement between Sir Thomas Wade and the Chinese Government, in which the Representatives of the other Powers have concurred. They have been very prolonged negotiations; but we have reason to believe that those negotiations will lead to a general agreement. That being so, I will only, on behalf of the Foreign Department, make this further observation—That, when we have the agreement before us, the Government will have to decide whether they will ratify the Convention, or whether they will agree to the fresh proposals made by Sir Thomas Wade. That is a matter of policy upon which I cannot speak to-night; but we shall have the advantage, before the debate closes, of hearing the views of the Indian Secretary on the subject; and it is only for me to state the exact position of the negotiations."—[3 *Hansard*, cclii. 1254-5.]

I have already alluded to the exertions of my hon. Friend the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) in the matter. We have had many assurances that the thing was in hand; but year after year, although one Government may go out and another Government may come in, the Chinese are still left in the unfortunate position they have so long occupied. When Sir Thomas Wade first went into this matter he never expected all this delay. In his letter to Prince Kung, dated Peking, November 10, 1879, he says—

> "I returned home shortly after the Agreement was signed, and during the time I was in England—nearly two years—the Government was more than once called upon to state why the Agreement was not ratified. The question was asked in Parliament, and, out of Parliament, the Minister Kuo was used to complain that although ports and places of call, the immediate opening of which was stipulated in the Chefoo Agreement, had been opened by China, England, in withholding the ratification of the Agreement, had not fulfilled her part. I did not myself assume, when I signed the Agreement at Chefoo, that its formal ratification by my Sovereign would be necessary. The instrument in nine Articles, signed by your Imperial Highness and the Earl of Elgin in 1860, was never formally ratified by the Queen; but effect was none the less given immediately to its provisions. The Chefoo Agreement was, in its most essential conditions, accepted by Her Majesty's Government. The Government would otherwise have formally disapproved my note of 30th September, 1876, in which I informed your Imperial Highness that I should report the Yunnan affair finally closed."

Prince Kung replies, 10 days later, on the 20th of November, as follows:—

> "Were the rates originally ruling in the different Provinces to be raised or lowered, the terms of the Chefoo Agreement would be no longer abided by. At the present moment the Yamên have but one desire. They would earnestly request the British Minister, in all that regards the simultaneous collection of *li-kin* and tariff duty on opium, to act strictly in accord with the letter of the Chefoo Agreement itself, and name a date for putting the plan in operation. The Prince, in addressing this reply to the British Minister, requests that he will communicate it to his Government, Küang Hsia, 5th year, 10th moon, 7th day."

The date for putting the plan in operation has never yet been found, to the lasting disgrace of the English Administration, be it Tory or be it Liberal. In my view, that a Treaty should be made in good faith with people who are not quite on a level with ourselves should be left untouched, while Treaties made by those who are on a level with ourselves are rigorously enforced, is a disgrace to England. If I have failed in my main object in carrying the House with me, and have not succeeded in convincing them, I think I shall meet with general concurrence when I say that my right hon. Friend the late Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Bourke) was right in asserting that he had never heard anyone say aught in favour of the morality of the opium trade. The fact is that the Chinese people are in the most wholesale manner debauched and demoralized by our proceedings in connection with this trade—one which they would gladly get rid of if they could; but which we have compelled them to enter into, almost entirely upon our own terms. The only objection which has been raised to my Resolutions and the views which I take upon the matter, which have been brought before the House time after time by my hon. Friend the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson), by Mr. Mark Stewart, who, while a Member of this House, always took a warm interest in the subject, by myself, and by others, has been the one which is now raised by my hon. Friend the Member for Guildford (Mr. Onslow)—namely, the question of the Indian Revenue. My hon. Friend has placed an Amendment on the Paper to-day which again raises that question. Now, I do not at all deny that by the present state of things the Indian Revenue is benefited to the extent of £6,000,000 or £7,000,000 a-year; but the question of the Indian Revenue is a question not only of distributing revenue, but of receiving revenue. It is not, however, a question as to the acquiring of revenue, but as to the manner of acquiring that revenue; and if it is acquired at the expense of debauching a nation, and regardless of the evils which its acquisition inflicts upon the people of another nation, such a mode of acquiring it must be condemned by all right-minded people. I have shown that the Representative Bodies of the Christian Churches, of Working Men's Clubs, Corporations, Chambers of Commerce, have all come forward of one mind to say that this is an immoral revenue for India to receive, and that the sooner India gets rid of such a source of revenue, and adopts a system of more honest finance, the better. But it is said, whenever we come to the question of the opium trade, that the Indian Revenue is becoming more and more—most unjustifiably as I think—dependent upon it. As I have already stated, when Lord Ashley moved in this House a Resolution condemning the traffic, the Revenue derived by India from it was only £1,000,000. Taking an average of 10 years, in 1844, it was £1,200,000; in 1854, £2,800,000; in 1864, £6,400,000; and in 1874, £6,400,000. In 1878 it had increased to £6,500,000, and it was estimated to have reached £8,700,000 in 1879. But it has never been considered a safe revenue for India. First of all, it is the result of a very precarious crop. The Chinese are growing the poppy, and if we do not reform our ways it is not improbable that they may grow it to a still greater extent, and, in the end, outgrow us. Then, again, if they once make up their minds to do as Commissioner Lin did in 1839, and put an end to the trade, what is to become of our revenue? If they should do so, they would gain the sympathy, not only of a large portion of the people of this country, but of a large portion of the people of the civilized world; and no Government, however it might be formed, whether from this or the other side of the House, would have the power of forcing another war upon the people of this country in order to make the Chinese continue this demoralizing trade. My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister certainly sympathizes with me in the object which I have at heart, for in 1879, in the debate upon the Indian Budget, my right hon. Friend made use of the following words:—

> "The revenue from opium is not to be counted upon like the revenue from land, or like that from salt, which, be it objectionable or not, is under our control. The opium revenue we may accept, with more or less compunction and regret, as ministering to our present necessity; but we have no right to reckon upon its full continuance."—[3 *Hansard*, ccxlvi. 1744.]

Last year, in reply to my hon. Friend the Member for Guildford (Mr. Onslow), the Prime Minister said—

> "The Indian Revenue never can be solid and substantial so long as it is largely dependent on the opium revenue."—[*Ibid.*, ccli. 932.]

My noble Friend below me (the Marquess of Hartington), speaking on the 17th of August last year, said—

> "I will state, in one or two words, the impression that the general review which I have been enabled to make of Indian finance leaves upon my mind. It seems to me that the large surplus of Revenue over Expenditure, apart from the War, shows a decidedly satisfactory financial position. I think, perhaps, the most satisfactory feature of that position is the increasing productiveness of Public Works, to which I have referred. That is the most legitimate and most satisfactory feature in the situation, for it shows not only the financial position of India, but it shows also its industrial position. But, while there is this improvement, there is also much that is unsatisfactory, apart altogether from the extraordinary War charges. A Revenue which depends so largely on so precarious a reserve as the opium traffic cannot be considered to be in a secure position. As I have pointed out, the Indian Government have estimated their receipts from that source at very much below what has been obtained in recent

years; but, still, the Estimate is larger than any ever previously taken, and the Government of India have been informed that they are now relying more than is safe upon an item of Revenue which is so uncertain as this."—[3 *Hansard*, cclv. 1404.]

Sir, I think I am almost in a position—although I certainly do it with some timidity, because I feel the inferior position in which I, as an independent Member, with incomplete information am placed compared with my noble Friend below me, who has all the information in his hands—I am almost, I think, in a position to maintain that with the Indian finance thoroughly well and economically managed, and with the Indian resources well cultivated, we should be able to place India very quickly in a position in which she could gradually, but steadily and surely, be able to abandon her reliance upon the opium traffic. Taking the revenue at something like £6,500,000 a-year—I think my noble Friend will agree with that figure—it has once or twice been larger, but it has often been smaller—taking the revenue from the opium trade at that amount, there would always be a legitimate revenue derived from the trade. This, taken in conjunction with a reduction in our Indian Military Expenditure, the success of the Indian railways and economy in public works, would in a short time prevent the decrease of the opium revenue from being felt. There is also the further question of the assistance which is to be given by this country to the finances of India, and which question I have included in my 2nd Resolution. Only the other day a Memorial was sent from the Bombay branch of the East India Association to the Prime Minister—

> "Urging that the recent position of affairs, when more than 50,000 picked troops, British and Native, maintained wholly out of the Revenues of British India, were engaged in field service far beyond the Frontiers of India, affords unmistakable demonstration that the military armaments of the Government of India are far larger than are needed for the maintenance of order in India, and for the defence of the natural boundaries of the Empire. Since the Afghan campaigns began there have been intermittent disturbances in the rural districts of the British Deccan, more extensive and intractable disorder has been prevalent in the jungle districts of the Northern Provinces of the Madras Presidency, while on the North-East Frontier of Assam a formidable raid of savage tribes had to be repelled by active military operations in difficult and perilous warfare. Yet, notwithstanding the fact that such a large portion of the ordinary Military Forces of British India—nearly one-fifth of the whole—were engaged in a protracted campaign in the foreign territory of Afghanistan, there has been no lack of military force to keep up sufficient garrisons in India and engage in three special operations in widely distinct portions of the Peninsular. The Bombay memorialists therefore submit that there should be a substantial reduction in the Armies hitherto maintained under the Government of India, after the withdrawal of the British Forces from Candahar, so that material relief may be given from the pressure of unproductive expenditure."

A Minute of Major Baring states that, excluding the war charges in each year, the surplus in 1879-80 is £4,607,000; in 1880-1 £5,396,000; and in 1881-2 it is estimated to be £855,000. Therefore I say that if we remain at peace there is great room for a still further diminution of the expenses. My hon. Friend the Member for Rochester (Mr. Otway), in a speech which he delivered last year, pointed out that after the suppression of the Indian Mutiny Lord Canning said that the whole expenditure for the Army in India ought not to exceed £12,000,000. At this moment we are spending more than £17,000,000, which exceeds by £5,000,000 the sum mentioned by Lord Canning. Lord Northbrook said that £14,000,000 would be sufficient, which is less by £3,000,000 than the sum we are expending. The noble Lord the late Under Secretary of State for India (Lord George Hamilton) stated on the 17th of August last that he believed the Government of India could best be made self-supporting by introducing a more economical measure of administration. My hon. Friend the Member for Rochester (Mr. Otway), who was formerly Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, stated that he could point out, and he would be glad to point out to the House, where the Indian Government might be saved the expenditure of something like £10,000,000 if there were a more economical administration of some of the sub-governments which involved continual expense. My hon. Friend the Member for Bolton (Mr. J. K. Cross) told us that 35 per cent of the money spent upon public works in India is spent in the establishment cost of the Department, and not in the works which are carried out. But what gratified me most was the statement made by the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India that the railways in India have been steadily but most regularly progressing. The Report of the Committee on Indian Finance in 1874 states—

> "Your Committee have received an impression from these sources that charges have, in some instances, been imposed upon India which ought to have been borne by England."

Supposing the Expenditure of India is kept as low as possible, there ought to be no difficulty in securing such a reduction of the expenses of the Army, of the expense of administration, and of the expense of public works, and such an increase in the revenue from canals and works of irrigation, as would place the Government in a position to deal with the question of the Indian revenue to be derived from opium. I fully admit that there are other taxes to which the noble Lord alluded in the last debate upon the question which would deserve the serious consideration of the Government of India, and which are pressing hardly upon the people; but I believe that the noble Lord would have a sufficient revenue placed in his hands to enable him, not only to deal with the opium revenue, but with many other matters. I certainly think it is a mistake to make light of the distinction between the two sources from which the opium revenue is drawn—the one being in the shape of transit duties, and the other by the direct profit drawn from the Bengal cultivation of the drug. I think there is a very great difference between the two—not only as a question of morality, but as a question of practical administration. I look upon it as better and wiser for the Government of a country like this to deal with the question as one of raising the largest possible revenue, so long as you are raising any revenue at all, compatible with the minimum growth of the article. It is not our fault that we are in this fix, and that a revenue is derived by India from opium. But while this generation is not accountable for what I may call the crime of the cultivation, that is no reason why we should not take the initiative in putting an end to it. If we have the satisfaction of beginning to apply a remedy, I think we shall be successful in a short time, notwithstanding the magnitude of the question. I have here several opinions from statesmen who are high authorities as to the abandonment of the cultivation. Sir William Muir, in a Minute dated February 22, 1868, described the probable finances of an experiment under which the Government should abandon cultivation and leave the production to private individuals, imposing a gross duty on the drug in entire substitution for the Bengal monopoly. He pointed out that in Bengal the production was 48,000 chests, and in Bombay 35,000, upon which a duty of 700 rupees per chest would yield £8,500,000, which, allowing £2,000,000 for collection, would leave a net revenue of £6,500,000. After stating these figures, Sir William Muir concluded with this remarkable sentence—

> "The change would relieve the British Government from the odious imputation of pandering to the vice of China by over-stimulating production, over-stocking the market, and flooding China with a drug in order to raise a wider and more secure revenue to itself, an imputation of which, at least on one occasion, I fear we are not wholly guiltless."

Mr. Reid, the Chief Commissioner of Customs at Bombay, held the same opinion in very strong language. He says—

> "The disadvantages of the Government monopoly are so clearly pointed out that its further retention will surely find no advocacy, and its death-knell may well be sounded."

Sir R. Hamilton also expresses a strong opinion. He says—

> "I have always advocated the abolition of the monopoly. Government should reduce the cultivation, and settle the number of chests to go to Bombay every year."

Dr. Smith, the Rev. J. Wilson, and others who thoroughly understand the question, tell us the time has come when the Government should gradually cease the cultivation of the drug. And now, Sir, I come to the question how far the Chinese have the power, and are desirous, of stopping the internal trade. I believe it is true that the quantity of opium grown in China has been steadily increasing; but it has steadily increased because we have steadily increased the quantity which we have sent to China, and it was impossible for the Chinese Government to adopt any other policy. They took the obverse of the view of my hon. Friend the Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell), and they said—"If our people are to be poisoned, we may as well poison them ourselves." But they would be strong enough to deal with the question of home cultivation, if we were prepared to deal with the question of importation. Only two years ago, when a famine was raging in Shansi, a Famine Commissioner, Yien, was sent to Peking, and he immediately prohibited the entire growth of the poppy in a Province as large as two-thirds of England. The growth was at once stopped, and there was not a poppy in the Province, so strong was the Government in the hands of a resolute Commissioner. But I believe that the cultivation in this very district is now as thriving as ever. It shows, however, that the Chinese Government, when they take the question up, are quite capable of dealing with it. Mr. J. Sadler, of the London Missionary Society, who has been 14 years in China, at Amoy, says—

> "I have to state my firm conviction that the Chinese Government would, in the circumstances that you refer to, be unquestionably strong enough to stop the native cultivation of opium. Not only is there such proof as you refer to from Mr. Hill, but the great fact that the power of the Mandarins has increased through the prestige gained by crushing the Taiping rebellion, and the introduction of foreign armaments. Moreover, I found during last year an expectation amongst the people that opium was about to be prohibited; and no one expressed a doubt that such prohibition would prove effectual."

Another gentleman, the Rev. Evans Bryant, who was 14 years a resident at Hankow, says—

> "I believe that if the British Government allowed the Chinese to deal with the importation of the Indian opium, as they wish to do, the Chinese Government could, and would, effectually restrict the area of opium cultivation in their own country at once. The restrictive power of the Government over their own people is very great, and striking instances are given now and again, even where it seems to be antagonistic to public opinion and to the prejudices of the people. The application of this power to restrict the area of opium cultivation would, I believe, have public opinion on its side. The consciences of the smoking, as well as of the non-smoking, population would approve of it; and the well understood advantages of such restriction to the domestic, social, and national welfare of the people would secure from the people not a little active support."

In this view, Sir Rutherford Alcock very much agreed in his despatch to the Viceroy of India and his Council, for he states—

> "He had no doubt that the abhorrence expressed by the Government and people of China for opium, as destructive to the Chinese nation, was genuine and deep-seated; and he was also quite convinced that the Chinese Government could, if it pleased, carry out its threat of developing cultivation to any extent. On the other hand, he believed that so strong was this popular feeling on the subject, that if Britain would give up the opium revenue, and suppress the cultivation in India, the Chinese Government would have no difficulty in suppressing it in China, except in the Province of Yunnan, where its authority is in abeyance."

Mr. J. W. Pease

As regards this Province (Yunnan), I believe that such is not so much the case at the present moment as it was when Sir Rutherford Alcock wrote that letter. I think I have now proved my original proposition — that, if the Indian Government are prepared to deal with the question, they may look with confidence on the people of China as not only being willing, but able, to deal with it. Sir Rutherford Alcock, in one of his very able pieces of evidence, sketches out a scheme which he thinks would be the only proper scheme—namely, the reduction of the acreage licensed by the Indian Government, accompanied, at the same time, by a gradual diminution of the area in which the cultivation is authorized to be carried on in China. I would say that I go a great deal further than that myself. This trade, whether the Chinese grow the drug for themselves, or they do not grow it, is one which we ought to get rid of. We have no right to take up the position of dealing with an article which produces the misery, vice, and wretchedness of an entire population. I have trespassed a good deal longer on the patience of the House than I intended; but I hope that hon. Members will give me the credit of having been animated only by a sense of public duty. I have desired to look at the question as if we were in some degree responsible not only for the financial position of India, but for the fair name of our own nation, and I think I have proved my original proposition—that the trade in which we are implicated is one that is detrimental to thousands of our fellow-beings. I have argued the question as a practical one. I have asked for no sudden change, but for a decided change of principle; that the principle and policy we have followed towards the Chinese should be altered; that we should begin to turn our faces in the right direction, so that a decided change in practice may ultimately follow, and that we may ultimately retire from the traffic altogether. I believe that the true interests of nations are like the true interests of individuals, and that we would do well to shun and get rid of those things which are a reproach upon our integrity and fair dealing, and have regard only to those things which are right and pure in principle, and of good repute to the nation as a moral country, and as a religious country standing, I hope, high amongst the nations of the world, in spite of all our faults. I think we ought to turn to that line of policy which commends itself to our higher and better nature rather than to a policy which requires almost special pleading to defend it. I believe that I have proved my proposition, and I think I shall be supported by the thinking people of this country. The various bodies which I have mentioned who have sent Memorials and Petitions to Parliament afford a sufficient indication of the feeling of the people of this country who feel that our legitimate trade is damaged by this spurious traffic. I can only hope that it will not be the voice of the noble Lord, whom everyone in this House regards not merely as the Leader of a great Party in the State, but probably at no distant date, in the developments of Party warfare, as the Leader of a great nation—I trust that it will not be his voice that will tell me that, in my feeble advocacy of this cause, I have laboured so far in vain. I beg, Sir, to move the Resolutions which I have placed upon the Paper.

"1. That, in the opinion of this House, the Opium Trade, as now carried on between India and China, is opposed alike to Christian and International morality, and is instrumental in affecting the physical and moral degradation of thousands of Chinese, and ought not to be continued in the manner in which it is at present conducted.

"2. That, whilst believing that the careful development of the resources of India, combined with economy in expenditure, would provide for any gradual loss of revenue which the adoption of the policy indicated in the foregoing Resolution might entail, nevertheless this House is prepared to give such aid to the Government of India as, in the opinion of this House, may be requisite.

"3. That, in the opinion of this House, it is due to the Government of China that the 3rd Clause of the 3rd Section of the Convention signed by His Excellency Sir Thomas Wade at Chefoo, on September 13th, 1876, should be ratified by the Government of Her Majesty, without demanding from the Government of China modifications of its original terms."

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is aware that as an Amendment to the Motion for going into Committee of Supply has been already moved and negatived, no further Amendment can be put.

SIR JOHN KENNAWAY: The question brought forward by my hon. Friend is not a new one. It has been brought forward before the House with varying success; but up to the present I cannot think it has made much progress. I think we have felt there was an unreality about the Motions which have prevented them being regarded with the importance which the subject deserves. But I think to-night the situation has very greatly changed by the form in which my hon. Friend now seeks to obtain the assent of the House. It will be as well, perhaps, if I very briefly show what are the three proposals to which he asks our assent. He asks us, in the first place, to say that the opium trade, as now carried on, is opposed to Christian and International morality, that it causes degradation to the Chinese, and that it ought not to be carried on as it is at present. The second proposal is one that is advanced for the first time—he asks the House to say that, believing it right that the traffic should cease, this country would be willing to bear some part in the loss, and would aid in meeting the deficiency which would at first be caused by the cessation of the opium revenue. He then says that the Chefoo Convention should be ratified without modification. In the able and exhaustive speech in which he introduced the Motion, he clearly showed us that he fully realized the importance of the Motion to which he was asking our assent. He did not enter upon it with a light heart; he realized the great issues which were at stake, and the great difficulties which would arise if this policy was to take effect. He sees that he wishes to do no less a thing than to reverse the policy of this country for the last 30 or 40 years, to forego the benefits of Treaties which have been entered into for the sake of obtaining a market in China for our opium—to forego the benefits which we have derived from Treaties which we have extorted from China, and he asks us to give up a very large portion of the Indian Revenue, which, as we all know, has had very great demands made upon it of late, and which has exercised and is exercising the anxious care and thought of all who watch the finances of India; and to give up a revenue which does not press on the people of India. Why is it that he asks us to do it? Simply because it is impossible to stand up before the world, and justify the condition and the means by which that revenue finds its way into the Indian Exchequer. Because this opium which we sell does unmixed evil to China. Sir Rutherford Alcock has told us that there is a genuine abhorrence on the part of the Chinese Government to the importation of opium; and there is abundant evidence to show that if we were willing on our part to sacrifice the material advantages which we now enjoy, and to forego those Treaty rights by whatever means obtained, which are ours at present, that China would then do her best in future to prohibit the trade within her own borders. I have said that opium smoking is an unmixed evil. In support of that statement Sir Thomas Wade has been often quoted. He has had undoubted experience from residence in China, and he has put it on record that opium smoking is a habit many times more pernicious than the gin and whisky drinking which we deplore in this country. In this controversy it is said that opium is a harmless and beneficial drug, and, taken in moderation, has the same good effect which alcoholic liquor, taken in moderation, is admitted almost universally to have; and, therefore, ought not to be put down. I think Sir Thomas Wade shows that that is not the case, and that what we have often heard that it is better for the Chinese to smoke our good opium than to buy the bad opium which they would otherwise get from Persia and elsewhere is not worthy of consideration. Are the Chinese sincere? It is said all they are jealous of is the income we derive from it, and that once we prohibited or diminished the importation of it, they would at once set to work and grow it largely in their own country, ignoring the immorality and miseries which come from it, and looking only at the large revenue they would derive from the growth of it. I think my hon. Friend dealt with that to-night. He has shown there is evidence of a very large and convincing character to show that the Chinese do heartily detest the circulation and consumption of this drug, and that they are willing, wherever their power is sufficiently strong, to prohibit the growth of it, and, if they saw a way, were willing to take measures to prevent the growth of it in their own country. I think that has been shown by their late Treaty with America, when they obtained the insertion of a clause by which the importation of opium was prohibited in American vessels. In the debate of last year America was one place pointed out by an hon. Gentleman opposite as likely to furnish the opium if we no longer produced it in India. It was the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy Burghs (Sir George Campbell), who said that if we did not grow it, it would be grown in Persia, Turkey, and America. One of these countries is by this Treaty put out of the question altogether; and if they found means to prohibit the importation from America, supposing China to be in earnest, they would also prohibit the importation from Turkey or Persia. If the use of opium is bad, and is reprobated and disliked by the Chinese, can we refuse to assent to the first proposition of my hon. Friend, that the opium trade as now carried on is opposed to Christian and International morality, and should be put an end to? Can we justify to our own consciences, and in the eyes of the world, our continuing the manufacture of this drug, and also forcing it under the Treaties which exist upon the Chinese. I confess I do not think we can, and I think we ought to take steps to carry out the policy indicated by my hon. Friend. I think we ought not to do anything rashly which would upset the whole finances of India; but we should let it be clearly known that it was our determination to proceed in the direction indicated. Let the Indian authorities know that it is the settled policy of this country that the production of opium should be diminished gradually, and, at the same time, satisfy ourselves that the Chinese are acting *bonâ fide* in the matter, and that they would proceed *parî passu* with ourselves in prohibiting the growth of it in their own country. I was glad to hear to-night that we have at length taken some steps to ratify that portion of the Chefoo Convention which enables the Chinese to limit and regulate the internal duties on opium by their own municipal regulations; and, therefore, we are no longer open to the charge that while we are taking the benefit of the Chefoo Convention, in other respects we were determined to ignore it where it seemed against our own interests. The objection which has been always made is grounded on the question of Indian finance. It was admitted that there was not a word to be said for the traffic from a moral point of view. It was simply the fact that it formed so large a portion of the Indian Revenue that it could not be spared. The noble Lord the Secretary of State for India said last year that he could not disturb or diminish the Indian Revenue in that respect. No doubt, it would be hard to quarrel with anything he said last year, for having only just taken Office he was bound to be very cautious; but let us hope that the interval which has passed away may have enabled him to do something. With regard to the necessity, can anyone say it is necessary to do that which is not morally defensible? Can we say it is necessary to do anything which is wrong for any cause whatever? If a man puts his hand in our pocket to take our property, do we admit necessity, such as want of bread, as an excuse? We must ourselves be prepared to act up to the moral law in this respect. There is no doubt this would be a very heavy blow for a time to Indian finance; but we must recollect the stories which are told in Holy Writ of the King who entered into an unholy alliance, and obtained the sum of 50 talents. He was commanded by the prophet of old to give up this alliance, and he consented; but he asked the question — "What shall I do for the talents?" The answer was—"The Lord is able to give thee more than this;" and so, if we do what we think right and just on sound economical principles, we may be satisfied that the Revenues of India will not be insufficient for the purposes for which they are required. I congratulate my hon. Friend that he has had the courage to come forward and suggest that some assistance should be given to the Revenue. The noble Lord said last year that he had never heard any other suggestion than that the whole loss should fall on India, and he not unfairly remarked that it was very easy to be moral at other people's expense. But the thing has changed now, and remembering the sacrifices that England has made at other times, and remembering that she was willing to put an end to the Slave Trade and other cases of this sort, my hon. Friend has asked the House of Commons to say that England would be willing to assist India in this respect. England has shown herself willing to assist in the expenses of the Afghan War; and that grant having been made with approval, if a clear case is made out, I doubt not that England would be ready to deal also with this case. Not only justice and morality require it, but it has been shown that expediency demands that we should look at the question of the Revenue of India and remember that the opium revenue cannot be always reckoned upon. It is liable at any moment to be put an end to; and, therefore, it is very unwise to continue to depend upon it so extensively. There is also another consideration. Our position in the East is a very peculiar one. We have to maintain our Empire an enormous distance from home, and at times the strain upon our resources is found to be very great. No one can say that our position there is so secure that we can afford to incur the hostility of a great and increasing nation like the Chinese. There is no doubt that our conduct to her in regard to the opium trade has been a rankling sore. It is one very much felt, and if she sees an opportunity she will certainly shake herself free from the trammels of this trade, and the time may come when, as an ally, she might be most valuable if attached to us by ties of gratitude; while, as an enemy, she might be most formidable with the recollections of this evil. I consider, therefore, that every consideration—honour, morality, justice, and expediency, claim that we should look this question in the face, and that we should be ready to retrace our steps and reverse our policy if we are satisfied, as I think we ought to be, that it is a wrong one, and so relieve the national conscience from a strain which is increasingly felt every year, at the same time giving to Indian finance a security and stability which it cannot obtain while it depends on this source of revenue.

MR. ONSLOW: Differing entirely as I do from the hon. Gentleman who has just spoken, I hope the House will excuse me if I detain it a short time on this question. I think there are few in the House this evening who thought that this subject would come before us to-night. I cannot help thinking the subject is one of great importance, and I do not deny that it should receive the just and proper consideration of this House. But my hon. Friend (Sir John Kennaway) has said that we should let the people of India know that we intend to cease the exportation of opium. Knowing something about India, I disagree with that sentiment entirely, and I think we should let the people of India know that we shall not cease the exportation of opium to China. I look upon the withdrawal of the opium traffic as a matter fatal to the Revenues of India, in no way affected by sentimental ideas of Christian morality, and as a question which, although important in itself, yet is altogether a question for the Government of India to consider in raising its ways and means for the year; and not a question for this House to force on the Government of India. Much has been said about Christian morality in this question; but I suppose if we were cross-examined as to what our notions of Christian morality were, probably very few of us would agree. This question has been taken up by Gentlemen who are enthusiastic in the cause, by those who would wish to do away with the traffic in liquor; with the smoking of tobacco in this country; by those who are against vaccination; in fact, it is taken up by the "crotchet mongers" of England generally. The hon. Gentleman who has introduced this question has touched on the two different modes by which India gets her revenue from opium in the way we collect it. The first is the Bengal, and the other the Bombay or Malwa system; and he has tried to show the House that there should be some amelioration, so as to do away with the Bengal and rather encourage the other system. A great deal may be said on this side of the question. It has been considered many times by the Government of India, and it has always come to the conclusion that the Bengal system of collecting revenue is thoroughly well recognized and is popular. It has grown up gradually, and it would be difficult altogether, either gradually or at once, to alter that system. It may be said, if we were to begin again, that the mode of collecting revenue in Malwa is, perhaps, the better of the two. But I do not think this is practically the question before the House. It is a matter of detail, and should be left to the Government of India. But we have this revenue, and it rests with those who are so strongly opposed to it to show that there is any great crime or sin in sending opium to China, and also to show how the Government of India can recoup their finances if they do away with it altogether. There are many in this House who allege that the tax on salt is immoral. They say it is a necessary of life, and we have no business whatever to tax it. I suppose there might be a good deal said as to that; but if you do away with these two sources of revenue, how is it possible to conduct the government of India in a manner so as to meet all the growing requirements? It may be said—"You can find out some other revenue;" and many things have been tried by Finance Ministers. They have reduced the general expenditure of India at different times; but, do what they would, they always found something which required the money they had saved. If we are to rule India by such rigid notions of Christian morality, I do not know where we shall end. One hon. Member says this ought not to be done in India, and may justify his opinion by Christian morality. Surely it is far better to agree to the remarks made by Lord Lawrence in a Minute, in which he said—"It is impossible for us to rule India by our rigid notions of Christian morality." It is impossible for us to take notice of things which may go on simply because we have—I hope I am not speaking too strongly when I say—Exeter Hall, or sentimental ideas of Christian morality. It is said the Chinese are protesting against the trade in opium; but it is a curious way to protest against a trade to encourage it in every possible way. I say they are encouraging it. It may be that there are laws against growing it; but, at the same time, those laws are winked at, and its growth has increased to a very alarming extent. It is alarming, I say, because the expansion of its production must in time affect the future Revenues of India. It is a question which may become hereafter very serious to India —the exportation of opium to China from other countries and its internal production. Surely, if opium was so deleterious and so great a poison as my hon. Friend has tried to make out, it would be to the interest of the Chinese Government and of the nation to discontinue its growth as much as possible. But, from all we know, it is evident that the growth is increasing to a very great extent, and I think that is a conclusive proof that it cannot be so deleterious as the hon. Gentleman opposite says. I think it is a conclusive proof that, though taken in excess, it may be a poison, yet, taken in moderation, the Chinese Government do not object to it. I know there have been Petitions presented to the House in favour of the Motion. Of course, it is very easy to get up Petitions for anything, so long as you can get persons to talk about a certain object, and as long as you have money to carry out the agitation. I have no very great belief in Petitions as a rule, and I have very little faith in Petitions of this kind, coming, no doubt, from people who know nothing about the subject, and who sign simply from the eloquence of Gentlemen such as my hon. Friend opposite. I ask the House to look at these Resolutions. I do not like to touch on the 1st Resolution, because I do not think it is my duty, or the duty of any one of us, to say what is Christian morality in regard to a question of this kind. My hon. Friend says that it is against International morality. I do not think he has proved that it is against International morality. It may be that the Convention of Chefoo has not been carried out; but certainly we do not intend, and I hope this country will never intend, to break a Treaty with either a strong Power or a weak Power when once it has been made. As regards the second of his Resolutions, he has endeavoured to show—

> "That, whilst believing that the careful development of the resources of India, combined with economy in expenditure, would provide for any gradual loss of revenue which the adoption of the policy indicated in the foregoing Resolution might entail; nevertheless, this House is prepared to give such aid to the Government of India as, in the opinion of this House, may be requisite."

Sir, with all due deference to the remarks of my hon. Friend, I think what he has stated about the reduction of expenditure, especially of military expenditure, is all mere assertion. A reduction in the different branches of expenditure has been tried over and over again; and I only wish that my hon. Friend could show the House—could show the noble Lord who is responsible for the Revenues of India, and could show the Government of India in what possible way they could recoup themselves to the extent of £6,000,000 or £7,000,000 per annum, which we get from the opium trade, without materially damaging the resources of India. I would even go further than that. Taking it for granted that there may be some tinge of immorality in this opium traffic—[*Cheers and laughter*]—I say that merely for the sake of argument, if that be the case, I assert that this money we get from China we use for the advantage of the people of India in a far greater degree than the immorality which we cause to the people of China by receiving this money from her inhabitants. I say that if it had not been for this revenue you never would have had what we almost have now, and will have in a few years—namely, a complete network of railways in India. We never would have been able to alleviate the suffering, and sickness, and famine in that country as we have done. We never would have been able to construct the irrigation works which we have constructed in India; and I venture to say that if we did away with this revenue which we are getting from opium, most of our public works for useful purposes would be stopped in a few years. It is idle, for the sake of mere sentiment, to ignore altogether the question of the great utility of this money which comes from China, and which we use, and have been using, for the benefit of India. I say it is idle for this House to force upon the Government of India, either by a vote, or by an unanimous Resolution, the opinion that we are determined that the people of India should not be ameliorated in future years, because we thought the opium revenue was wrong. Well, Sir, my hon. Friend has stated that this House is prepared to give aid to the Government of India in relief of any deficit that might be caused. I do not suppose he means giving £7,000,000 at one time; but probably he means that, by a reduction in the Expenditure of India, and by an increase on the profits of railways, public works, and so on, we are to recoup in some measure the loss which will result from the suppression of the opium trade. Probably he means also that we should advance a certain sum with that object. But how would the taxpayers of this country regard that? They do not understand it; and I am sure they would not like it. India has never asked for this; and if we carried out my hon. Friend's view, we would be creating a principle which I have always maintained is wrong. Quite recently I voted against any portion of the expenses of the Afghan War being contributed by this country, being of opinion that India, and India alone, should be responsible, should out of her own Revenue find the money for that purpose, and should never come to this country for one penny for any purpose whatever. I believe that principle to be correct; and I hope it may be always carried out. It is all very well to talk of the subject of slavery; but that is a different thing, and bears no analogy to this case. Sir, I think it would be a dangerous thing to lay down the principle that we should recoup the finances of India for whatever loss may result in this way by a Resolution passed in this House, because the Government of India might then be always expecting that some crotchet would spring up, and that they would get assistance in some other way. My hon. Friend has said a good deal about the morality of this subject; but I would merely, in passing, say a word in reference to a subject which has been before the House for a long time, and on which, no doubt, my hon. Friend the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) will say something presently. Why is the revenue we derive from opium any more immoral than the taxes which are now paid on all the liquor sold in this country? If one trade is immoral, why is not the other? And I would say, if hon. Gentlemen agree with my hon. Friend opposite that the opium traffic is immoral, that it is our first duty to do away with the liquor traffic in this country before we put down immorality thousands of miles from our shores. I say we should begin at home and endeavour to reduce immorality in this country before we go abroad. Liquor, after all, may be said to be a luxury, and that is the reason why we tax it. Well, opium, I suppose, is a luxury also; and, therefore, we tax it in the same way. It appears to me there is no difference between the two; but if there is anything wrong in either we should first begin at home, and assist my hon. Friend the Member for Carlisle in carrying out those views which he so persistently puts before the House. My hon. Friend says that this consumption of opium is a poison to the people of China. If it is, I must say it is a very slow poison. The population of China is increasing to an alarming extent. Emigration from China has increased very largely within the last few years; and the Chinese, wherever they have gone, have shown themselves laborious mechanics and good hard-working labourers. We do not see any ill effects to the Chinese who emigrate, and we do not see that this poison is killing the people to any large extent. On the contrary, we see that it gives them an increase in their population. I do not know where my hon. Friend got his ideas as to the poisoning of the people of China by this drug; but I think the whole of the facts are against his assertion. If we saw that the Chinese were degrading themselves, and becoming less in the eyes of other civilized countries in consequence of the consumption of opium, there might be some justification for attacking the traffic; but, on the contrary, I think the Chinese are improving in civilization, and improving in usefulness, not only in their own country, but abroad; and although they have been taking this opium for generations, I fail to see that it has had any bad effect in the generations that succeeded them. If my hon. Friend knew as much about the finances of India as my hon. Friend the Member for Orkney (Mr. Laing), I am sure he would agree with me in saying that it is impossible for any Government, whether Liberal or Conservative, to do away—at all events, for some years—with this revenue which they receive from opium. It may be, and I hope it will be the case, that the apparently Utopian ideas of my hon. Friend the Member for South Durham (Mr. J. W. Pease) may be realized, and that we shall derive such sums from the profits of railways and irrigation and other works as that we may, in the course of a few years, be able to recoup ourselves for this loss of revenue. But let me point out that as soon as you reduce one source of expenditure some other will be sure to crop up. You may get a surplus of £1,000,000 or £2,000,000 in the course of a year; but there will be a cry—and a natural cry—that that should be used for irrigation purposes and public works generally; and I believe myself that it would be far better for India, and you would be far better able to promote the civilization of India, if you expended the whole of your available surplus, not so much in reducing present taxation, as in the construction of railways and irrigation and other works, which will ameliorate the condition of the people of India in time to come. Well, Sir, I think I have pointed out that there is no real *bonâ fide* determination on the part of the Chinese to stop the growth of this drug. If it were so, if their laws were strictly carried out, we should not see this great increase which has been going on from year to year. I own that the opium revenue has been a very precarious revenue, and that it has been for years a matter of anxiety to Indian Finance Ministers. I do not see how you can get rid of that precariousness and anxiety, because we must rely on the people of China to give us a certain sum for the opium which is sent from India. But, at the same time, whether it is a matter of anxiety or of speculation, I should pity the poor Finance Minister sent out to India with a mandate from this country to get rid of the opium revenue altogether as soon as he arrived, because this House or the country considered it immoral. I am not one of those who agree with my hon. Friend in looking upon this traffic as a crime. If you look upon it as a crime, there are many other sources of revenue in India and in this country which you must look upon as criminal also. I fail to see that the hon. Gentleman has shown the House that, from the point of view of Christian morality, or from the point of view of fiscal morality, this opium traffic should be reduced or suppressed; and I hope the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India, notwithstanding that a certain amount of his following will support my hon. Friend, will not give way to ideas which I think are purely sentimental in themselves, because if we did that we should soon lose our hold upon India altogether.

MR. LAING: Mr. Speaker, having been responsible some time for the finances of India, and having some practical experience of that country, I am anxious to say a few words on this subject. Whatever differences of opinion there may be about the moral aspects of the question, there can be no second opinion that a suppression of the opium revenue would be the absolute ruin of the entire finances of India. The average net income derived from opium for the last ten years has been £6,554,000 a-year. That is as nearly as possible a sixth part of the total net Revenue of our Indian Empire. If you have £40,000,000 a-year as the Revenue with which to carry on the administration of that Empire, and you take away £6,500,000, you take away a sixth part of the whole available Revenue of India. It is, in fact, as if you were to take away one-sixth of the available net Revenue of England, or, in round numbers, to oblige the Chancellor of the Exchequer to leave out £12,000,000 from his calculation. But that would be giving a very inadequate idea of the financial gravity of this question, for, after all, even if we were obliged to strike off £12,000,000 from our national receipts, owing to the adoption of any plan of the hon. Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson), although it may be very inconvenient to supply it from the financial resources of the country, and although it may necessitate an additional 6*d.* in the pound of Income Tax, still it would not absolutely ruin the country. But in the case of India I defy any hon. Member who knows anything of India to point out one single source from which you could supply any serious deficiency at all in the existing Revenue of India. The other day, when the finances of India were greatly straitened on the question of the Famine Emergency Fund, the Government of India cast about in all directions to see how a revenue could be raised by increased taxation, and after exhausting all other sources, they had to fall back, in the first place, on a licensing tax which affected incomes of a few shillings a-week, and in the next place upon an increase on the salt duty, to the extent of some 30 per cent in the districts of Madras and Bombay, where in the year previous it had been admitted that more than 1,000,000 of people perished of famine. With only resorts to measures of that sort, I think it would be a waste of words to argue that the resources of increased taxation in India are completely exhausted. If, therefore, you were to wipe away this £6,500,000 by which the people of India are at present aided in the payment of their net burden, how do you propose to meet it? Where are the sources of increased taxation? Will anybody say that the salt duty can be increased or ought to be increased? Anyone who heard the remarkable speech of my right hon. Friend the Member for the University of Edinburgh (Mr. Lyon Playfair) some time ago must be aware that there is much more cruelty and misery inflicted upon our poor subject population of India by this high salt duty which presses so heavily upon them than there is upon the inhabitants of China by the voluntary use of opium. I say the voluntary use of opium, because it is so. We do not compel them to smoke it. Why does not it go to America, Europe, and other parts of the world? Simply because it so happens that the Chinese like opium as a nervous stimulant while we prefer alcohol. We do not force it on them. But you must remember that there is an enormous population whose taste for nervous stimulants lies in the direction of this drug; and if they do not get it from India they will grow it at home, or get it somewhere else, just as alcohol and whisky are got. In the interests of morality, of course, it may be an excellent thing if the entire consumption of alcohol could be put down. But that is a matter of opinion. For my own part, I think the nation would get on without it quite as well. But, be that as it may, who can say that our legislation is wholly immoral or un-Christian because we levy a high duty on alcohol, because a large part of our revenue is derived from it, and because we do not attempt by Act of Parliament to prohibit its use? So with regard to the Chinese, we cannot make them give up opium unless they wish to do so themselves. They do want opium. Experience has shown that for the last 60 years there has been a progressive demand for opium on the part of the Chinese; and now it is proposed that, in deference to public sentiment in England, the Government is to step in and mulct the people of India. It is proposed to strike £6,500,000 off a revenue which is already in an extreme state of tension and distress without the possibility of supplying it from any other source save an increase in the most oppressive taxes, like the high duty on salt. And all this is to be done, not in deference to public opinion in India, but to public sentiment in England. Well, now, if we were to do so, in what possible way could bankruptcy be avoided? We had some vague hopes and expectations of a reduction in expenditure. Well, I think I know something about reductions in Indian Expenditure, and how far they are possible and impossible. I did hope that by some reasonable reduction in Military expenditure, it might be possible to save, perhaps, £1,000,000 in the Expenditure of India; but I think it would be hard work to do so, and I should be exceedingly well pleased in the course of some years to see that reduction. But if that reduction be effected I do say that the taxpayers of India have the first claim to any surplus of the kind. I should first say that it ought to be employed in the reduction of the extreme taxation which has been imposed on them, and after the most oppressive and obnoxious taxes have been reduced, it should be expended upon public works, by which the country would be benefited. With regard to the surplus of £4,000,000 or £5,000,000 which has been referred to, I wish to point out that that is only nominal, in this sense. You have been spending £4,000,000 or £5,000,000 a-year on public works of a nominally reproductive character; but, in fact, they have given no return, and your National Debt has been increasing in amount by that figure, and therefore I maintain that the surplus is not real or *bonâ fide*. My hon. Friend the Member for South Durham (Mr. J. W. Pease) talks of getting a surplus revenue by spending more money on railways and irrigation works; but I wonder if he looked to see how much the £30,000,000 spent on this work during the last 10 years is returning. If he did, he would find it is not returning a quarter per cent. That is not exactly the way to make up a deficit of £6,500,000, which would result from doing away with the opium revenue. If the opium revenue had been a revenue of £1,500,000 there might be a possibility of cutting it off; but, in the state of the finances of India, to cut off £6,500,000 is an impossibility. Are you ready to meet the deficit yourselves? Are you prepared to make up £6,500,000 by imposing an additional tax of 3*d.* in the pound, or by largely increasing the duties of sugar or some other commodity? If you are ready to do that, then, I say, you have a perfect right to take this step; but until you are prepared to do that, it is merely being charitable at other people's expense, which is not the charity we should exercise. On the contrary, charity begins at home. Our first duty is to the poor ryots of India; and we should not, in deference to mere sentimental scruples or considerations about morality, be prepared to cast a sudden and unsupportable burden upon them. I say this involves even larger questions; it touches a question of the greatest importance—namely, the extent of the Imperial responsibility of this country. As a Liberal, I feel those Imperial instincts as strongly as anybody; while I am entirely opposed to unjust and unprofitable wars and annexations, I feel that we should accept the responsibilities of our situation and hand down to our children the great Empire which we have inherited from our forefathers. If you attempt to meddle with the religion of India, practically you lose the Empire. Well, I say in the same way, if you attempt to ruin the finances of India in accordance with scruples entertained here in England, and which would not be felt by a single Native of India, you will simply end by losing your Indian Empire. Ought not India to be governed, to a certain extent, in accordance with the opinions of India itself, and in accordance with the good of India? I say, then, beware of what you are doing. It is a large question. I believe if the inhabitants of India could be polled that all but a very few hundreds out of 200,000,000 would prefer to retain the existing opium revenue rather than impose new burdens upon the people of that country. If you wish to keep this Empire, you must have sufficient strength of mind to let your Government in India deal with India according to Indian necessities and Indian ideas to a very great extent; and if you attempt, because something is done there which you do not like, to force your own ideas upon India, I say it is better for you at once to wash your hands of the responsibility and give up your Indian Empire.

DR. CAMERON: I do not intend to prolong the debate, but I wish to bring back the House to the consideration of the question before it. I would ask you to consider one or two statements made by the hon. Member for Orkney (Mr. Laing), who told us that the proposition before the House was really asking us to give up one-sixth of the whole Revenue of India. He told us also how, when we wished to raise a sum to alleviate the misery incurred through the recent famine, we had to levy a licence tax and level up the tax of salt; but did it ever occur to him to ask how the money thus raised was appropriated? Was it appropriated in alleviating the misery and distress incurred through the famine? No; it was appropriated to the Afghan War. It is perfectly plain that the bankruptcy or solvency of India, so long as it depends upon the opium revenue, is in the hands of the Chinese. They had only to cultivate opium to cut us out of the Chinese market. There is no use shilly-shallying about this matter. We must face the fact that the Chinese Government had only to do what they have repeatedly spoken of doing—they have only to cultivate the opium themselves in order to cut off our opium revenue altogether, and to force us to face the difficulty which might be better faced at our own option in our own way than at their option when they choose. I am glad to hear that we have at last done something with regard to the Chefoo Convention. We were the only Power that was interested in the non-fulfilment of that portion of the Convention which related to the placing of all imported opium under the charge of the Chinese Custom officials. It is well that that portion of the disgrace which I think the whole history of our opium dealings with China had branded upon this country has been already done away with. I trust that, quite apart from the question of Christian morality, we will look broadly at the matter, and while the control of the opium revenue is in our own hands. It is not that I regret so much the question of the growth and selling of opium. What I consider the disgrace in this whole matter is our forcing our traffic upon the Chinese. They protested and resisted. They fought and have been defeated again and again. It is all very well for Gentlemen like the hon. Member for Guildford (Mr. Onslow) to tell us that our Ambassadors and authorities of great weight had assured us of their belief in the sincerity of the Chinese; but I venture to say that the great majority of the people in this country will give the weight of their opinions against any authorities brought in sustainment of their assertions. I hope the noble Lord will not lose sight of this point when he comes to reply, that the financial portion of the question may any day be taken out of our own hands at the option of the Chinese Government; that at the present moment the growth of opium in China is increasing to such an extent as to alarm Indian financiers for the fate of that revenue, and that it would be much better to deal with that revenue while it is in our own hands.

Mr. O'DONNELL: I rise to support that caution given by the hon. Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron), that in placing the hopes of our Indian finance upon the continuous forbearance of the Chinese Government we are resting on a support which at any moment may break in our hands. I have reason to feel a strong satisfaction with myself, at any rate, that the interference of the Chinese Government in the opium question did not wait until the Indian opium had been fairly under-bid in the Chinese market by the Native Chinese drug. I believe the Chinese Government have been influentially advised that, in the present state of popular opinion in England upon the subject of forcing opium upon China, it would be perfectly safe for the Chinese Government to prohibit the importation of Indian opium into China. The Chinese Government is rapidly advancing in most of the arts of modern civilization. In the organization and consolidation of their Empire the Chinese Rulers have made enormous progress; and not only from a moral regard for the welfare of their people, but from fiscal reasons, the necessity for having a large revenue is becoming more and more apparent to the able men who steer the Chinese Empire. From fiscal reasons, as well as moral reasons, there is a party of increasing power at the Chinese Court in favour of preventing the profit of a drug consumed by the Chinese people going into the pocket of a foreign Government. I believe that before very many months pass an emphatic step will be taken in that direction by the Chinese Government. It must be remembered that the Chinese Government has got many able advisers at its back, who are not friendly to this country, and that under the circumstances advice will be given to China to take up an attitude which would embarrass England. For all these reasons, I believe that Indian financiers must take into their early consideration the probability of having soon to do without the opium revenue, or, at any rate, to do with a greatly diminished revenue. I am perfectly satisfied that Indian financiers will soon have to do without the opium revenue; and if the Chinese Government choose to-morrow to tell you that they will not allow opium to be forced on them any longer, that they will be able to take that step with the moral certainty that the British people will not enter on another opium war.

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: The hon. Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron) said he wished to bring back the House to the consideration of the question before it, and which, in his opinion, the speech of the hon. Member for Orkney (Mr. Laing) had to some extent drawn it away from. It seems to me that the hon. Member for Orkney's speech was a most valuable contribution to the consideration of this question. Whatever opinion we and the country may ultimately form upon this most difficult and important question, at all events, it is highly desirable that the country should form that opinion with all the facts before it, and with a full knowledge of all the circumstances of the case. The hon. Member for Orkney, speaking with the authority and experience of a former Minister of Finance in India, did, in a very short and in a very clear and plain manner, put before the House several issues with which it will have to deal whenever it comes to a final decision of this question. I was very much reproached last year for having treated this subject too exclusively from an Indian Revenue point of view; and I was very much reproached last year in this House for having dwelt very considerably upon the effect which would fall on the Revenue of India by any considerable alteration in the system of our opium revenue. I must still maintain, however, that, as responsible in this House for the administration of India, I cannot, in dealing with this question, be indifferent to Indian Revenue. The question as has been pointed out by the hon. Member for Orkney is one of such immense fiscal importance, and the revenue derived from opium is so large a portion of the whole net Revenue of India, that it would be impossible for anyone concerned for the Revenue of India to be indifferent to that consideration. My hon. Friend the Member for South Durham (Mr. J. W. Pease) takes a very sanguine view of the financial position of India. He says that but for the late war we should have had a surplus this year, and he sees a prospect of a further reduction of expenditure, and thinks that without any extraordinary efforts it may be possible for India to dispense with this sort of revenue. Well, I entirely hope that the sanguine estimate formed by my hon. Friend, and those who agree with him, may be justified. I entirely agree with him that it is the duty of the Government of India, both in India and here, to use every exertion both for the reduction of the expenditure and the avoidance of unnecessary wars. But, even supposing my hon. Friend's anticipations should be justified, and that our position should be so satisfactory as to enable us without a great deal of consideration to dispense with this great revenue, yet, as the hon. Member for Orkney pointed out, these calculations are all exclusive of public works expenditure. I will not go fully into that question now; but we all know that many authorities consider that these surpluses ought not to be estimated till we have included all public works expenditure which is not proved to be productive. Then we know that we are liable from time to time to the fearful scourge of famine, and we know that with the feelings which most properly prevail here upon that subject, every famine will probably involve us in an increased expenditure, because the English people will not tolerate that thousands and millions of our Indian fellow-subjects should perish from famine if any expenditure of money will save them. It is certain that on the recurrence of famine we shall be involved in an enormous expenditure. Is that expenditure always to take the form of a permanent increase to our Indian Debt; are we in prosperous years to make no provision against famines occurring; and are we to throw away a source of revenue which might form a sort of insurance against these calamities? The hon. Member for Orkney (Mr. Laing) pointed out that whatever fault may be found with this revenue from a moral or other point of view, it is, undoubtedly, a revenue which does not press hardly and which is not felt at all by the people of India themselves. Moreover, it is a source of income which the whole of the people of India, if they were consulted, would be in favour of retaining. I do not say that that is a conclusive reason for maintaining the system; but it is a circumstance which cannot be altogether disregarded. My hon. Friend (Mr. J. W. Pease) has this Session, for the first time, come forward with a proposal that this House should make good, if necessary, any deficiency which might occur in the resources of India by reason of the changes which he advocates. I fully sympathize with the motives which have induced my hon. Friend to insert that Resolution among those which he intended to lay upon the Table; but he must excuse me if I cannot altogether admit that that profession of readiness on his part constitutes a complete guarantee for India against the loss it might sustain. It is one thing for the House, in a moment of enthusiasm, to pass a Resolution that it is ready to make good a certain sum; but it will be a very different thing when it comes to voting that sum annually, and imposing a great burden on the people of this country for the purpose of relieving India, and of carrying out the policy advocated by my hon. Friend. I will grant to my hon. Friend that this year, or perhaps next year, this House might vote the money, though I have some doubt of it. This House might vote a considerable sum towards relieving India for this purpose; but supposing that it turned out that after all we have done no good—that we have fatally damaged the resources of India, and done no good to China, can it for a moment be imagined that the House of Commons would continue to make an annual Vote? Even if it were otherwise, if I could be certain that this House would continue an annual grant, I must say I should have, in the interest of India, grave doubt whether India ought to accept it. I was entirely of opinion that it was right, when India had been put to a great expenditure in the furtherance of a policy—whether right or wrong—which was partly of an Imperial character, that the whole burden of that policy should not be thrown on India, but that a contribution should be made by this country in aid of that policy. Some differed from that view; but many would differ, and I myself should differ, if it were a question of an annual subsidy from the Revenues of England for the relief of India, which would make India a burden to this country, than which I can conceive nothing more likely to imperil the connection between us and our Indian Dominions. I cannot, therefore, be indifferent to the financial aspect of this question, although I do not mean to rest my case exclusively, or even mainly, on financial grounds. If the revenue is an immoral one, and if we are doing actual injustice to China in the arrangements imposed upon her by Treaty, no doubt there will be an increasing feeling in this country in favour of some change, and it will be necessary for those who are responsible for the Government of India to see whether India cannot dispense with this revenue. But if India is to be called upon to make this sacrifice, it must be clearly and conclusively proved that the revenue is an immoral one, and that the abandonment of the revenue will do any good to China at all; it will have to be conclusively proved that China desires, and if she desires is able, to put a stop to the consumption of opium; and that it is only our system which prevents her from doing so. I do not think any of these things have been, or can be, conclusively proved. My hon. Friend brought forward some evidence —though very little, in my opinion—to show that opium was, and must be, necessarily pernicious to the people who use it. In my opinion, there is a great deal of evidence which shows that opium smoking is not necessarily or universally pernicious. My right hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Grant Duff), speaking on this subject more than 10 years ago, quoted some high authorities, of which it may be well for me to remind the House, to show that the practice of opium smoking in China was not pernicious at all to the people at large. The first authority was Mr. Fortune, a well-known traveller in China, and he said—

> "From my own experience, I have no hesitation in saying that the number of persons who use opium to excess has been very much exaggerated; it is quite true that a very large quantity of the drug is yearly imported from India, but then we must take into consideration the vast extent of the Chinese Empire and its population of 300,000,000. I have, when travelling in different parts of the country, often been in company with opium-smokers, and am consequently able to speak with some confidence with regard to their habits. I well remember the impressions I had on this subject before I left England, and my surprise when I was first in the company of an opium-smoker, who was enjoying his favourite stimulant. When the man lay down upon the couch and began to inhale the fumes of the opium I observed him attentively, expecting in a minute or two to see him in his 'third heaven of bliss;' but no, after he had taken a few whiffs, he quietly resigned the pipe to one of his friends, and walked away to his business. Several others of the party did exactly the same. Since then I have often seen the drug used, and I can assert that in the great majority of cases it was not immoderately indulged in. At the same time, I am well aware that, like the use of ardent spirits in our own country, it is frequently carried to a most lamentable excess."—[3 *Hansard*, cci. 510.]

My right hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies then quoted from Balfour's *Encyclopædia of India*, in which it was stated, on the authority of Dr. Oxley, a physician of eminence at Singapore, where there is the highest rate of consumption of the drug, that though its inordinate abuse most decidedly does bring on bad effects, Dr. Oxley had seen a man who had used it in moderation for 50 years without any evil effects, and another who had so used it was upwards of 80. My right hon. Friend then quoted from a Report "on the poppy cultivation and the Benares Opium Agency," in the *Selections from Records of the Bengal Government in* 1851, in which it was said that—

> "The question for determination is not what are the effects of opium used to excess, but what are its effects on the moral and physical constitution of the mass of the individuals who use it habitually and in moderation, either as a stimulant to sustain the frame under fatigue, or as a restorative and sedative after labour, bodily or mental."—[*Ibid.* 511-512.]

The writer, who had passed three years in China, stated, as the result of his own observation, that no injurious results are apparent from this habitual and moderate use of the drug, and that the people generally are a muscular and well-formed race, capable of great and prolonged exertion under a fierce sun in an unhealthy climate, of cheerful and peaceable disposition and considerable intelligence. These opinions were entirely borne out by most recent information that has come under my own knowledge. Dr. Moore, Deputy Surgeon General in the

Bombay Presidency, has recently argued in *The Indian Medical Gazette* that the use of opium is not more deleterious or dangerous than is the use of alcohol; and in the case of the population of China is attended with considerable advantage. A gentleman, now in England, who has long been a civil engineer in China, says the use of opium is as general among the labouring classes in China as that of tobacco in England, but that its deleterious effects are neither so great nor so common as those of alcohol in England. Well, then, Sir, the evidence of Sir Rutherford Alcock has been referred to as proving the bad effects of opium smoking; he was examined before a Select Committee of this House in 1871. No doubt, the first evidence he gave on the subject was that it was liable to very great abuse, and was a source of great evil in China. On further examination, however, he considerably modified that opinion, for he estimated that the total opium supply, native and foreign, was sufficient for the immoderate use of only 1 per cent of the population; whereas a majority of the population, especially the labourers, in the Provinces he knew smoked. A majority of the smokers could not smoke to excess, because the cost of opium to the moderate smoker would be $50 a-year; and a labourer's wages only amounted, on the average, to this sum, so that men of this class could not procure enough opium to smoke to excess. Again, as Sir Rutherford Alcock has been quoted as an authority against the traffic, I must say that he considered that opium in moderation was probably a tonic and prophylactic against fever, especially in the marshy tracts where it is most used. He would regret exceedingly an attempt to put a sudden end to the opium trade; it would do more harm than good. All people, he added, would use some kind of narcotic or stimulant; the Japanese did not use opium, but drank hard. Other evidence of a similar character was given before the same Committee. Mr. Winchester, Consul at Shanghai, was examined, and he stated that, in his opinion, the use of opium in China had become habitual as a prophylactic against fever and dysentery, which are exceedingly prevalent on account of the malarious nature of the climate and habits of the people. He believed that excess was very injurious; but that immense numbers of people remained moderate smokers all their lives to a great age, with no bad effects. To smoke to excess, he added, would cost a man $500 a-year, or ten times as much as an ordinary labourer's wages; and, as all labourers smoked, it followed they must do so moderately. Notwithstanding the great evils of immoderate smoking, he was inclined to think the use of the drug in China, on the whole, a benefit to the people. Well, Sir, that evidence seems to me to show that it is, at least, open to very great doubt whether the use of opium is necessarily injurious, at all events, whether it is more injurious than the use of any other stimulant, which, of course, may be used to excess, though not necessarily. But it also seems to show that, if opium is used to excess in China, it is not the Indian opium. Indian opium, in consequence of the enormous duty levied upon it, is a very expensive article; it is not, and cannot be, the means of abuse, at all events, amongst the lower and working classes of China. In China it is the luxury of the rich, and is not that which is generally consumed by the poor and middle classes. We have heard a great deal to-night about the wickedness and immorality of forcing opium upon China. Now, the word China is used in a somewhat loose manner. No doubt, compulsion has been placed on the Government of China to admit Indian opium; but, when we talk about forcing opium upon China, we must recollect that there is no compulsion used upon the Chinese; no individual Chinaman is forced to consume opium; on the contrary, the enormous price which the Indian Government get for their article places a considerable obstacle in the way of its use by the great mass of the people. Therefore, when you speak of the great immorality of forcing opium upon China, or rather upon the Chinese Government, and when we are asked what would be thought if this was done in the case of a European nation, I am inclined to put another question in regard to European nations, and it is this. What would be thought of our conduct, supposing that we, while we permit and make revenue out of the consumption of gin and other spirits made in Great Britain, were to say to the French Government—"We absolutely forbid you to import Cognac, because by that importation you are demoralizing our people, and forcing upon them the use of ardent spirits." There would be almost as much reason in our telling the French that their importation of French brandy was the cause of intoxication amongst our people, as there is in the Chinese Government telling us—while they permit the cultivation of opium in their own country—that it is the importation of our opium which causes all the demoralization of their people. Now, as to the cultivation in China. The hon. Member for South Durham (Mr. Pease) made some statements upon that subject which did not appear to me to help his case very much. He said the Chinese Government desired to stop the cultivation, and he brought forward one case to show that they had stopped cultivation in one Province. Yes, Sir, in that Province a very large cultivation had taken place; a large portion of the soil of the country had been diverted from the growth of corn to that of the poppy; a famine ensued, and the officials who were responsible for the government of that Province forbade the cultivation of opium for a year or two. At the end of that time, however, the state of affairs improved, and the cultivation of opium was resumed. Surely this does not show there was any real desire on the part of the Chinese Government to forbid the growth of opium in China. Well, Sir, it is said it would stop if it were not for our importation. It is very difficult to ascertain what goes on in the interior of China; but from what we are told by those travellers who have been able to penetrate into the country, we know that the consumption of opium was introduced into China long before the trade of India ever began; that the consumption of opium, in a very great part of China, has existed for more than 100 years, and that up to this day the consumption is entirely supplied by Chinese growth, and that the Indian opium has never entered it at all. A very able letter on this subject appeared in *The Times* a few weeks ago, in which the writer quoted a Report of one of our Consuls. He says—

"The habit of opium smoking is common all over China; but it is in the West, in the comparatively unknown half of China west of the 110th meridian, that is most prevalent. In some parts of Western Hu Pei and Eastern Szechuen, it is all but universal; there are few adults, in any station of life, who do not take an occasional whiff, and the very streets of the towns and villages reek with opium fumes. The practice is there indulged in in the most open manner, and no more stigma or disgrace attaches to it than to smoking tobacco. Mr. Watters, Her Majesty's Consul at Ichang, made careful inquiries last year into the origin of the practice, and he found it had been indulged in for several hundred years, long before either the present reigning dynasty or foreign merchants and their opium were ever dreamt of. The custom, generations ago, passed into the family *sacra;* and at funerals in the West of China, among other gifts which are transmitted into the next world—by burning paper fac-similes of them in this—for the solace of the departed, is a complete set of opium smoking requisites—pipe, lamp, needle, &c. By the people themselves, the habit, so far from being regarded as a curse, is looked on as a *sine quâ non* for a Chinaman who wishes to make the best of both worlds. The whole of the opium consumed in the West is locally produced, and Indian opium does not come higher up the Yangtsze than the districts contiguous to the port of Hankow; nor is it imported by any channel into Western Hu Pei, Szechuen, or the other Provinces of the West."

There, then, is the statement that in the West of China, where opium smoking is most common—indeed, where it is almost universal—it entirely depends upon Chinese production, and not an ounce of Indian opium ever penetrates into the district at all. If hon. Members would take the trouble to examine the Reports which have been laid upon the Table, they would find ample confirmation of this statement. The growth of opium in China is increasing, and increasing without any serious effort on the part of the Chinese authorities to put a stop to it. These, I think, are some reasons why the House should not hastily assume that the importation of Indian opium into China is an unmixed evil, and that by sacrificing a large amount of revenue the Indian Government could necessarily do immense good towards the population of China. But I am quite ready to admit that the Government of India is, in the circumstances of the traffic, placed in a somewhat invidious and false position. The Indian Government are, as regards Bengal, manufacturers and dealers in a drug which, though not universally abused, is capable of abuse, and that places them in a somewhat invidious and false position. They occupy the same position that would be occupied by the Government of our own country, if, instead of imposing on ardent spirits as heavy a duty as they will bear, it was itself to be the manufacturer. That is not the position I would desire to see the Government of India occupy. I think a good deal of the objection that is felt so widely in this country to this source of revenue is due to prejudice, some of which, I have endeavoured to show, is unfounded, caused by this circumstance. Having had many communications with the Finance Minister of India on the subject, I can state that he is perfectly aware of the weak points in the opium revenue and of its precarious nature, and it will be his endeavour to call the attention of his Colleagues in the Government of India to the matter, and will endeavour to place it, if possible, on a sounder and more defensible footing. I agree with much that has been said by my hon. Friend the Member for South Durham, and by the hon. Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell), as to the opium revenue of India being in a somewhat precarious position. It is threatened, it seems to me, from several sources; it is threatened by the danger of competition from China itself, it is threatened by other causes. Already there are considerable importations from Persia, from Turkey, and from Africa. No doubt, all these sources of supply will be developed and will seriously compete with the importation from India. It is also threatened, I am willing to admit, by the public opinion of England, which, no doubt, is adverse to this traffic. At all events, it is threatened by the possibility of the Chinese imposing more restrictive duties upon it. I quite agree with what has been said, that if the Chinese Government were to show a desire to limit and restrict the importation of opium in any legitimate way, the public opinion of this country would not support any Government in forcing it upon them. Well, under these circumstances, I think it desirable that the Government of India should thoroughly review their position with regard to this opium revenue, and see whether they cannot adopt some alteration of the system which would render their connection and interest in the trade less direct, and place them in a sounder and better position. I propose formally to invite their consideration to this important question. But the House will hardly desire that I should pledge myself beforehand as to the result of that consideration. The subject is one which has from time to time engaged the attention of the Government of India. My hon. Friend has referred to the Minute of Sir William Muir, who, in 1868, recommended the abandonment of the Government monopoly. At that time the question was fully discussed whether the manufacture of opium in Bengal by the Government should be abolished, and whether there should be substituted for it export duties on opium freely grown. On this point they came to the conclusion that the question had been already fully considered, and that the arguments then advanced in favour of the existing system had never been refuted. On the other hand, the system proposed to be substituted for it appeared likely to result in great financial loss, and this without altering the normal aspect of the question, or even affecting to withdraw any amount of the drug sent to China from the market. I do not say that these opinions are conclusive; there are always strong reasons against disturbing any well-established financial system, especially one which is so profitable, and has long been so successfully worked as that of the opium monopoly in Bengal. I think the time has come when the Indian Government might well consider the desirability of some change; but I must admit, however, that the arguments against any change do appear to be very strong. It is impossible that we can prohibit the cultivation of opium in the Native States. It is very doubtful whether we should be morally justified in preventing our own subjects cultivating what is to them a source of profitable employment; but if we could, we should only stimulate the production in other places—we should stimulate the production in China, in Persia, and in Turkey, and it is very probable that, while ruining our own revenue, we should not reduce in the slightest degree the quantity of opium to be imported into China. Well, if we place a monopoly in other hands, it does not follow that by that means we should restrict the exportation of India. There would be a great loss of revenue, and the manufacture would be placed in the hands of private individuals, whose object it would be, and whose energy would enable them to develop rather than restrict the trade. It would be extremely difficult for the Government to interfere for the purpose of checking enterprize and placing the country at a disadvantage as compared with other countries. Another result probably would be that the illicit consumption of opium would be immensely increased in our own Dominions. By the existing system we are enabled very greatly to check it. The extracts read by the hon. Member for South Durham show that, among races other than the Chinese, the practice is an almost unmitigated misfortune, and the object of the Government of India has been to restrict and limit the consumption of opium in their own Dominions; and the system adopted has enabled them, to a great extent, to accomplish that object. Once take away the Government monopoly, leave it to private enterprize, and it is extremely difficult to say that that object can still be accomplished, and that they would not have an universal increase of opium consumption in our own Dominions, where, undoubtedly, it would be a great calamity. There is only one other point to which I need refer, and that is relating to the wars with China, and the negotiations by which the Treaties had been made with China. I do not think it is necessary we should go back on those questions. I am not able to defend everything that has been done. What we have to deal with is not what possibly might have been done in a time long past, but the present position. I do not think my hon. Friend goes further; at any rate, I do not think we are asked to go further than carry out the provisions of the Chefoo Convention. I regret that obstacles have so long impeded the application of that Convention; and, no doubt, obstacles have been placed in the way in the interest of the Indian Government; but I think the objections taken by Lord Salisbury to the Convention have been misunderstood. My hon. Friend, I think, stated that Lord Salisbury objected to the Chefoo Convention because it would discourage smuggling. Now, the nature of the Convention does not appear to me to be understood. It did not, as my hon. Friend appeared to imagine, enable the Chinese Government to levy any duties they pleased at the ports. All that it enabled them to do was to commute the transit dues—*li-kin*—on opium levied in interior places within a certain distance of the port of entry into an additional import duty at the port of entry. The great delay which has taken place in the ratification of the Convention has been in consequence of the difficulty in the way of the Government of India and the Government at home to discover what was intended by the Chinese Government—to discover the exact nature of the arrangement. The obstacles, so far as the Government of India is concerned, in the way of the ratification of the Convention have been withdrawn, and it is ready to agree to proposals now made in consequence of the communications that have taken place with Chinese Ministers, and to give the new system a five years' trial at Shanghai. The obstacle is not at present with the Government of India. Sir Thomas Wade has found that another difficulty exists, altogether unconnected with the Indian Government—namely, that the other Treaty Powers will not join in the arrangement unless China agrees to abolish *li-kin* on goods other than opium, and until they do so the arrangement will be inoperative, as opium will be imported under the flag of Powers not parties to it. However, in December last Sir Thomas Wade telegraphed that a settlement which will remove the objections of the Treaty Powers will soon be effected; and there is, therefore, ground to hope that the Chefoo Convention will shortly be brought entirely into force. Well, that is as far as the Government can be expected to go, at all events at present. At any rate, so far as I am aware, the Chinese Government does not ask for more. It is true that we do, under the Treaty, still limit the amount of import duty which China can place on the importation of opium. If China asks to have greater fiscal liberty than she at present enjoys, I certainly should not, in the interests of the Indian Revenue, feel justified in opposing any unreasonable resistance to demands of that sort. But I certainly should not be prepared to invite China to impose prohibitive or restrictive duties, which will have the effect of reviving the smuggling trade from which so many evils and so many difficulties have arisen between us and China. Such a revival of prohibitive duties—and the Chinese Ministers are aware of it—is not desirable. My hon. Friend has quoted the opinion of the Marquess Tseng; but, in the Papers which I hope to lay upon the Table of the House, we have a more recent expression of opinion by the Chinese Ministers which hardly supports the contention of my hon. Friend. In a telegram sent in January, this year, Sir Thomas Wade says—

"I went to the Yamen on the 16th to speak of various matters. Four Ministers received me. Adverting to opium, I observed that the authorities, in some places, were taxing opium, Native and foreign; in others, were trying to increase both sale and consumption of both. Without at all denying the right of the Chinese Government to do as it chose, I said I should wish to know which course the Government approved. They said the question was embarrassing. The Chinese Government would be glad to stop opium smoking altogether; but the habit was too confirmed to be stopped by official intervention. No idea of abolishing the trade at present was in the mind of the Government. Alluding to the desire of well-disposed people at home to see England withdraw from the trade, I asked if it would be of any use to diminish yearly the exports from India. They said so long as the habit exists opium will be procured either from India or elsewhere. Any serious attempt to check the evil must originate with the people themselves. The measure I suggested would affect the Chinese Revenue, but would not reach the root of the mischief. I said that the suggestion about diminution was purely my own, that I had no authority to speak of it from my Government. I am satisfied that even if opium be bonded, as my Convention proposed, the Government of India will not lose a farthing. But production of Native opium is increasing fast, and will sooner or later supply the Chinese demand."

I think that telegram shows that we are prepared for the ratification of the Chefoo Convention, and that it is not impeded by the action of the Government of India. We have gone as far as is reasonable or desirable, either in our own interest or in that of the Chinese Government, and I believe that they are well aware that it would be a mistake and an act of impolicy to attempt to revert to their old policy of prohibition or restrictive duties. No doubt, they may desire now, or at some future time, to increase the revenue which they derive from the importation of this drug, as they have a perfect right, within reason, to do. But I do not think it is desirable, by any action which can be taken by the Indian Government or this House, to stimulate the Chinese to do that which might do immense damage to the Revenues of India without being followed by any good effect upon the population of China, and which might lead to a renewal of smuggling and all those evils which, at one time, resulted from that practice.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER: The noble Marquess who has just sat down referred to a statement made by the hon. Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell) to the effect that the opium revenue is of a most precarious nature. I think that statement was borne out by the conversation Sir Thomas Wade had with the Chinese Ministers, for they state that the production of the drug is increasing in China itself. If that is the case, it is clear that a great danger threatens the Revenues of India. Well, Sir, there was one point raised by the noble Marquess on which I should be very glad if he would give us further information. He stated—and the remark was privately made to me by a great authority on all Chinese questions, Her Majesty's Minister at Yeddo, in Japan, Sir Harry Parkes—that opium smoking was not unknown in China before the introduction of the drug by Warren Hastings. I should have very much liked the noble Marquess to tell us on what ground he bases that statement. Opium smoking in China has become so universal a habit that it is difficult for those who know the country to conceive that 100 years ago this vice was utterly unknown there. I have not, however, been able to obtain proof that before the days when Warren Hastings sent 200 chests of opium to China opium smoking was practised there. Of course, the argument of the noble Marquess, and of all those who defend this opium revenue, is—"If you abolish it, what are you to put in its place? How are you to maintain India?" No doubt there is some force in the argument. I fully appreciate it. I feel that we ought to govern India with reference to the interests of the people of India; and certainly, if you are to abolish this trade, which yields so large a revenue, we must know what you can put in its place. I have spoken very strongly on former occasions as to the morality of this revenue, and I feel very much that the conduct of this country in connection with the opium trade is the greatest blot upon the escutcheon of the English people. By the fault partly of our forefathers and partly of ourselves, we are now in a position in which it is very difficult for the Revenues of India to do without the opium traffic. I am afraid that the only way to meet the difficulty is to act as our forefathers did at the time of the abolition of slavery. It is for us to make a sacrifice to get rid of what I cannot help looking on as a national evil. We know that some 46 or 47 years ago this House voted

£20,000,000 to get rid of the evil of slavery. I cannot but feel that if we are to get rid of what many Members of this House and a great proportion of the people of England believe to be a national evil—of a thing which weighs heavily upon the conscience of the people of this country, we must be prepared to make some subvention to the Revenues of India. But, be that as it may, I will call attention to what was alluded to in the speech of the noble Marquess, and in the speech of the hon. Member for South Durham (Mr. J. W. Pease)—namely, the reference made to this matter by Sir William Muir. I believe Sir William Muir is nearly the father of the Indian Service. For 35 years he has served his country in India, and latterly he rose to some of the highest positions in that country, having been appointed Governor of the North-West Provinces and Finance Minister. Since his return he has been a Member of the Indian Council. Well, he advocated the abandonment of the system of advances to producers and manufacturers prevailing in Bengal, and the levying of a simple pass duty. It would, no doubt, be a great advantage if that plan could be carried out, for the consciences of the people of this country would be relieved. The noble Marquess, in defence of the opium duty, hinted that we are doing in India with regard to opium what we are doing in this country with regard to spirits. It seems to me that no analogy could be more delusive. We all of us lament the evils in connection with the habits of drinking in this country; but, at the same time, it is obvious that the action the Government takes has a repressive effect. A heavy duty is put both on spirits and beer, and a heavy licence duty is put upon all houses where alcoholic liquors are sold. If we were to abolish the duty on spirits and beer and make the trade in them perfectly free, no doubt we should give a great impetus to drunkenness in this country. Therefore, so far as legislation goes, we put a restriction upon the sale and consumption of alcoholic liquors. On the other hand, what we do in India is to encourage the production of opium which we send out to China and sell to the Chinese to as great an extent as we can. Therefore, it seems to me that the two cases are totally dissimilar. We discourage in this country what we encourage in India. I am glad to hear that the noble Marquess has the matter under his consideration, and that he is going to bring under the notice of his Council the plan which was proposed by Sir William Muir. Sir William, I believe, is now a Member of that Council; and, though it would not remove the objection which I, for one, entertain, and which many other hon. Members entertain, as well as many excellent people outside the House, to the opium revenue, it would, nevertheless, to a considerable extent, remove the objection which we must feel as to the position in which the Indian Government is placed in regard to the production of the drug, which we cannot but believe is most injurious to the people of China. I will only, in conclusion, refer to what was said in the most terse sentence that was perhaps ever uttered in connection with this subject by those who have been referred to as the originators of this trade—namely, the East India Company, who declared in a despatch—

> "If it were possible to put an end to the use of the drug altogether, except for medical purposes, we would gladly do it in compassion to mankind."

I would urge the House to do all they can to put an end to the consumption of opium in China.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL: I wish to say a word on this subject, although it is one on which I have frequently spoken before. I desire to express my opinion that the speech of the noble Marquess shows that he has addressed himself to this subject since last year, and has considered it entirely in the right manner. I think the hon. Member for South Durham (Mr. J. W. Pease) has great reason to congratulate himself on having brought forward the subject this evening, if only for its having elicited the speech from the Secretary of State for India. If I were to take exception to any part of that speech it would only be to that part in which the noble Lord seemed inclined to minimize the evil effects of opium. No doubt the noble Lord approached the subject in the right spirit, and put it properly before us, when he said it is doubtful whether opium or alcohol is most injurious to mankind. To my mind, opium does most injury to the individual himself;

but alcohol does most to the individual's neighbour. The man who drinks alcohol becomes noisy and quarrelsome, and, therefore, an annoyance to those with whom he comes into contact; whereas the man who eats or smokes opium only hurts himself—he sinks down into a state of calm, if I may so say, and does no injury to his neighbour. On all other points I most entirely concur in what has been said by the noble Lord. I have not been inclined to hold India responsible for the evil in China. I have declined to consider it a question of Indian Revenue. The noble Marquess has shown that he is not disposed to maintain the opium trade beyond the points of justice and morality. As to the Indian question, I think the hon. Member is wrong in saying that we treat it differently to the manner in which we treat the home question of alcohol. Our system at home is repression by means of taxation, and it is the same in India, for we levy heavy taxes on the production of opium, and in that way benefit the Chinese. I have long felt that, in our connection with the opium trade in India, we should, if possible, have nothing to do with the direct manufacture of the drug—that that is a policy which it is extremely desirable to avoid; but I can endorse all that the noble Lord has said as to the extreme difficulties which surround the question. I should be glad to see the Bengal system got rid of, if we could do it without injury to our own subjects in India; but if we cannot adopt it without doing immense injury to our own subjects, and that without, at the same time, materially benefiting the Chinese, the House will admit there is a good reason for hesitating. As to forcing the trade on China, I have not one word to say. I do not defend the opium wars; but I say the Government of India is not responsible for them. The speech the noble Lord has delivered I look upon as one of very great importance, showing, as it does, the great advance that has been made in this matter. We must set our house in order in regard to this revenue. I quite feel that we are in no degree in a position to ask the people of this country to do violence to their consciences, and to force opium on China; therefore, I consider that the noble Lord, having taken the position he has, we, who are connected with India, must do the best we can to bring about economies, and must turn our attention to setting our house in order.

Mr. STORER: This is a matter which causes considerable sensation in this country, and I do not think it right that the debate should close without a protest coming from this side of the House with regard to the opium revenue. I hold it to be no part of the Conservative creed that we should perpetrate such a glaring injustice as for a strong country like England to force its will upon a weak country like China—to force a trade upon it that it objects to. It is said that China ought not to object to the trade; but surely they should know whether or not the traffic is good for them, and they should have the right of opposing us in forcing opium on them. The noble Lord, in his lengthy quotations from medical men, proves too much, and argues on both sides. He candidly admits the disastrous effects of opium in Burmah, and he would consider it a great calamity if used in India; but, at the same time, he does not think it is injurious in China. I do not know how he makes that out; and the hon. Member for Orkney (Mr. Laing) has produced no argument except that the duty ought to continue to be levied on opium, on account of the tax being one-sixth of the whole Revenue of India, thus making the amount of the iniquity the measure of its justification. That argument will not hold water, because a great country like India surely has resources sufficient to replace any loss to the Revenue in consequence of the abolition of the opium duty. I think, so far as we understand it, that the Revenues of India hitherto have been collected very much on the same vicious principle that is adopted too much in this country. The taxation of this country has been raised not so much from the wealth as the poverty of the country. The salt tax ought no longer to exist in India; it once existed here to the great injury of the lower orders; but it has been abolished long ago. I am delighted to hear the noble Marquess say that the whole subject is likely soon to be inquired into.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Committee *deferred* till *Monday* next.

CUSTOMS AND INLAND REVENUE BILL.—[Bill 136.]

(*Mr. Playfair, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord Frederick Cavendish.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Mr. STORER, who had given Notice of the following Amendment:—

"That the proposed alterations in the licences on private brewing will inflict further hardships upon farmers, inasmuch as raising their assessment by including farm buildings with farm houses, and at the same time raising the exemption from duty from £10 to £15 houses, will only have the effect of exempting the same class of farmers who now can brew free of duty at £10, but by making them pay an additional three shillings for their licence, while those who at present are excluded from that privilege will remain so, only many of them, by having their assessment raised, will become liable to house tax; that the alterations also are unjust to farmers as compared with other classes, by estimating farm buildings necessary for the cultivation of the land, and separate from the house, as part of the house, for the purposes of the duty, whereas other persons residing in houses under £15 value, without any business premises, or who may have business premises unattached, will be entitled to brew free of duty; that the alteration gives no relief to the labourer, who justly complains, that, when he brews only two bushels for harvest, he is subject to a higher duty, as licence, than he paid under the malt tax, although the Law was professedly altered for his relief,"

said, that the statement of the Premier on the subject of this Bill had relieved him from asking the House to express an opinion on the first portion of the Amendment of which he had given Notice; and it would, therefore, be only necessary to say a word as to its concluding paragraph. He felt sure that the right hon. Gentleman would take into his consideration the case of the labourer as well as that of the farmer. There was no doubt that the great brewers had gained immensely by the change introduced last year by the right hon. Gentleman, for, as he himself had acknowledged, they were going to use rice, maize, and other articles, and would be able to get a profit which they had not realized before. From the arguments which had been used against private brewing, he had feared that this would not have received adequate consideration from the right hon. Gentleman, whom he could not help comparing to the youthful Hercules, placed between the rival attractions of vice and virtue—on one side the glaring public-house interests, the lucrative brewing interest, and the Excise; on the other the modest claims of domestic brewing; but he was glad to see that he had not yielded to the temptations with which he was beset. He need hardly remind him of the very great claim possessed by private brewing. He (Mr. Storer) had often thought that the labourers of the country did not get half the amount of beer they deserved. Private brewing did no harm; on the contrary, he knew—and it was a view he would commend to the hon. Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson)—that the men who had their malt regularly every day in harvest time were the most sober and industrious, because they were released from the temptations of the public-house, and were less likely to go to excesses. He, therefore, hoped the right hon. Gentleman would see the propriety of altering the Bill so as to meet the just claims of the labourer. He begged to move the 3rd clause of his Amendment.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "the alteration gives no relief to the labourer, who justly complains, that, when he brews only two bushels for harvest, he is subject to a higher duty, as licence, than he paid under the malt tax, although the Law was professedly altered for his relief,"—(*Mr. Storer,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Sir BALDWYN LEIGHTON said, that after the answer given by the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Gladstone) to his (Sir Baldwyn Leighton's) Question of yesterday, as to whether it was intended to include farm buildings in assessment of farm-houses for the brewing licence, the complexion and effect of the clauses of the Bill relating to private brewing was considerably altered, and favourably altered. The right hon. Gentleman would bear in mind that in his Budget Speech he used the words "farm buildings," perhaps inadvertently; but it was now clear that farm buildings were not to be estimated in the valuation of the

£15 farm-house. [Mr. GLADSTONE assented.] That was an important concession; but he would again urge the right hon. Gentleman to re-consider whether the differential licence of 9*s.* for a £15 house should not be for a £20 house, with perhaps an increased licensed duty, and for the reason that the trouble and friction which it would cause to the public and the officers of Inland Revenue would be very considerable; whilst, if the £20 limit was taken, the fact of the house being rated to the Inhabited House Duty would at once settle the question without friction or trouble. He did not ask the right hon. Gentleman to answer or decide the question; it was, perhaps, a question for Committee; but he would venture to ask him, with all deference, between that time and then to give the matter his consideration. There was another element of novelty introduced into this Bill as regarded these licences—that was, that the Inland Revenue were to be themselves the judges of the value of the house. He (Sir Baldwyn Leighton) thought that required some amendment, for the Inland Revenue officers were themselves at present not agreed upon the question. His proposal would obviate all that difficulty; and he ventured, therefore, to recommend it to the consideration of the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, this Bill is intended to meet the public engagements of the Empire to the extent of many millions; yet the hon. Member for South Nottinghamshire (Mr. Storer) has thought fit to interpose an obstacle in the way of the second reading by a Motion which he grounded on the assertion that the change from the Malt Duty to the Beer Duty would impose an Income Tax upon the labourer of 7*d.* in the pound. But that is hardly an adequate reason for a Motion on the second reading of the Bill, which, even if carried, would have no effect whatever upon the measure. The hon. Member congratulates himself upon the fact of the absence of the brewers on this occasion; but the hon. Gentlemen who represent the brewing interest are absent because they know that we cannot now import the slightest alteration into the clauses of the Bill in which they are interested. No doubt, when the time arrives when it will be possible to make alterations in the Bill which will affect their interests, they will be found in their places. I have been filled with pleasurable surprise at having been made the subject of an undeserved compliment from the hon. Member opposite, who alluded to me as the youthful Hercules. I do not think I should have deserved that compliment 40 years ago, and I am, therefore, unable to accept it now. The hon. Member, however, says that this youthful Hercules is placed between the rival allurements of vice and virtue, by which he evidently means himself on the one hand, and the hon. Member for East Surrey (Mr. Watney) on the other; but which is vice and which is virtue is a matter which he judiciously left behind a veil, and placed it within the range of private opinion for each person to settle for himself. With regard to the point raised by the hon. Member for South Shropshire (Sir Baldwyn Leighton), I cannot hold out any expectation of raising the £15 exemption to £20. When the proper time comes, no doubt the proposition of the hon. Member will be opposed with sufficient warmth by the brewers, who, I am sorry to say, deny that they have derived the benefit which is imputed to them. It is, of course, very difficult to balance the comparatively minute considerations which I admit may be fairly urged by one side and the other; but I must say, with regard to this exemption, we have done our best to get at what is fair as between conflicting interests. I do not in the least desire to shut out the discussion of these details when we reach the period most proper for their consideration; but I must not be understood to hold out any expectation of making further changes, although I am glad to remove a misapprehension for which I am myself responsible, and thereby, as I trust, to do something towards retaining the favourable opinion of the hon. Member opposite.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL wished to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer for some information with regard to the very important change which had been announced with regard to the duty on silver plate. It had been stated that this duty would be abandoned; but, notwithstanding this, he was somewhat surprised to see a notice in the newspapers that the Government intended striking the clause relating to its abolition out of the Bill. It appeared that this was to be done, not because it was a tax on a luxury, but on account of representations made by persons concerned in the trade. When the right hon. Gentleman announced the proposed remission of the duty, he stated briefly that the effect of the change would be to give greater facilities for the importation of silver plate from foreign countries, inasmuch as the skilled manufacturers abroad would have an opportunity of importing their wares into this country. This he (Sir George Campbell) believed would be of great advantage to this country, and still more to the people of India. At this point, however, being reminded that the right hon. Gentleman could not, in accordance with the Rules of the House, speak again upon that stage of the Bill, he would not proceed further with the observations he had intended to address to the House.

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Monday* next.

BANKRUPTCY AND CESSIO (SCOTLAND) BILL.—[BILL 81.]

(*Dr. Cameron, Mr. Orr Ewing, Mr. Ramsay, Mr. James Campbell, Mr. Mackintosh.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

DR. CAMERON, in rising to move that the Bill be now read a second time, said, its object was to carry into effect some of the changes in the Law of Bankruptcy, and assimilate the Scotch law to that of England and Ireland. So far as the general principle of the Bill was concerned, he believed Her Majesty's Government, represented by the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate, approved of it, and would assent to the second reading, reserving the power to make Amendments, if necessary, in the details in Committee.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Dr. Cameron.*)

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. M'LAREN) said, as had been stated by the hon. Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron), he cordially approved the leading provisions of the Bill. Until the measure of last year, there had been no provision in the law of Scotland for bankruptcies in which the claim of the largest debtor was below the amount of £50; and unless there was a creditor to the extent of £50, or three creditors whose aggregate claims amounted to £100, it was impossible to render the debtor bankrupt, although there was a process by which he might himself apply to have his funds sequestrated for the benefit of his creditors. By the Act of last Session, abolishing imprisonment for debt, the power was extended to creditors; but, unfortunately, in this Act no provision was made for the discharge of the debtor, and the forms of bankruptcy were kept up solely to make the unfortunate man the servant of his creditors for the term of his natural life, or until he could pay 20*s.* in the pound. He believed the House would be of opinion that this distinction between large and small estates, not being founded upon justice, ought not to be maintained. With regard to the other provisions of the Bill, he desired to reserve his opinion, and was not sure that he should be able to support the Bill in all respects. The particular portion of the measure, however, relating to the discharge of the bankrupt was worthy of consideration, and upon that ground he thought the Bill might receive the consent of the House to the second reading.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he did not wish to oppose the Bill on the Motion for second reading; but seeing that the latter portion of it, to which reference had just been made, was to be treated in Committee, he would merely state that he reserved to himself freedom of action when that stage was reached. It was not to be understood that he assented to all the clauses of the Bill by consenting to the second reading.

DR. COMMINS pointed out that there was no provision in the Bankruptcy Act to give the debtor who had no creditor for £50 the benefit referred to by the learned Lord Advocate. England and Ireland in this respect were, therefore, in precisely the same position as Scotland. The hon. Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron) appeared to think that the debtors of the poorer class in England were allowed the benefit of the Bankruptcy Act. He should be glad to see the Bill extended to England and Ireland.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Monday* next.

MARRIED WOMEN'S PROPERTY (SCOTLAND) BILL.—[Bill 128.]

(*Mr. Anderson, Mr. Duncan M'Laren, Sir David Wedderburn.*)

THIRD READING.

Order for Third Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read the third time."—(*Mr. Anderson.*)

Mr. WARTON said, he objected to the Bill being brought on at that hour (12.25). He protested against the practice which had been followed by the Government on two or three occasions during the present Session of bringing forward Bills which had not been printed. There were two Bills amongst the Orders of the Day in that position, the present Bill being one of them. Owing to this objectionable practice, Bills were continually coming forward unexpectedly, and the result was that many hon. Members who took an interest in them were absent from the House and unable to take part in their discussion. He would move the adjournment of the debate.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL, in seconding the Motion, said, it was totally impossible that this important subject could be discussed at that time of night. He had protested on a former occasion against a Bill which created a social revolution being brought forward in the small hours of the morning. The enormous social revolution which, he believed he was correct in saying, the Bill would bring about, would affect not only Scotland, but the other portions of the Kingdom; because, if it passed into law for Scotland, how could it be refused for England and Ireland? He thought that, looking at the measure as affecting social relations in this Kingdom, the House would have done well to give the question a greater amount of attention. The Bill had been brought forward in a shape that was hardly fair to the men. He was, however, free to admit that the Committee which sat to consider the Bill had dealt with it from the woman's point of view in a fair spirit—that was to say, they put the two spouses on the same footing as between themselves. So far, therefore, they had acted with perfect fairness. But to place them upon the same footing with regard to property seemed to him to reduce their married condition to nothing else than a sort of chumming together. His Indian experience enabled him to speak with some knowledge upon this matter, and to point out to the House that the law now proposed to be introduced was precisely the Mahommedan custom as practised under the law of the Koran, and which, in his experience, did not work well. By that law Mahommedan women were placed on an equal footing with men as regards property; but then that law also afforded great facilities for divorce as well as for plurality of wives, so that a man with a disagreeable wife had his remedy. Therefore, it seemed to him that a Bill which reduced marriage to that form of contract that prevailed in the East, and which, in his opinion, must be accompanied with facilities for divorce, ought not to be allowed to pass the third reading without further consideration.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned." —(*Mr. Warton.*)

Mr. STAVELEY HILL assured the House that, having sat upon the Committee which considered this Bill, the measure had been fully discussed on every clause and detail. The Committee were anxious in the extreme that the Bill should be completely put into shape, and that there should be no avoidance of details; and, if any part of the measure needed further discussion, he was sure it could be disposed of in a very short time. It could not properly be said that there had been any desire to avoid discussion.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS was quite satisfied that the Bill had been carefully discussed. There was, however, no doubt that the measure affected England as well as Scotland. During a long experience in that House, he had seen that, when Bills were brought forward for Scotland in one Session, Bills upon the same subjects were often introduced during the next Session for England. He was glad to see the learned Lord Advocate in his place, and would like to hear from him how far the Bill would alter the law of Scotland, and from the learned Attorney General how far it might affect the law of England.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. M'LAREN) said, he was surprised that, at the stage of the third reading of this measure, it should be alleged that there had been no adequate consideration of its provisions. The Bill had been considered on the second reading, and, after some discussion, it was agreed that the same course should be taken with regard to it as had been followed in the case of a cognate Bill with reference to England —namely, to refer it to a Select Committee. This being, with reference to Scotland, a comparatively new question, the Committee resolved to take the evidence of experts, and proceeded to examine several of the leading lawyers of Scotland; they had also the assistance of the Solicitor General for England, who was a Member of the Committee. He (the Lord Advocate) agreed with some of the criticisms which had been passed on the Bill as introduced by the hon. Member for Glasgow (Mr. Anderson), inasmuch as it certainly did, in the form in which it was brought in by him, proceed on the basis of entire separation of interests as between husband and wife. The result of the evidence given before the Select Committee was that, whether they had regard to the general opinion of the people of Scotland conversant with the subject, or whether they had regard to the usage of parties in their marriage contracts, or to the principles of law, it was not possible to carry out such a complete separation of interests without serious disurbance to the social relations of the country and the state of public feeling upon the subject. Accordingly the Bill underwent serious modification at the hands of the Committee; and he thought he might say that, while there were some differences of opinion upon the clauses and matters of detail, the Bill as reported to the House represented the most moderate view of the subject that had been taken in Committee. He might, however, add that the changes which the Bill proposed to introduce were not dissimilar either in kind or degree from those which the Legislature had already sanctioned with reference to the English law. In one respect only the Bill went a little further. Under the English Married Women's Property Act, complete protection was given to married women in regard to their personal property, provided it was invested in certain specified ways. There were various modes of investment suitable to different classes of society; but, under the recent Act, no protection was given unless the property were invested either in the funds, insurances, savings banks, or in one or two other ways pointed out by the Act. The Committee which sat to consider the present Bill were of opinion that the specification of particular investments was inexpedient. After the experience of several years, during which the English Act had been in operation, the Committee thought that, under any amendment of the law which was to be introduced, it was desirable to leave the same freedom of investment with regard to the property of married women that was competent to any other subject not under disability. The leading change now to be sanctioned was that the law in regard to the rights of married women in personal property should be put upon the same footing as that of real or heritable estate. There was no reason or equity for making the distinction which existed between these species of estates. The origin of the existing distinction was that, in old times, when our Common Law originated, there was really no personal estate worth mentioning. Such personal property as the wife might possess—corn, cattle, or suchlike—was not considered of sufficient importance to constitute separate estate. Where there was such estate, the law did not recognize that there was any interest distinct from the husband's. Now, however, that personal estate had increased to such an extent that its total value very greatly exceeded that of real estate, he thought that the law ought to recognize the fact, and deal with it as having the same character of permanence and value as real estate. This was the first change which the Bill proposed to legalize. The second was that, with regard to income, whether of real or personal estate, the wife should enjoy it as separate estate as it accrued. That change was justified on the ground that wherever a wife had property of such importance and value as to make it desirable that she should be protected by marriage settlement, it was invariably provided by such settlement that the income of her estate should be enjoyed by herself free from the control of her husband or his creditors. That being the protection secured by the friends for every married lady amongst the wealthy classes, he thought the House would concede that it was in no way unreasonable when applied to the property of persons of smaller means. At the same time, it had not been thought desirable that the control of the husband should be entirely withdrawn, or that such a measure of independence should be conceded as would be likely to cause dissensions or variance between husband and wife; and it was accordingly provided that the husband's consent should be necessary to any sale or assignment of the wife's property. In that way his legitimate authority was preserved, and a protection afforded against the squandering of the wife's property. He would not trouble the House by going into the other clauses of the Bill, nor should he attempt to discuss the suggestions thrown out by some hon. Members. The hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) seemed to hint that, if this Bill were passed, it might be followed by some project of assimilation with the practice with which he had became familiar in India, and under which there was not only plurality of property, but plurality of wives. With all respect for the opinion and experience of the hon. Member, he pointed out that they were not at a stage on which the principle of the measure could be discussed; and, therefore, he thought that the observations which he had addressed to the House should have been made at an earlier period. For these reasons, he submitted that the House might safely give its approval to the Bill.

Mr. WHITLEY wished to draw special attention to one clause of the Bill. It was true, he observed, that by the Married Women's Property (England) Act, married women had control over their own property if invested in securities; but this Bill went a great deal further, and he regarded one clause as very objectionable. That was the clause by which a wife might lend money to her husband for business purposes. It might happen that a man would carry on business with his wife's money, and then the wife could claim as a creditor for the money so lent. He did not think the House ought to be asked to pass such a clause. If the Bill was to extend to England it would open the way to vast fraud; and a clause going, as this did, much further than any Bill dealing with married women's property, was certainly very objectionable. Another clause to which he objected was the clause making wives responsible for debts incurred for the maintenance of their families, for the husbands might incur heavy debts, and the clause would then operate harshly upon the wives. In any case, he believed the clause would prove very difficult to work.

Mr. ANDERSON regretted that the hon. Members who had spoken had not been Members of the Select Committee, for then they would have been aware that the Bill as now framed had become an extremely mild and moderate measure. In point of fact, it was now so mild and moderate that the Ladies' Committee would no longer have anything to do with it; and he was passing it rather against than with their wish. The Bill did not go as far as he should have liked; but it was a distinct measure of progress, and he thought it better to adopt a step in advance than do nothing at all. The hon. Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton), in persisting in adjourning the debate and postponing the Bill, was playing the game of the wildest part of the Women's Rights Committee; and now that he was aware of that he hoped the hon. Member would withdraw his Motion. The hon. Member for Liverpool (Mr. Whitley) had quite misunderstood the clause to which he objected. It did not give power to a wife to lend money to her husband. She had that power now when she had money of her own, and the object of the clause was to prevent a husband and wife having collusion for the purpose of defrauding creditors. It provided that if a wife did place her money in the hands of her husband for use in his business the creditors should not be prejudiced. With respect to the other clause to which the hon. Member objected—namely, that relating to household expenditure, he did not approve of, and should not defend it; but the Bill being now in a mild and moderate form he hoped the hon. Member opposite would allow it to pass.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Original Question again proposed.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS invited the hon. and learned Solicitor General to answer the points raised by the hon. Member for Liverpool (Mr. Whitley).

The SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir Farrer Herschell) said, that although there were serious objections to the Bill before it was referred to a Select Committee, those objections had been substantially removed by the Committee, and the Bill was now much more moderate than the English Bill as it came from the Committee to which it had been referred. With reference to the point raised by the hon. Member for Liverpool (Mr. Whitley), he thought it a pity that that objection had not been taken when the Bill was passing through the Committee; but he apprehended that there was no objection to the principle proposed, which was not, as he understood, to enable a wife to lend her money to her husband—which she could always do in England or in Scotland—but to protect the creditors, by making the money *primâ facie* part of the assets of the husband. The onus of proof was thrown on the wife, who would have to prove a separate property, and could only then prove, in the same way as other persons, for her dividend. There might be a question as to the wording of the clause; but he would recommend his hon. Friend to turn his attention to improving the wording. Proposals in that direction would, no doubt, receive attention in "another place," and so the difficulty might be removed.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS said, there was really a practical difficulty in regard to the clause, and he suggested that the Government should endeavour to improve it, instead of throwing the task on the hon. Member for Liverpool (Mr. Whitley).

Mr. STAVELEY HILL thought that if this clause was read with the other clauses of the Bill there would be no difficulty.

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read the third time, and *passed.*

PARLIAMENTARY OATHS.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

Mr. ONSLOW wished to ask the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General a Question. The Prime Minister had stated that he proposed on Monday to ask for leave to introduce a Bill on Affirmations, and that if the Bill was not opposed at that stage he should take the second reading on Tuesday; but that if it was opposed he proposed to have a Morning Sitting on Friday for its discussion. From a communication which he (Mr. Onslow) had received he understood that the Bill would be opposed on its introduction. He did not at that time say that he, personally, would oppose the introduction of the Bill. At all events, he thought it would be well that the country should have an opportunity of seeing the Bill, and that it should be printed for that purpose at some time or other; but he wished to point out that if the Bill was opposed, and there was a Morning Sitting on Tuesday for the discussion of its introduction, the Bill could not be printed before Wednesday, and, if the second reading was to be taken on Friday, the country would barely have two days for considering the effects of the Bill. The measure would create a good deal of feeling, no doubt, on both sides of the House; and surely such a measure ought to be before the country at least a week before the House was asked to take the second reading. If he was incorrect as to the intentions of the Government, he, as well as many Members on both sides of the House, would be glad to know what the intentions of the Government really were.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER reminded the House that on Wednesday he had stated it to be his intention to oppose such a Bill as that proposed, and on every occasion, if he could get anyone to tell with him, to take a division. The Bill was one of which he thought the House understood the character. He did not intend to block it, because he thought that it should be brought in at any time which was most convenient, and he did not wish to place the Government in any difficulty in that respect; but, feeling very strongly on the subject, he should consider it to be his duty at every stage of the Bill to take a division against its progress.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) observed that, in his opinion, some hon. Members opposite did not represent the anxiety of the country to know what the Bill was, because they seemed to understand already what its object was. The hon.

Member for the City of London (Mr. R. N. Fowler) had expressed his intention to oppose the measure at every stage; and if everybody was as well informed as the hon. Member was there would be no necessity for delaying the second reading. He thought the appeal of the hon. Member for Guildford (Mr. Onslow) was somewhat unreasonable. The Prime Minister had stated distinctly what was his intention; and although there might be circumstances that would compel the House to take a hostile attitude, what the Prime Minister had said was that he should ask to be allowed to introduce the Bill on Monday. He also stated that he would take the second reading of the Bill at the Morning Sitting on Tuesday, unless there was considerable opposition, and that if there was opposition he would defer that stage till Friday. He would suggest to the hon. Member (Mr. Onslow) that the time to take objection to the course proposed would be on Monday, when the Prime Minister would endeavour to introduce the Bill. It was not for him (the Attorney General) to determine upon the action of the Government; but he was sure that the Prime Minister, if appealed to, would do all he could to afford every opportunity to Members of expressing their views.

MR. J. G. TALBOT wished to know whether the Government proposed to introduce the Bill after the adjournment of the debate on the second reading of the Land Law (Ireland) Bill?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) replied that, as he understood, the Government would move to postpone the Orders of the Day after the Land Law (Ireland) Bill in order to introduce this Bill.

EARL PERCY wished to know whether the House was to expect a Morning Sitting on Tuesday if the introduction of the Bill was opposed on Monday?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) replied, that the noble Earl had heard the statement of the Prime Minister, and he himself had really very little information on the subject; but he was sure that if, on the Motion to be made by the Prime Minister, the noble Earl, or any other hon. Member, wished to express his views in regard to the proper conduct of this measure, he would receive every consideration.

MOTION.

ALKALI, &C. WORKS REGULATION [STAMP DUTY, SALARIES, &C.].

Committee to consider of authorising the imposition of a Stamp Duty on Certificates of registration of Alkali and other Works; also the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of the Salaries of Inspectors, and of Expenses which may become payable under the provisions of any Act of the present Session for regulating Alkali and certain other Works in which noxious or offensive gases are evolved (Queen's *Recommendation* signified), upon *Monday* next.

House adjourned at One o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 2nd May, 1881.

MINUTES.]—SELECT COMMITTEE—Tithe Rent-charges, *appointed.*

PRIVATE BILL (*by Order*)—*Second Reading*—Medway Conservancy (No. 2) *.

PUBLIC BILLS—*Motion for Bill*—Parliamentary Oaths.

Ordered — First Reading — Local Government Provisional Order (Birmingham) * [144]; Local Government (Gas) Provisional Order) * [145].

Second Reading—Land Law (Ireland) [135]—[*Third Night*]—*debate further adjourned.*

Committee — Alkali, &c. Works Regulation [119]—R.P.; Bankruptcy and Cessio (Scotland) * [81]—R.P.

Third Reading—Local Government Provisional Orders (Bath, &c.) * [131]; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) * [130]; Local Government (Highways) Provisional Order (York) * [132], and *passed.*

PARLIAMENTARY OATHS ACT—MR. BRADLAUGH.

MR. MAC IVER: I rise, Mr. Speaker, to appeal to you upon a point of Order that may have some bearing upon the course it is understood Her Majesty's Government propose to adopt with regard to Mr. Bradlaugh. I wish to ask you, Whether the Parliamentary Affirmation, which has hitherto been incumbent upon those who conscientiously object to taking oaths, does not contain a solemn declaration of loyalty to the Queen and Constitution, such as cannot reasonably be made by one who proclaims himself to be an Atheist and a Republican; and whether, under these circumstances, the introduction of any measure which proposes to substitute a mere formality for what is now a binding obligation would not of itself be an abuse of the Privileges of this House such as ought not be permitted in an Assembly where every Member has either taken the Oath of Allegiance himself, or has made a solemn declaration to a like purport?

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member asks me a Question with reference to the construction of an Act of Parliament. The hon. Member—and, indeed, every other Member of this House—is equally competent with myself to construe such Acts; and I must leave it to the hon. Member to form his own opinion on the matter.

Mr. LEWIS: When the Motion of the Attorney General for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Parliamentary Oaths Act is made, I shall move the following Amendment:—

> "That, inasmuch as the proposed alteration of the Parliamentary Oaths Act is brought forward for the express and immediate purpose of admitting to a seat in the Legislature a professed Atheist, this House declines to be in any way party to a proceeding which is, at the same time, obnoxious to the general religious feeling of the Country, opposed to the spirit of the Constitution and Common Law of this Land, and dishonouring to God."

MONUMENT TO THE RIGHT HON. THE LATE EARL OF BEACONSFIELD.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: I beg to give Notice that on the First Lord of the Treasury moving that the House resolve itself into a Committee to consider an Address to be presented to the Queen, praying that Her Majesty will give directions that a monument be erected in Westminster Abbey at the public charge to the memory of the Earl of Beaconsfield, I shall move the Previous Question.

QUESTIONS.

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he can afford any facilities for the discussion of the Motion of which Notice has been given with respect to the Transvaal?

Mr. Mac Iver

Mr. GLADSTONE: The right hon. Gentleman has done everything that could be expected of him to secure the discussion of the Motion of which he has given Notice; and had matters in South Africa remained as they were at the time we last communicated across the Table, I should have been quite prepared to place at the right hon. Gentleman's disposal the first or second Government day after the second reading of the Land Law (Ireland) Bill. But, since that time, a change of circumstances have occurred. We have been authentically informed of the nature of the proceedings at Potchefstroom; and it has been made quite undeniable that the capitulation of Potchefstroom was obtained—and it is admitted by the Boer Leaders themselves, with whose conduct we have no fault to find—by an act of treachery on the part of Cronjes, who commanded the besieging force, and who never made known to the garrison the fact that an armistice had been concluded. The Boer leaders quite agree that full reparation must be made for the capitulation, and that the capitulation must be cancelled and the garrison replaced in Potchefstroom, or other equivalent measures taken for the satisfaction of Her Majesty's Government. In these circumstances, the arrangements in South Africa have certainly receded somewhat from the degree of maturity which they had reached at the time of the former conversation in the House, and which was such as to enable us to believe that the whole conduct of Her Majesty's Government might be brought under review without injury to the public interest. At present, I cannot say that that is the case. I could not be responsible—I am sure the right hon. Gentleman will understand me—for promoting a discussion in the circumstances which now prevail. I certainly have very good hope that no long delay need on that account be interposed; but until the very serious matter—serious in principle—to which I have referred, is disposed of, I am not in a position to make any communications to the right hon. Gentleman. If he thinks fit, I will leave the matter on this footing—that, instead of his watching from day to day for the opportunity he desires, and possibly putting Questions to the Government, I will be responsible for making known to him at the first moment when it may be considered that we have reverted to the former state of affairs, and will tender to him the best arrangements in my power with the view of enabling him, if he thinks fit, to bring his Motion forward.

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL (NEGOTIATIONS)—FURTHER PAPERS.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, When any further Papers relating to the Transvaal will be presented to Parliament; and, whether they will include the instructions, if any, to Sir F. Roberts on his departure from England?

MR. GRANT DUFF: I was under the impression that the Instructions to the Commission would be circulated to-day. If they are not, they will be circulated immediately. The Instructions to Sir Frederick Roberts were circulated on Saturday. They are already in the hands of the right hon. Gentleman.

SOUTH AFRICA — THE TRANSVAAL (MILITARY OPERATIONS) — SURRENDER OF POTCHEFSTROOM.

MR. GIBSON asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether there were any casualties in the garrison of Potchefstroom between date of armistice and date of its surrender, and what has become of the garrison since the surrender; at what dates respectively were the news of the armistice conveyed by the Boers to the other besieged garrisons in the Transvaal; and, whether the Government have made any, and, if so, what inquiry on these subjects?

MR. GRANT DUFF: In reply to the right hon. and learned Gentleman's first Question, I have to say that our casualties at Potchefstroom were from the 9th to the 12th of March—killed, 2; wounded, 10 British and 1 Native; from the 13th to the 19th—wounded, 3. The garrison has come away. In reply to his second Question, I have to say that Sir Evelyn Wood telegraphs to-day that he believes that the armistice was notified at Wesselstroom on the 10th of March; at Standerton on the 11th; at Pretoria on the 15th; at Lydenberg on the 25th; at Rustenburg on the 30th; and at Marabastadt on a date not known. The Boers, however, state that the date he quotes as to Wesselstroom and Standerton must be inaccurate; but they have no date they can rely on. They explain that the swollen rivers delayed the message to Lydenberg.

SOUTH AFRICA — THE TRANSVAAL (NEGOTIATIONS)—"SUZERAINTY."

SIR HENRY PEEK asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether the substitution of suzerainty for the sovereignty which was proclaimed in the Transvaal will disturb the rights of appeal from the courts of the territory to Her Majesty in Council?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): According to the terms of agreement entered into by Sir Evelyn Wood, the Transvaal will have complete self-government in its own internal affairs; and as this includes the holding of Courts, the right of appeal to Her Majesty in Council will be entirely gone.

SOUTH AFRICA—NATIVE CUSTOMS IN NATAL.

MR. SUMMERS asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the British Government in Natal recognises the sale of women, and sanctions the right of a native insolvent to include the marriageable value of his daughters in the assets of his estate; and, whether he will lay upon the Table Copies of any Papers that may be at the Colonial Office relating to native customs in Natal?

MR. GRANT DUFF: My reply to the first Question is that the Natal Zulus, who outnumber the Whites by about 20 to 1, are still governed to a great extent by their own laws and customs, one of which requires the bridegroom to give his future father-in-law a present of cattle for consenting to give his daughter in marriage. Such a transaction would be recognized by our authorities, provided the young lady consented. I can give no certain reply to the second Question; but we have not heard of any such case at the Colonial Office. My reply to the third Question is that various Papers on the subject are already before Parliament, and will be found at pages 297-306 of C 2,144, and at page 14 of 2,676. We have little about it that is unprinted; but I know of no objection to giving what we have.

ARMY — AUXILIARY FORCES — THE VOLUNTEER REVIEW AT WINDSOR.

Mr. BUXTON asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he can inform the House what date has been fixed for the Review of the Volunteers by Her Majesty in Windsor Park?

Mr. CHILDERS: In reply to my hon. Friend, I have to state that I have Her Majesty's authority to say that she hopes to hold the Volunteer Review either in the last week of June or the first week of July. When the actual day is fixed, I will at once take care to make it publicly known.

FISHERIES (IRELAND)—THE MACKEREL FISHERY.

Mr. O'SHEA asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether his attention has been called to the recent extraordinary development of the mackerel fishery on the coast of Clare, where 69 boats are stated by Mr. F. J. Brady, Inspector of Fisheries, to have each been taking, near Loop Head, on an average 20,000 mackerel nightly, of the value of from £200 to £300; and, whether, in view of the very large fishing fleet, with its attendant steamers, which may in future be expected in the locality, the Treasury will reconsider its refusal to assist in the extension of the Cappa Pier at Kilrush?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH: I am informed that during the month of April a large number of vessels have been very successfully engaged in prosecuting the mackerel fishery off the mouth of the Shannon. The fish taken have been brought to Foynes in steamers, and thence conveyed by rail for the most part to Dublin and elsewhere. To accommodate this traffic the harbour of Foynes, which had become to a great extent silted up, has been cleared out, at a cost of between £400 and £500, so as to allow of the regular and prompt despatch of the cargoes. On the other hand, the Cappa Pier at Kilrush is about 28 miles from the nearest railway station, and would not, therefore, meet the requirements of the fish traffic. As this is the only new reason brought forward, the Treasury are not at present prepared to re-consider their decision, which was founded on considerations of the general interests of the Shannon navigation. But if the localities interested are prepared to undertake the expense and responsibility of maintaining piers such as that at Kilrush, the Treasury would consider whether statutory power should not be taken to hand them over upon conditions to the local authorities.

PRISONS (ENGLAND) ACT, 1877—NEWCASTLE AND MORPETH PRISONS.

Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he can state if he has come to any conclusion respecting the closing of Newcastle and Morpeth Prisons, or either of them; and, whether he contemplates the erection of a large central prison for that district?

Mr. COURTNEY, in reply, said, no conclusion had yet been arrived at respecting the closing of the prisons referred to. It was hoped the expense of erecting a large central prison might be avoided.

THE CENSUS (SCOTLAND)—THE GAELIC LANGUAGE.

Mr. FRASER-MACKINTOSH asked the Lord Advocate, Whether his attention has been directed to numerous complaints of the manner in which certain enumerators in Scotland have dealt with the Census Returns in regard to Gaelic speaking Scotsmen; and, whether he will allow these Returns to be amended in all cases where it can be shown that enumerators acted in contravention of the Registrar General's instructions, as finally explained in his secretary's letter of date 21st March last?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. M'Laren) said, that the Census of Gaelic-speaking persons was intentionally confined to those who spoke the language habitually; and he failed to see what legitimate purpose a statistical inquiry of this kind could serve, by including in the Census persons who merely possessed a literary acquaintance with the language. He could not undertake to correct any of those errors which were incident to such a Return, and which could only pretend to be approximately accurate.

THE FISHERIES—LIGHTS OF FISHING VESSELS.

Mr. HENEAGE asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he is aware that the use of coloured lights by trawling smacks was unanimously condemned by a Select Committee presided over last Session by the Secretary of the Board of Trade; and, further, that the masters and owners of trawlers are unanimous in their opinion that considerable loss of life and damage to their property would be the result of the use of a coloured masthead light, in which opinion the smack owners' insurance offices fully concur; and, whether he will undertake that the Report of the Select Committee shall not be set aside without giving the House an opportunity of judging the question on its true merits, and the trawling smack owners of having their case fairly stated by those Members specially representing their interests?

Mr. GLADSTONE: The hon. Member's Question appears calculated to convey an impression that the law relating to the carrying of white lights by trawlers ought not to be altered. On this subject the Government are collecting information. Before anything is done, Papers on the subject will be laid before the House.

CUSTOMS AND INLAND REVENUE BILL —DIFFERENTIAL DUTY ON SPIRITS.

Captain AYLMER asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If he can supply the House with any figures to bear out the estimate given in his Budget Sheet, that the proposed

> "More accurate method of measurement and the establishment of a more perfect equality between different kinds of spirits will produce an increase of revenue amounting to £180,000;"

and, whether it would not be more correct to estimate said increase at a sum nearer £1,000,000?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I have no hesitation in saying that to estimate the increase in the Revenue from the source referred to in the hon. and gallant Gentleman's Question at £1,000,000, or even at £500,000, would be grossly incorrect. This is a matter in which the Government must place dependence upon the judgment of practical officers, who are perfectly accustomed to the work. The substitution of an accurate for an inaccurate method is quite within the range of their competency and judgment; and I have no reason to think that their estimate of the result is not substantially correct. The representation made to me has been that the amount of increase will be rather less than the figures I stated in my Budget speech.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—TREATMENT OF PRISONERS UNDER THE ACT.

Mr. O'CONNOR POWER asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is true that Mr. D. O'Connor and Mr. T. J. Quinn, who are imprisoned in Kilmainham Gaol under the Lord Lieutenant's warrant, were not provided with bedding in the police barrack of Claremorris, where they were detained on the night of their arrest; and, if so, whether steps will be taken to prevent the further infliction of such hardship upon prisoners similarly circumstanced?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: It is true that the gentlemen referred to in the hon. Member's Question were not provided with bedding in the police barracks of Claremorris, there being no bedding in the barracks except that provided for the police themselves. The police gave them their great coats to wrap themselves in, and they passed the night upon forms. A good fire was kept up for them during the night, and when they left in the morning they expressed their thanks to the constables for the kindness with which they had treated them.

THE CIVIL SERVICE—THE PLAYFAIR SCHEME.

Mr. A. GRANT asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether under the Playfair Scheme, when a clerk of the lower division not drawing duty pay has been called upon for several months in each year to take the place of duty pay clerks absent on annual leave, that clerk is entitled to receive duty pay while performing such duty?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH: In the case described by my hon. Friend, the practice would follow the general rule of the Public Service, that during an officer's leave his colleagues perform his duties. I may add that it is usually found that juniors are glad to take the place of their superiors when absent, as they obtain thereby acquaintance with the duties of the latter, and so become better qualified for promotion.

TRADE AND COMMERCE — THE NEW FRENCH GENERAL TARIFF.

Mr. KYNASTON CROSS asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If he can give to the House any detailed information as to the actual increase of duty to which cotton, linen, and woollen goods, and also hardware and pottery, will be subject under the proposed French General Tariff?

Mr. GOURLEY asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If he is aware that the arrangements entered into with the French Government in the Treaty of 1860, with regard to British Sheet and plate glass, have proven to be practically prohibitory; and, further, if he can inform the House what measures he intends adopting in future negotiations for the purpose of obtaining a modification of the existing French Tariff?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: The scale of duties under the new general tariff of France is stated to be in general an augmentation of 24 per cent on the present conventional rates. In consequence, however, of the conversion of *ad valorem* into specific duties, and of changes in classification, it is not possible to give, within the limits of an answer, detailed information as to the actual increase of the new duties. From information which has been received from Chambers of Commerce and competent persons in this country, Her Majesty's Government have reason to believe that on many of the articles mentioned by my hon. Friend the real increase of duty will considerably exceed the nominal increase, and the attention of the French officials has already been called to these points by Mr. Kennedy, and the subject will be fully considered and examined when the formal negotiations begin. In reply to the Question of the hon. Member for Sunderland, I may state that Her Majesty's Government have been informed that the present rates on sheet and plate glass have proved prohibitory, and every effort will be made to procure a reduction of them. I would wish to add that on the promulgation of the general tariff of France, which must take place before the 8th instant, copies will be sent to all the Chambers of Commerce in this country, with the request that any observations which they may desire to make in addition to those already received, may be transmitted without delay.

INLAND REVENUE—TAX ON HORSES AND CARRIAGES.

Mr. BIRLEY asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether it is a fact that the Inland Revenue authorities have decided to enforce the carriage tax of two guineas annually, upon carts and larries used occasionally on holidays for the conveyance of Sunday school children, and hitherto exempt; and, if so, whether he will take measures to continue this exemption under the exceptional circumstances?

Mr. ARMITAGE asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether the memorial which has been presented to the Inland Revenue Department by the Manchester Sunday School Union may be granted, namely, that the lurries-waggons or carts, which are usually lent on hire at a nominal charge for the conveyance of children for purposes of excursion during the days of holiday in Whitsun week, shall not be required to pay a licence, the fact being, that previous to the present time the Act requiring such licence to be taken out for general purposes has never been put in force in respect to Sunday Schools?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I am not without hope that we may make some arrangement in reference to this subject that may be satisfactory to all parties. At the same time, I cannot absolutely promise that vehicles so employed shall be exempted altogether from the ordinary tax. The Inland Revenue Board are placed in this matter between two fires —one, from those who desire this exemption, and the other from the tradesmen who have to pay the tax. I will make inquiry into the subject, and will see whether some lower rate of tax cannot be imposed upon vehicles used for this particular purpose.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) BILL—THE COMMISSION.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, in the event of the Land Law (Ireland) Bill being read a second time, he will be prepared, before asking the

House to go into Committee on the Bill, to state the names of the persons who are to compose the Land Commission referred to in the Bill?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I am unable to give the noble Lord any promise to state the names of the persons who are to compose the Land Commission before going into Committee on the Bill. I trust, however, that it will not be long before we may go into Committee on the measure. I can promise, at the same time, that at a later stage, probably when we go out of Committee, we shall be prepared to give the names.

STATE OF IRELAND—OUTRAGES AT MUCKROSS AND CLIFDEN.

Mr. THORNHILL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the following statement, which appeared in the London papers of last night, is correct, viz.:—

> "According to information received from Tralee on Tuesday, a party of about sixty men, partly armed and disguised, visited the house of a bailiff named Denehy, in the employment of Mr. Henry Arthur Herbert, of Muckross, at Clydane, near Castle Island, and cut off both his ears. They left after cautioning him not to serve any more writs. No arrests have been made;"

and, if so, what steps Her Majesty's Government intend to take to put an end to such barbarous outrages?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: The details of this crime have been much exaggerated in the reports, but it is still of a barbarous nature. A party numbering about 10 men entered the house of the bailiff Denehy at half-past 12 o'clock on the night of the 25th ultimo. They searched for writs, but found none. Before leaving they cut off a small piece from his left ear and two pieces out of his right ear, and they made him promise not to serve any more writs. This was a week ago. No arrests have been made; but I have given stringent instructions to the police to use every effort to discover the perpetrators of these atrocities.

Mr. LEWIS asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has inquired into the circumstances connected with the murder, on the night of Sunday the 24th April, near Clifden in Connemara, of John Lydon, and of the attempted assassination of his son, after both the victims were taken from bed, in the middle of the night; whether it was not proved at the inquest that the father and son were seized by six men, taken outside of their cabin, thrown on the ground, and then shot when in that position; whether the crime was not of an agrarian character; whether the son, who survived, did not identify a man named Patrick Walshe as one of the murderers, and, notwithstanding the jury returned a verdict of wilful murder against some persons unknown; and, whether, under an ordinary trial by jury in the West of Ireland, there is any prospect of a conviction being obtained again in a plainly proved case?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I have inquired very strictly into this case, and I have seen several official reports in reference to it. The facts of the murder are substantially correct as set forth in the hon. Gentleman's Question. The crime was of an agrarian character. Notwithstanding the fact that the son who survived identified one of the persons who took part in the crime, the Coroner's Jury returned a verdict of wilful murder against some person or persons unknown.

Mr. HEALY asked the right hon. Gentleman, Whether he would state to the House the reasons he had for alleging that the crime was of an agrarian character?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I cannot imagine any person acquainted with the facts of the case not being convinced that it was of an agrarian character.

Mr. LEWIS said, the right hon. Gentleman had not answered the last part of his Question.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, the hon. Gentleman asked him whether in an ordinary trial by jury in the West of Ireland there was any prospect of a conviction being obtained in a clearly proved case. In a great many plainly proved cases a conviction was just as likely to be obtained in the West of Ireland as anywhere else. With regard to agrarian cases, the hon. Gentleman was as able as himself to form an opinion of the likelihood of obtaining a conviction in the West of Ireland.

ARMY—THE AUXILIARY FORCES—ADJUTANTS OF VOLUNTEERS.

Mr. ANDERSON asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, considering the small number and age of the Volunteer Adjutants on the old footing, and the expediency of having them all retired, he will not at once arrange that they may do so on the same footing as was conceded to the old Militia Adjutants some years ago?

MR. CHILDERS: In reply to my hon. Friend, I have to say that I have twice replied to a similar inquiry, to the effect that the case of these few old officers does not form part of any general plan of re-organization; but I have made preliminary inquiries as to each officer before deciding whether anything should be done in the matter.

STATE OF IRELAND—THE WHITEBOY ACT—CASE OF DANIEL O'SULLIVAN, AT MILLSTREET, CO. CORK.

MR. DALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the prosecution by the police, at Millstreet, county Cork, of Daniel O'Sullivan the younger, aged nine or ten years, who appeared before the magistrates crying, and who was prosecuted by the Queen at the suit of head constable Spencer, under the Whiteboy Act, for having, on the 22nd instant, at two o'clock in the day, attempted, by carrying a lighted torch in the public streets of Millstreet,—

> "To promote a certain unlawful assembly, contrary to the statute made and provided, and against the peace of our Sovereign Lady the Queen, her Crown and Dignity;"

whether, on the occasion referred to, the child's offence did not consist in his heading a procession of young fellows who were after tilling the farm for a woman whose husband had died, and that, on being spoken to, the child stated that he did not know he was doing anything wrong, and went away when he was told; and, whether he will direct an inquiry into the circumstances attending this prosecution?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: I have received a Report on this subject, and it appears that the youth Daniel O'Sullivan was the leader of a party of boys from 12 to 17 years of age, he himself being about 12. About 30 boys assembled and went in procession through Millstreet. On being stopped they dispersed. They re-assembled at the instigation of grown-up persons. The case has been adjourned by the magistrates until the 19th instant; and, pending their decision, I do not intend to take any further steps in the matter. There was much more probability of disturbance than would appear from the Question. There was a great deal of excitement in the place.

THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—ALLEGED EXCESS OF DUTY AT NEWCASTLE.

MR. PARNELL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been directed to a Report in the "Freeman's Journal" of Tuesday 26th April, of the conduct of the Constabulary at Newcastle on the 24th April, when, as stated, the Constabulary was ordered to charge a number of boys who were following them whistling a tune; whether the Constabulary knocked down, kicked, and beat indiscriminately with the butts of their guns a number of persons including a little son of James B. Bell, who was knocked senseless on the road, and a young man named Massey, who had taken this child in his arms after he had been thus assaulted; whether a policeman knocked down with his rifle an old grey-headed man, and beat him till he was almost senseless, and left him lying in the street bleeding from the mouth; whether a respectable young man named David Kennedy, the managing clerk of Mr. James Cregan, merchant, was brutally beaten by the Police as he was leaving his employer's shop on his way home, being struck in the region of the heart, and made to vomit large quantities of blood; and, whether he will direct a searching inquiry into the occurrence?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, he had made particular inquiry about this matter, and he was of opinion that the local correspondent of *The Freeman's Journal* had given an account which was not correct. It really was a serious case of rioting. A dangerous and unprovoked assault was made on the police. The affair occurred on the 23rd and not on the 24th of April, and instead of being confined to a number of boys, it was a desperate riot by a large mob of men, who attacked and stoned the police, several of whom, including a sub-inspector, were injured by stones. The police had to charge the mob; but they did not do so until six of their number (nearly 30) were struck with stones. The sub-inspector had given a full and careful report of the case; and, therefore, no inquiry was called for.

MR. PARNELL: Will the right hon. Gentleman answer the last three parts of the Question?

MR. W. E. FORSTER said, he was informed it was not true that the police knocked down, kicked, and beat people indiscriminately; that nothing whatever was known of the little boy Bell having been hurt, nor of a grey-headed man having been knocked down. Nothing was known of Kennedy having been hurt. He had been seen repeatedly since the occurrence walking about in his usual health.

SOUTH AFRICA—THE BASUTOS (NEGOTIATIONS).

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, If he can state the present position of the Basuto affair, and say—whether the Cape Government distinctly accepted the arbitration of Sir H. Robinson and bound themselves to abide by any award which he might give; whether when the Basutos were required to lay down their arms before arbitration, it was merely intended that they should cease from armed opposition, or they were called on actually to surrender their arms; and, how the arbitration is to be conducted now that Sir H. Robinson has gone to the Transvaal?

SIR WILFRID LAWSON had also given Notice of his intention to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the Government are able to communicate to the House any authentic information concerning the recent negotiations between Sir Hercules Robinson and the Basuto Chiefs?

MR. GRANT DUFF: I will, with the permission of the House, answer my hon. Friend the Member for Kirkcaldy and my hon. Friend the Member for Carlisle together. In reply to the first specific Question of the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy, I have to say "Yes." In reply to the second, I have to say that the words were used in the ordinary sense—namely, that the Basutos were to cease from hostilities. In reply to the third, I have to say that, as the award has been given, the difficulty cannot arise. My best reply to my hon. Friend the Member for Carlisle will be to read the telegrams which have been received from Sir Hercules Robinson—

> "April 29.—The following is a summary of the terms which I have awarded in the Basuto case:—First, disarmament, tempered by a system of registration, and an annual licence fee of £1 for each gun; second, compensation to be paid by tribe to loyal people and traders for destruction of property; third, the tribe to pay a fine of 5,000 head of cattle for taking up arms against the Government; fourth, these terms being complied with, there shall be a complete amnesty, and no confiscation of territory."

Sir Hercules Robinson adds that he thinks these terms just, and most generous. The other telegram is as follows:—

> "April 30.—Ministers have adopted my award, and assumed the responsibility for it in Parliament."

CONTROVERTED ELECTIONS — THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS ACT, 1868, THE PARLIAMENTARY AND CORRUPT PRACTICES ACT, 1879, AND THE PARLIAMENTARY AND CORRUPT PRACTICES ACT, 1880—THE BOSTON ELECTION.

MR. MELLOR asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether his attention has been called to an article in the "Boston Independent" newspaper of the 9th April, which has been sent to various Members of this House, and circulated in Lincolnshire, containing the following passages:—

> "Boston is comparatively pure before the wholesale corruption of the other offending constituencies, and nothing could well be milder in the shape of bribery (if bribery it can be held) than the part taken by Messrs. Wren and Kitwood at the last election. They were not systematic bribers; they made no preparations; and, if the accusations against them can be proved, all that they did was inconsiderately on the day of the poll to yield to earnest solicitations to furnish money for the purposes of the election, without asking questions. Other influence has however we feel sure been at work, and the decision of the Attorney General is not altogether due to convenience or accident. If pressure had not been brought to bear upon him, for the purpose of gratifying personal vindictive feelings caused by disappointment and defeat, it is probable we should never have heard of these indictments. There is a growing feeling of indignation in the town at such a gross miscarriage of justice, which day by day will become more general and intense as the time of the trial approaches;"

whether such expressions, in reference to pending criminal proceedings, have not a tendency to defeat the administration of justice; and, whether he intends to take any proceedings in consequence?

Mr. WARTON: I rise to Order. I beg to ask you, Sir, whether it is in accordance with the Rules of the House that counsel about to prosecute in a criminal proceeding should also act in that capacity in this House?

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. and learned Member has put the Question on his own responsibility; but, as at present advised, I do not feel called upon to interfere.

Mr. E. STANHOPE said, before the hon. and learned Gentleman answered the Question, he should like to ask him another with reference to this matter, of which he had given him private Notice. It was, Whether it was not the fact that the prosecutions for bribery at Boston were confined to members of one political Party, although members of the other Party had also been scheduled by the Royal Commission as guilty of bribery; whether he would not take that opportunity of explaining the grounds upon which that course had been adopted, which had never been publicly explained, and by this means to calm the excited state of political feeling in Boston which not unnaturally existed? He should like also to ask him whether he had read the whole of the article complained of, of which the extract now given only gave a misleading account?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James): I am sure, Sir, that the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Stanhope) would not intentionally add the authority arising from his high position in this House to a suggestion for which there is no foundation; but his Question appears to me to be in two particulars couched in somewhat unfortunate language, because he says that the course which I have adopted has never been publicly explained, and that in consequence of it an excited state of political feeling not unnaturally exists in Boston. Now, the hon. Member's Question appears to suggest that, certain persons of both Parties having been scheduled as guilty of corrupt practices, I have selected for prosecution persons of one political Party and allowed those who belong to the other—that is, the Liberal Party—to escape. The duty of prosecuting persons guilty of corrupt practices is imposed upon me by statute, and I am directed to prosecute all persons guilty of corrupt practices against whom I think there is sufficient evidence to put them on their trial, subject to this—that a certificate of indemnity given to persons who have been examined as witnesses protects them from prosecution. In this case of Boston, the Report of the Commissioners concludes as follows:—

> "We have granted certificates to all persons whose names appear in the Schedules appended to this Report stating that they have been asked questions the answers to which criminated or tended to criminate them, and that they answered all such questions, with the exception of"

certain persons named in the Report. Therefore, it was beyond my power to prosecute anyone but such excepted persons, and all those I have prosecuted. When the hon. Member suggests that no public explanation of this kind has hitherto been given, I must remind the House that some three weeks or more ago I asked the indulgence of the House to make the very statement I have now made. Again, when the hon. Member suggests that the excited state of feeling in Boston is natural, I must inform the House that it is stated to me that the Report of the Commissioners has been published in newspapers circulating in Boston, and that, therefore, those who are said to be excited must have known of these certificates of protection having been given. In answer to my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Grantham, I have to say that my attention has been called, with much regret, to this article. It suggests that I have permitted those who are acting under the disappointment arising from defeat to influence me, and that except for such influence these prosecutions would not have been instituted. The fact is that, with the exception of my hon. and learned Friend the Solicitor General, the Public Prosecutor, and the legal officials of the Treasury, no one has communicated with me on the subject of the prosecution. Of course, such an article is most improper; but as I am so personally attacked, I feel great difficulty in directing that proceedings should be taken against the publishers. I have, however, taken steps to cause the article to be placed before the Solicitor General and the Director of Public Prosecutions, with a request that they should determine whether any proceedings should be taken to prevent so grave an interference with the administration of justice as this article amounts to taking place. As, however, I find that measures have been taken to secure an exceptional publication of the article among that class from which jurymen would be summoned, I shall have to consider whether it will not be necessary, for the purpose of securing an impartial jury, to remove the trial of the informations to a locality upon which such an improper influence as this article has not been brought to bear.

ARMY RECRUITING—IRISH RECRUITS.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he will lay upon the Table a Return showing the various regiments or departments of the Army to which the 3415 recruits raised in Ireland during the year 1879 were finally posted after being passed into the service, together with the number so posted to each regiment or department?

MR. CHILDERS: Will the hon. Member be good enough to tell me, as is customary with respect to new Returns, what is his object in asking for such a Return? My hon. and gallant Friend the Member for East Aberdeenshire (Sir Alexander Gordon) has moved for a Return as to Scotch recruits with a definite object, which he explained in his speech on the Army Estimates; but I know of no reason why this detail as to to Irish recruits need be given. If he will communicate with me and explain his object, I will see whether I can meet his wishes.

MR. HEALY asked the right hon. Gentleman, whether, if the Return were granted, it would not show that the brunt of foreign service was thrown to a very large extent upon Irish regiments?

MR. CHILDERS: No, it would not. That would require a Return showing many more particulars. If the hon. Member will inform me of his object, and I can meet it, I shall have no objection to give him the Return.

FRANCE AND TUNIS—BRITISH SUBJECTS IN TUNIS.

MR. BIRLEY asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether, having regard to the critical state of the relations between France and Tunis, and the probability of a French Protectorate being imposed upon the latter, Her Majesty's Government will take measures to secure for British subjects resident in the Regency, and for British traders, the commercial privileges which they now enjoy?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Her Majesty's Government have no reason to suppose that the commercial privileges of British subjects in Tunis will be interfered with by the present French military operations. Her Majesty's ship *Monarch* has been ordered to proceed to Tunis, and has probably already arrived there. Captain Tryon has been instructed to assist Europeans in case of disturbances, which, however, it is hoped, will not occur.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) BILL—RECOVERY OF RENT BY WRIT.

THE O'DONOGHUE asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If proceedings for recovery of rent by writ, followed by the sale of the tenant's interest, deprives such tenant of the right of applying to the proposed Land Court to fix the judicial rent, which right it is the object of the Land Law Bill now before the House to confer upon him; and, if so, whether it is not the duty of the Government to interfere to put a stop to any attempt to defeat the intentions of the Legislature?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that Question was a legal one, and could be better answered by the Attorney General for Ireland; but all debts recovered by judgment by creditors, whether the creditors were landlords or other persons, could be realized by execution and sale of the debtor's chattels, including a tenant's interest in the land; and that applied to rent as well as to any other debt. The tenancy would not be extinguished, but simply transferred in the case supposed. The tenant would be able to apply to the Court to fix the judicial rent.

MR. PARNELL asked whether, in the case of such a sale, the person to whom the interest was sold would have to serve a notice to quit on the old tenant, or what other proceeding would be necessary for the purchaser to obtain possession?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. LAW) was understood to say that if the interest was sold, it would be assigned by deed in the ordinary way by the sheriff to the purchaser, who, if refused possession, could at once recover it by action of ejectment.

THE CROWN AGENTS FOR THE COLONIES.

MR. ANDERSON asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, If, in saying that the Crown agents for the Colonies have, "in the interest of public convenience, an establishment close to the Colonial Office," he meant the House to understand that the office in question is within the Government building, and provided by the Government; if he is aware that these officers have been negotiating loans, with the statement that they did so by direction of Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies; if Her Majesty's Government has anything to do with the appointment of these officers, or who does appoint them; if it be the fact that a Colonial Government is not a Corporation that can be sued, except under "Petition of Right;" and if, as regards the Cape Government, that remedy is excluded by the circumstance that the Cape Parliament has never passed an Act submitting themselves to that process?

MR. GRANT DUFF: In reply to my hon. Friend's first Question, my reply is "Yes, certainly." The Crown Agents are established, in the interest of public convenience, close to the Colonial Office; but, unlike the other denizens of that large mass of buildings between Charles Street and Downing Street, they pay rent to the Government for the accommodation they require. My reply to his second Question is that I am quite aware that the prospectuses of the loans which they raise for Crown Colonies have the statement in question attached to them, with the further statement that the loans are issued on the security of the revenues and assets of the Colonies. The Secretary of State exercises a close supervision over the finances of Crown Colonies; but the Imperial Government undertakes no responsibility for Colonial loans, direct or indirect, even in the case of Crown Colonies. My reply to the third Question is that these officers are appointed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies as a guarantee to the Colonies who intrust their affairs to them that they are dealing with responsible and efficient persons; but they are paid by the Colonies, not by the Imperial Government, and they enter into engagements with the public on behalf of the Colonies, not of the Secretary of State or of any Member of the Imperial Government. To the fourth Question my reply is that I understand that it has been decided that a Colonial Government cannot be sued as a Corporation. To the fifth Question my reply is that I am informed that the question whether the remedy for the breach of contract made by the Government of the Cape Colony is by a Petition of Right in the Courts of the Cape Colony is now the subject of an appeal before the Privy Council. As, therefore, the Question involves a subject now awaiting judicial decision, I think it would be undesirable for me to express my opinion upon it.

BELFAST IMPROVEMENT ACT, 1878—FINLEY *v.* BELFAST TOWN COUNCIL.

MR. CALLAN asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, If his attention has been drawn to the report of the important traverse case, Finley *v.* Belfast Town Council, at the recent Assizes in county Antrim, in which it was given in evidence that the Corporation of Belfast entered into a secret agreement with Messrs. Hamilton and Gregg, two members of their body, Mr. Gregg being at same time a member of the Improvement Committee, to dispossess the fee simple owners of property in the Borough of Belfast, without their knowledge, and contrary to their expressed wish, by means of the compulsory purchase powers of "The Belfast Improvement Act, 1878," and to re-sell or convey by lease in perpetuity said property, or as much as they required, to said Messrs. Hamilton and Gregg, a transaction which the presiding judge, Mr. Justice Lawson, characterised in the following terms:—

> "If there were no other element in the case than that Messrs. Hamilton and Gregg, two of the parties to the agreement, were members of the Corporation, and Mr. Gregg himself a member of the committee who entered into it, that agreement would not be worth the paper upon which it was written in a court of justice. But the case did not rest there, because there was a most extraordinary suppression of facts on the

part of Mr. Gregg and Mr. Hamilton, members of the Corporation, in entering into this transaction;"

whether such secret agreement amounted to a criminal conspiracy; whether Mr. Gregg still continues a member of the Belfast Corporation and their Improvement Committee—Mr. Hamilton having since ceased connection with the Council; whether Mr. Gregg still remains in the Commission of the Peace for the Borough of Belfast; and, whether the Law officers of the Crown, or the Lord Chancellor, propose to take any action in connection with the matters disclosed at the hearing of this case?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. LAW): Yes, Sir; my attention has been drawn to the newspaper reports of the trial referred to, in the course of which it appeared that an agreement somewhat of the character described had been made between the Corporation of Belfast and two of its members, but had been subsequently cancelled. The facts are complicated; but it will be sufficient for me to say that, however indefensible that agreement might have been, if it had been necessary to impeach it, the case was not one for a criminal prosecution. Mr. Gregg, I believe, still continues a member of the Corporation and its Improvement Committee, and also one of the borough magistrates of Belfast. The Law Officers do not consider it their duty to take any action in the matter.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—MR. DILLON.

COLONEL WALROND (for Mr. LONG) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been called to the following observations made by Mr. Dillon at the Land League meeting on Tuesday last:—

> "He (Mr. Dillon) would mention a case which occurred in his own county, Tipperary, the other day, but which has not appeared in the newspapers. It was a case in which forty police were brought to assist in putting a man out. They found the front door barricaded. The priest stood by and said he would not interfere, but thought it right to inform the police that the first blow they struck the door would result in five or six of them being shot by the men who were inside with loaded rifles. The police held a consultation, and then decided to return to Thurles;"

and, further, he (Mr. Dillon) said that—

> "If thus sought on any large scale to carry out evictions, the people were prepared to offer resistance, and would do so; and he certainly should say that the next time a man was shot in Ireland for refusing to leave his house, possibly the verdict would be, if he was not very much mistaken, one of wilful murder, not against the policeman who may have shot him, but against Gladstone and Forster, under whose orders the police fired;"

and, whether he intends taking any steps thereon?

MR. SEXTON, before the Chief Secretary answered the last Question, wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman, Whether he had read a full report of the speech of the hon. Member for Tipperary, and whether it did not appear from it that he stated that over 5,000, and probably even as many as 10,000, families were under process of eviction in Ireland, and that the Government would get one more chance of saying whether they intended to put a stop to this state of things; whether the hon. Member for Tipperary was not entitled to give the public warning of the desperate spirit excited amongst the Irish people by the unjust and cruel proceedings of numbers of Irish landlords who were turning helpless tenants out of their homes for non-payment of rent, after a period of severe distress, and were deliberately excluding them from the benefits of any rights sought to be vested in them by impending legislation; and, whether, in view of the tremendous peril involved in these proceedings, the hon. Member was not justified in the course he had adopted?

MR. T. O'CONNOR asked, whether the attention of the Chief Secretary had been called to a New York telegram in *The Daily News* of that day, according to which the emigration in the first three months of this year had amounted to 105,000 persons, being nearly 25,000 more than in the same period last year?

MR. PARNELL also wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman what was the object of the Government in suspending the Constitution in the City of Dublin?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: With regard to the second and third Questions, I must request that Notice be given of them. As to the Question of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), I have to say that the Government have proclaimed the County of the

City of Dublin under the Protection of Person and Property Act because we thought it necessary to do so. In reply to the Question of the hon. Member for North Wilts (Mr. Long), I have only to say that the attention of the Government has been closely directed to the speech made by the hon. Member for Tipperary, and it was under the close attention of the Government before the Question of the hon. Member was placed on the Notice Paper. That is all the answer I can give.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR gave Notice that, on Thursday, he would ask the Chief Secretary, Whether the cause alleged for the suspension of the Constitution in the City of Dublin, which contains 250,000 inhabitants, was not the proceedings at the Sheriff's sale at the farm of Mr. John Butterly, at Howth; and whether at that sale all the animals put up for sale, with the exception of some pigs, were not disposed of; whether the sales did not realize the sum of £62, the full amount claimed by the landlord; whether the members of the Emergency Committee present were not all armed; and whether, when one of the number was accused of having displayed a revolver, Sub-Inspector Heard refused to remove him, on the ground that he could not interfere with him unless the revolver was presented at someone; whether any of the members of the Land League were armed; whether when the cow bought by the Emergency Committee reached its destination the crowd quietly dispersed; whether the whole transaction was not considered of so ridiculous a character as only to excite a smile; and whether a single assault was committed on the police or any other person engaged in the sale, either at the sale itself or during the procession of many hours' duration from Howth to Dublin?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I think I had better say at once that I could not answer that Question. I do not consider that it would be my duty to give the reason for which particular districts are prescribed.

TURKEY AND GREECE—THE FRONTIER QUESTION.

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is true that the Turkish Government have accepted the final terms of the Powers for the settlement of the Greek Frontier?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: An Imperial Iradé, accepting the decision of the Powers, was sent yesterday from the Palace to the Porte.

PARLIAMENTARY OATHS BILL.

Mr. NEWDEGATE asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether, if the Notice of Motion in his name was not reached that night, when would it come on?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) thought that when the proper time came for making the Motion the Question should be put to the head of the Government.

Colonel MAKINS asked the Prime Minister, Whether, in reference to the Parliamentary Oaths or Bradlaugh Relief Bill, he intended to delare that the Public Business was urgent?

Mr. GLADSTONE: No, Sir, I do not.

MOTION.

ORDERS OF THE DAY—PARLIAMENTARY OATHS BILL.

In reply to Mr. Newdegate,

Mr. GLADSTONE said, it was intended that the debate on the Land Law (Ireland) Bill should terminate at a convenient hour that evening, so as to allow his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General to submit his proposal in regard to the Parliamentary Oath. The proposal he anticipated would not require any large development by statement; but if hon. Gentlemen were desirous of discussing it—which he had been given to understand was the case—he should propose to adjourn that debate until 2 o'clock to-morrow. That was the only arrangement he had now before him. He, therefore, begged now to move the Resolution that stood on the Notice Paper in his name as to the Orders of the Day.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the Orders of the Day, subsequent to the Order of the Day for resuming the Adjourned Debate on the Second Reading of the Land Law (Ireland) Bill, be postponed until after the Notice of Motion for the introduction of the Parliamentary Oaths Bill."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, he rose, with much respect, to ask the House to disagree to the Resolution. He owned that he was surprised at the inconsistency which was displayed by the proposal. A few days ago—he thought last Wednesday—the Prime Minister stated that he could not, under the circumstances, be induced to allow any legislation respecting the Parliamentary Oath to interfere with the very limited time which the Government had to give to the discussion of the Irish Land Bill; and yet the right hon. Gentleman now proposed to-day to break up the discussion on the Bill at an early hour in order that legislation affecting the Parliamentary Oath might be proceeded with. [Mr. GLADSTONE dissented.] Well, if it was not an early hour, better not do it at all. What could be the reason of that extraordinary, and, he thought, very unfortunate, change of opinion? It was difficult to assign any reason; but he must point out to the House that the Motion resembled the Irish Land Bill in this—that it was a concession to violence and mob law. It was part of an arrangement, he might almost say a bargain, entered into between the Prime Minister and the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster on the one part, and the two Members for Northampton on the other part, that, *coute que coute*, Mr. Bradlaugh should be brought into that House. The House had been asked to pass the Motion out of fear of what Mr. Bradlaugh might do, because Mr. Bradlaugh had intimated, or the Government thought it convenient to think that he had intimated, that if this course was not taken, Mr. Bradlaugh would come down every day and turn the House of Commons into a bear garden, and, under the protection of the Prime Minister, have a game at romps with the Serjeant-at-Arms. By agreeing to the Motion, the Speaker and the House would practically acknowledge that they were perfectly powerless to protect themselves from such scandalous proceedings, and that was an extremely discreditable position for the House to be placed in. But there was another reason which had occurred to him why the proposal was made. He thought it was intended partly to carry out the very thinly-veiled threat held out by the Prime Minister to the Irish Members that, if they permitted themselves to vote against him in this matter, they might be made to appear as if they were interfering with the progress of the Land Bill; or, in other words, if they ventured to obey the supreme dictates of their conscience and religion, they would be preventing the rapid promotion of measures in which their country was vitally concerned. Another, and the third, reason why hon. Members should not agree to this proposal was that it had the appearance of an attempt to bully the House of Commons. They knew perfectly well—at least those acquainted with the Parliament of 1868 knew perfectly well—that the Prime Minister was not one who allowed himself to be thwarted with impunity; and if the House of Commons chose to go against the right hon. Gentleman's commands, the House was made to pay for it; and the penalty they were to pay for defeating the Prime Minister in the Lobby the other night was that they were at that period of the Session to be treated to Morning Sittings. Let the House think how the proposal affected private Members. Hitherto, every hour had been taken away from them without one word of apology or compunction. Now they had an interval of about a month or six weeks, when private Members might bring forward Motions or draw attention to grievances; but if they tamely allowed this brief interval to be taken away from them, and devoted to the relief of Mr. Bradlaugh, they would allow the Government to monopolize the whole time of Parliament during the Session, and establish a precedent which might be followed in future Sessions. Why were they to make that concession? Why were they to postpone the Orders of the Day? Was it that they might discuss matters of absorbing interest or overwhelming importance? Were they to discuss the fearful state of Ireland? Was it in order that they might ask explanations of the burnings, and the flayings, and the mutilations, or the conflicts between the police and the mob, and the bloodshed on either side? Was it that they might know how the Chief Secretary for Ireland was using or misusing the great powers that were intrusted to him for the preservation of order? Not a bit of it. If that was the object, they might depend upon it the Government would put every obstacle in the way. If they asked English and Scotch measures to be proceeded with, would they be listened to? Not a bit of it. But they were now asked to break off the discussion on the Land Bill in order that a tremendous Constitutional change might be effected, and without notice, suddenly, and under the threat of violence, to seat Mr. Bradlaugh where he had no right to sit. ["Oh, oh!"] That was the position of Mr. Bradlaugh; he had no right to sit in the House. The ulterior object of the Motion was to enable the Prime Minister to repeat his great and glorious *coup* of last year, and force the House of Commons to stultify itself, and practically reverse a decision already solemnly arrived at. On all those grounds he asked the House to divide against the Motion. He did not expect much support from hon. Gentlemen opposite; he had grown accustomed to their want of independence. But he had hopes that there were many Members on the Conservative side of the House, and he hoped there were some also on the other side, who would, at all costs and hazards, resist the imperious and arbitrary behests of the Prime Minister, and who would give no facilities for placing in the House of Commons brazen Atheism and rampant disloyalty.

Mr. NEWDEGATE said, it was a departure from all precedent that the House should be hurried into the consideration of the question.

Mr. SPEAKER reminded the hon. Member that the point immediately before the House related to the order of Business, and that the line of argument he was pursuing was consequently out of Order.

Mr. NEWDEGATE, resuming, said, he intended to address himself to the order of Business. The course which it was proposed they should take was quite unprecedented; and he would adjure the House, for the sake of its own dignity, to be careful not to seem to deal lightly or hastily with a matter of so much importance. He was unwilling to adopt any course which would be liable to the imputation of faction, baseless as that imputation might be; and consequently he would content himself by asking the First Lord of the Treasury at what hour of the evening he proposed that the power which he had asked for from the House should be exercised?

Mr. ONSLOW, who rose amid considerable interruption, said, he could assure the right hon. Gentleman that there was a very strong feeling on both sides of the House that his Motion would tend to some very bitter and harsh words being uttered. The measure the right hon. Gentleman was now proposing, he would tell him, was one which was subversive of the Constitution of the country, and contrary to what was said in the Queen's Speech with regard to the important Business of the Session. The Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Bill, the Ballot Act Continuance and Amendment Bill, and the Bankruptcy Bill, which were characterized in the Speech from the Throne as very important measures, were all three on the Paper for discussion that evening; and yet the right hon. Gentleman proposed that the consideration of these Bills, as well as the discussion upon the Land Law (Ireland) Bill, should be postponed in order that a Bill might be brought in for the purpose of admitting Atheists into the Legislature. Watching, as he had done, the antecedents of the right hon. Gentleman, and knowing how strong his religious proclivities were, he could not help thinking that he did not like the task set before him, and, indeed, forced upon him, by two of the right hon. Gentlemen in the Cabinet—he meant the Members for Birmingham. ["Oh, oh!"] He could only tell the right hon. Gentleman that if he should continue to listen too readily to the opinions of the two right hon. Gentlemen whom he had designated, the Government of the right hon. Gentleman would not last very long. The Motion proposed by the Government being unprecedented, he trusted that every Conservative Member would vote with the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) in resisting it.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I have never, Sir, disguised from myself, nor have I disguised from the House, the difficulty which I feel to exist with regard to this question. I shall now endeavour, in a very few words, to express temperately what my own feelings upon this subject are. In the first place, I would say this—that the question which is raised by the intimation made on the part of the Government that they propose to ask for leave to bring in a Bill to alter the Parliamentary Oath, or in some way or other to deal with the Parliamentary Oath, is a question of the greatest gravity. It is a question of, at least, as much importance, I should say, as the question of the alteration of the Parliamentary Oath on the occasion when Jews were admitted to Parliament; and while I entirely desire to keep clear of any premature expression of opinion upon the measure itself, I may say that I am most anxious that it should be brought forward and discussed, on the responsibility of the Government, in a serious, solemn, and convenient manner. In the next place, I am very anxious that any proposal that may be made upon this subject should be made upon its own merits, and not with reference to the circumstances and the position of any particular individual. Nobody can for a moment doubt that it is the case of Mr. Bradlaugh which has raised the necessity, or, at all events, raised the question whether there should or should not be legislation upon this subject; and nobody can be surprised that, after what has taken place, the Government should think it right to invite the House to legislate with regard to it. At the same time, I hope the House will feel that its own dignity is concerned, and that other interests are concerned, in its not being allowed to appear that we are proceeding in anything like heat or haste in consequence of the occurrence of certain proceedings which have taken place. I think, also, that it is very desirable we should as soon as possible know what the nature of the proposal of the Government is, because I observe there are statements and comments made in public, and even in this House, as to that proposal, and we are really ignorant of what the nature of that proposal is. I think, therefore, that it would be convenient if the proposal were to be made known as soon as possible; but, on the other hand, I do not think the House should be asked to take even the step of allowing the introduction of a Bill without a fit and proper amount of time for its consideration. Now, I understand the course that the Government propose to take to be this—that they shall be allowed at some not very early hour this evening to make a brief statement on the nature of the Bill, and that then, having engaged the House in a discussion on its introduction, so that it may become an Order of the Day, they would propose to take a Morning Sitting to-morrow in order to further discuss it. That is equivalent to asking us to take to-morrow for the introduction of the Bill. There is never a Morning Sitting for the submission of a Motion, and so the Government propose to make their Bill an Order of the Day by introducing it to-night, and to continue the discussion to-morrow. Well, I am bound to say that I think that is too early. I think myself that it would be a reasonable and a feasible thing if we had the proposal of the Government made to-night, and that some later day should be taken for the discussion, unless, indeed, the Government say that the matter is one for which they will postpone other Business. But even that is open to the objection that it would mark the case as that of a particular individual, and give to the question a semblance—which I am loth to impute—a semblance of hurry for the purpose of avoiding a scandalous scene. I think myself that such a scene is not to be anticipated; I do not believe that we are in danger of it; but if I thought that we were, I should say—"Let the House take its own proper course." I do not, however, allow myself to contemplate the possibility of anything of the kind. For the reasons I have given, I would recommend the House to assent to the proposal of the Government that the Orders of the Day should at the same time be postponed for the purpose of enabling the Government to make their statement; but I am not prepared to go on with the discussion at a Morning Sitting to-morrow, and I think that a later hour should be proposed.

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, from the observations that have been made, I think it would be supposed by hon. Gentlemen who knew nothing of anterior proceedings that to gratify some humour, or, at any rate, some opinion of their own, Her Majesty's Government were gratuitously inviting the House to legislate on the subject of the Parliamentary Oath. We are, however, doing nothing of the kind. We are endeavouring to meet a case of very great difficulty created by a vote of the House to which we were distinctly objecting parties. There would have been no necessity to ask for Morning Sittings or any other Sittings for the purpose if it had not been that we had the misfortune to differ from the majority of the House, and that this majority did that which I frankly own I thought was debarring one of Her Majesty's subjects from the exercise of his legal right. The House, therefore, found itself in very great difficulty; and, so far as we could judge, it appeared that the proposal to legislate was the course which was most agreeable to the general sense of the House; and further—the very last thing which I, for one, should have desired, overpowered as we are with Business—that if such a proposal were made, it should be made on the responsibility of the Government. It is therefore a proposal which is not designed to meet any view of Her Majesty's Government, for Her Majesty's Government have their own views, and I would have desired to take an entirely different proceeding. It is a proposal made entirely in the interest of what we conceive to be the dignity of the House—the House of Commons having, as it was perfectly entitled to, being the only judges of its opinion, declared its voice in a manner which appeared to point to the necessity of such a proposal. Well, under ordinary circumstances, it is my impression that it would be consonant with the courtesy usually extended to every hon. Member who makes proposals, even of this nature —and it ought not to be withheld from the Government—that the Government should be allowed to lay their proposal on the Table without any difficulty. This is not a measure required by the views of the Government, but one suggested by the Government in order to meet the views of others than the Government on this particular question. In this particular instance, therefore, I hoped that, without discussion, we would be allowed to lay the Bill on the Table. The right hon. Gentleman, however, says he will not allow us to place the Bill on the Table. We must, he says, first make a verbal statement in reference to the measure, and then, without our having had an opportunity of verifying or vindicating the statement by the production of the printed Bill, an interval must be allowed to interpose between the statement of my hon. and learned Friend and the bringing in of the Bill itself. [Mr. NEWDEGATE: By the Standing Orders of the House.] By the Standing Order of the House! Then there is a Standing Order of the House to the effect that the stage of a debate on which it has been moved to introduce a Bill must be adjourned before the Bill is brought in. That is a piece of information entirely new to me, coming as it does from an hon. Gentleman who has sat for 40 years in this House, and with some little experience of the Standing Orders of the House. Now, Sir, it appears to me that it would be by far the best course that this Motion, which is of a purely formal character, should not be made use of for airing the opinion of the House in respect of the Bill, and in saying that I am only following the example of the right hon. Gentleman. I think it would be most desirable that my hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General should be permitted, without any delay at all, either to-night or to-morrow, to lay the Bill upon the Table of the House. If that were done then would arise the question, very fairly and properly stated as it has been, that this is a serious matter, and I agree with those who think that the stages of the Bill ought not to be unduly hastened. To that opinion I at once and very freely accede. I must say, on the other hand, that it would, I think, be a very unusual and inconvenient course if the proceedings should be interrupted after the speech of my hon. and learned Friend, and if I know not how many days were allowed to elapse before the Bill was laid upon the Table of the House. At the same time, I am in the condition of which the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) has availed himself. He knows very well the intense anxiety of the Government to get on with the important measure they have now in hand, and he has availed himself of the opportunity this formal Motion has given him of bringing pressure upon the Government by threatening to bring on debates and discussions, which, I believe, he has the great faculty of creating even in himself; and, therefore, the influence he exercises over us, whatever it may be on other grounds, is very considerable on that account now. I am too much in earnest about the Land Law (Ireland) Bill not to be sensible of the vital consequences of that measure and of my duty to press it forward, and not to do anything that can seriously interfere with it; and, therefore, much as I must regret what I think the very unusual and inconvenient course of allowing my hon. and learned Friend to make his statement, and then requiring an adjournment of the debate, which may last for many days before the introduction of the Bill, I shall certainly rather submit to such a course—I will not say concur in it—than waste and absorb the time of the House in discussing whether it should be followed or not. After once the Bill is introduced, then I shall freely accede to an interval before its second reading. At present, if I accede to it, I only accede to it complying with compulsion. As to the hour, I have already named the time as nearly as I am able at which we shall propose or endeavour to secure the postponement of the Land Law (Ireland) Bill.

MR. LEWIS said, if he could get anybody to join with him he should vote against the Motion. He looked upon the question as one of principle, and he maintained that the Conservative Party should be staunch in their defence of the religious feeling of the country on this question at every stage and turn. If not, it had better be absent from the House. As he had said, the question involved a great principle, and it was a matter of indifference to him what course the right hon. Gentleman on the front Opposition Bench took. [*Cries of* "Divide!"] The step taken by the Government was obnoxious to the strong convictions of millions of people in the country, and he would not be dragged into a particular Lobby by any terms or agreement made with right hon. Gentlemen opposite. The present state of this wretched dispute was far more serious than was its former stage. [*Loud cries of* "Divide!"] He asked —[*Renewed interruption*]—if he were not allowed to proceed he had but one course to adopt. The former question was one of law—[*Cries of* "Question!" "Adjourn!" *and* "Divide!"] He begged to move the adjournment of the House.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. Lewis.*)

MR. SPEAKER: The Question is, "That this Debate be now adjourned." [*Cries of* "House!" *and* "Debate!"]

MR. LEWIS: I certainly intended to use the word "Debate."

MR. GLADSTONE: Mr. Speaker, the Motion made was "That this House do now adjourn."

MR. LEWIS: I certainly intended to say "Debate."

MR. SPEAKER: I must ask the hon. Member what was the Motion he made?

MR. LEWIS: Sir, I am perfectly candid with the House. By a slip of the tongue I used the word "House" instead of the word "Debate."

MR. SPEAKER: The Question is "That this House do now adjourn."

The House *divided*:—Ayes 43; Noes 318: Majority 275.—(Div. List, No. 189.)

Original Question again proposed,

"That the Orders of the Day, subsequent to the Order of the Day for resuming the Adjourned Debate on the Second Reading of the Land Law (Ireland) Bill, be postponed until after the Notice of Motion for the introduction of the Parliamentary Oaths Bill."

COLONEL MAKINS said, that the right hon. Gentleman, in his speech just now, admitted a great part of the charge of the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) when he said it was not the fault of the Government that the House was to be called upon to have Morning Sittings, and to devote some of the time which ought to be given to the Land Law (Ireland) Bill to the discussion of the question of the Oath. He understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that he would not have felt it his duty to propose Morning Sittings if the majority had not voted against him the other day. The meaning of that was that the House was to be punished with Morning Sittings because a majority had disagreed with the Prime Minister and his Colleagues. He understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that if the hon. and learned Attorney General were permitted to introduce the Bill that night there would be no Morning Sitting on Tuesday, but that there would be one on Friday for this purpose, so as to avoid interfering with the progress of the Land Bill. That, of course, partially met the case of the opponents of the Motion, but not entirely; because, after the forcible way in which the right hon. Gentleman had insisted on the importance of carrying on the discussion on the Land Law (Ireland) Bill, if he did not ask for a Morning Sitting to-morrow, he would ask for one on some subsequent day. It seemed to be trifling with the House first to go on with the Land Law (Ireland) Bill, and then to introduce a measure which would involve the consumption of an enormous amount of time and the consequent deprivation of the rights of private Members for the Session. If he were correct in understanding that there was to be a Morning Sitting on Friday, he should vote against the present Motion.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he had understood the Prime Minister to say that, if the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General were allowed to make his statement regarding the Parliamentary Oath to-night, the further consideration of the Bill would be put off for a considerable time, so that the House and the country might understand the nature of the proposal that the Government thought it right to make under the circumstances. The suggestion he would make was this—that, the statement of the hon. and learned Gentleman having been made, the Government would not propose a Morning Sitting on Tuesday or Friday, which would deprive private Members of their just rights. If the other side had been in opposition, they would never for one moment have allowed such a thing, so he ventured to ask hon. Gentlemen to support the Opposition in pressing upon the Government to give a Government night for the discussion of one of the most important measures as to the constitution of the House. If the Government would grant that, there would be no further opposition to the proposal. He asked the right hon. Gentleman humbly, but firmly, whether he would give a Government night for the discussion of their proposals? But in stating this they would most certainly also reserve to themselves the right, after hearing the proposal of the Government, to consider what course they ought to adopt in the difficult circumstances in which they were placed.

Mr. DILLWYN ventured to urge the Government to accede to the proposal which had been made on the other side by the hon. and gallant Baronet (Sir Walter B. Barttelot). He would say, let the Bill be introduced this evening, and its further consideration be delayed till Friday evening, otherwise the night would be lost as regarded the Land Law (Ireland) Bill.

Mr. MAC IVER moved the adjournment of the debate, because he conceived that no good purpose could be served by the further adjournment of the question that night. He also thought that the Prime Minister should in a few words indicate to the House what was the precise nature of the Bill. He ventured to think that an Affirmation made by a notorious Atheist and Republican would be a mere formality, and not a solemn declaration of loyalty.

Mr. CALLAN seconded the Motion for adjournment, in order to give himself an opportunity of addressing the House at an earlier period than he otherwise could. He hoped that the Prime Minister would not yield to the insidious appeal of the hon. and gallant Baronet (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) that he should give up a Government night for the discussion of the subject. As an independent Member fresh from Ireland, he could assure the House that the widest feeling of regret existed in that country that precedence should be given to this matter over the all-important subject of the Land Law (Ireland) Bill. Suppose the Government took a Morning Sitting the next day, would any more of the time of the House be occupied with the subject previous to the second reading of the Land Law (Ireland) Bill? He hoped the Government did not intend to yield altogether to the violence and intimidation of the electors of Northampton; and he had only to express his regret that they showed greater deference to his convenience than to the wants and wishes of the Irish people.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned." —(*Mr. Mac Iver.*)

Mr. CHAPLIN hoped his hon. Friend the Member for Birkenhead (Mr. Mac Iver) would withdraw his Motion for the adjournment of the debate if the Prime Minister would accede to the appeal of the hon. and gallant Baronet the Member for West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot), and fix a Government night for the introduction of the Bill. If, however, the right hon. Gentleman intended to take a Morning Sitting, he would support the Motion of his hon. Friend.

Mr. NEWDEGATE said, he had voted with great regret against the Motion of the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis), because that Motion was a mistake. The hon. Member ought to have moved the adjournment of the debate, He hoped the hon. Member for Birkenhead (Mr. Mac Iver) would not divide the House on his Motion for adjournment, because the question should be treated with the gravity with which it ought to be treated as a matter affecting religion. The first and oldest Standing Order with respect to Public Business was passed 99 years ago, and it was this—

> "That no Bill relating to religion, or any alteration of the law concerning religion, be brought into this House until the proposal shall have been first considered in Committee of the Whole House, and agreed unto by the House."

He trusted when the hon. and learned Attorney General made his statement, that the House would consider it in Committee in accordance with that Standing Order.

MR. GLADSTONE, in answer to the question which had been put to him, would say a very few words. He was anxious that the Bill should be proceeded with by his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General to-morrow, without a wrangle; but if a vote could not be given willingly that evening upon the question, it must stand over till Friday. It had been suggested that the matter, if taken on Friday, should follow Supply. He had no objection to that; but it must depend upon the appearance of the Notice Paper. He would leave it till Thursday to make a final arrangement. He appealed to the hon. Member for Birkenhead (Mr. Mac Iver) to withdraw his Motion.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE said, he hoped, after the statement of the Prime Minister, that the Motion for the adjournment of the debate would be withdrawn, as he thought the House would have a fair opportunity for discussion.

MR. MAC IVER said, that, in consequence of the appeal of the right hon. Baronet, he would ask leave to withdraw his Motion.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolved, That the Orders of the Day, subsequent to the Order of the Day for resuming the Adjourned Debate on the Second Reading of the Land Law (Ireland) Bill, be postponed until after the Notice of Motion for the introduction of the Parliamentary Oaths Bill.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) BILL.—[BILL 135.]

(*Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Forster, Mr. Bright, Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland.*)

SECOND READING. ADJOURNED DEBATE.

[THIRD NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [25th April], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

LORD ELCHO, in rising to move the following Amendment, of which he had given Notice:—

> "That this House, while willing to consider any just measure, founded upon sound principles, that will benefit tenants of land in Ireland, is of opinion that the leading provisions of the Land Law (Ireland) Bill are in the main economically unsound, unjust, and impolitic;"

said, he would show his grateful sense of the kindness which had been extended to him on Thursday last by not detaining the House now at any length. Fortune, in the shape of the Parliamentary wheel, having brought his Amendment to the surface, he now stood between the Bill and the Amendment of his noble Friend the Member for North Leicestershire (Lord John Manners). He, however, must adhere to his own Amendment; but, in doing so, he hoped the House would give him the credit of believing that if he thought the Amendment of his noble Friend was more to the purpose than his own, he would willingly give place to his noble Friend. But when he looked at his noble Friend's Amendment, he felt that it did not express objection to the Bill in a clear and definite manner, that it was vague, uncertain, and wordy, and that it in no way affected the principle of the Bill. For what did his noble Friend's Amendment say? Leaving out the reference to the Ulster and other customs, it said that the measure "confuses, without settling on a just and permanent basis, the relations of landlord and tenant." Now, if the House was to vote upon that, and if the Bill was to pass into law and was to fail, as it would fail, and if the Prime Minister were to bring in, after three, four, or five years, another Bill, he would be able to point to that Resolution and say that the present measure had been accepted by the Conservative Party, because there was nothing in the Resolution against it. He objected to that, and therefore, without further preface, he begged to move the Amendment standing in his name upon the Paper.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "this House, while willing to consider any just measure, founded upon sound principles, that will benefit tenants of land in Ireland, is of opinion that the leading provisions of the Land Law (Ireland) Bill are in the main economically unsound, unjust, and impolitic,"—(*Lord Elcho,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, he did not intend to discuss, with a view to determine between either the Amendment just moved by the noble Lord the Member for Haddingtonshire (Lord Elcho), or the Amendment which had been put on the Paper by his noble Friend (Lord John Manners); he proposed rather to confine his observations to the Bill itself. The Prime Minister, in introducing the Bill, spoke of the gravity of the occasion and the vast interests involved, and he (Mr. W. H. Smith) must say he never rose to address the House with a deeper sense of responsibility, or a greater consciousness of the grave and serious condition in which Ireland was now found. He believed there never was a period in which the condition of Ireland could be more accurately described as it had been in the language of an hon. Gentleman who had spoken of it as "desperate and critical." He believed there were parts of Ireland in which it would be impossible for a loyal man to protect his property and interests except by joining the Land League; that the only law which existed was correctly described by the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Forster) when he introduced the Coercion Bill as the law of the Land League; and that tenants and landlords, loyal subjects of Her Majesty, were alike unable to follow their ordinary avocations, or protect themselves from the bullet of the assassin, or outrages aimed at their life and property. The responsibility of the Government was, undoubtedly, very great; it was very heavy, and very serious. It was their duty to maintain law and order in Ireland, and it was the duty of that House to give them all the support possible in the efforts they might make to do so. He would, therefore, endeavour as far as he could to avoid making use of any language or reference which in the least degree might throw difficulties in the path, the grave and difficult path, before the Government, or increase in the slightest degree the amount of their serious responsibility. A great agitation had been going on in Ireland during the last year, an agitation in the opinion of many which had not been discouraged by Her Majesty's Government. There was an impression, he would not say entirely and fully warranted, that this agitation had not been completely put down or grappled with as it might have been, because it was supposed to tend favourably towards a stringent, drastic, and complete Land Bill. Now, he desired to do everything in his power to heal the serious troubles existing in Ireland and to pass any measure which, in his opinion, might benefit the people of that country; but the question was, Would this measure tend to benefit the people of Ireland, or to heal those sores and troubles which existed in Ireland, and which they all deplored, and to bring peace and contentment to that portion of the British Empire which had been long a cause of anxiety and humiliation to the Government of this country? He ventured to ask was the Bill based on sound principles? He was aware that a policy might change, and that there were times which necessitated changes of policy with Governments and statesmen. He made no accusation against right hon. Gentlemen opposite on that account; but there was a vast difference between a change of policy and a distinct change of principles. Principles which were really sound must remain sound, whatever the circumstances in which they were applied, and whether the condition of things in the country to which they were applied was different or not. Well, they had heard a great deal of the principles which had been asserted and maintained by right hon. Gentleman opposite up to a very recent period; but he would not weary the House by repeating their arguments, which appeared to him unanswerable, and facts which appeared to him irrefutable. He would only ask them to consider what the evils were which they were endeavouring now to remedy. It was stated by the Prime Minister in his introductory speech that there was a "land hunger," meaning a "land scarcity," and it was stated the evils under which the people of Ireland laboured were an arbitrary raising of rent and cruel evictions; and, in moving the second reading of the Bill, the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland said the main objects were to secure land tenure, to increase the number of landed proprietors, and to relieve the overcrowded districts. But was the present a Bill that would prove a complete remedy for the evil which was called "land hunger" and the other evils complained of? It would certainly take from the owner the power of arbitrarily raising his rent. That he (Mr. W. H. Smith) never doubted. But he doubted very much whether it would increase very largely the number of proprietors, or whether there was any provision whatever in the Bill suited or likely to attain the object of relieving the overcrowded districts. There was one evil which had been reported by all the Commissions, and that was the great poverty and misery which prevailed in some parts of Ireland, and the absolute insufficiency of the means of living afforded to the people. He asked himself and the House whether this Bill did offer to the people of Ireland a remedy for that insufficiency? Did it promise any reasonable hope that a remedy would be provided for overcrowding in some parts of Ireland? Would it afford the means of living on small holdings, so that occupiers of three, four, or five acres should be able to cultivate the land and obtain a sufficient livelihood from it for their families? In the Bill he found no such provision. That he was not speaking rashly, that such was the view of the Commissioners, he would show by reading one or two extracts. It was abundantly clear that one of the greatest evils in the state of Ireland was the disposition of the people to live on plots of land that were altogether incapable of supporting a family. The Report of the Duke of Richmond's Commission said—

> "With respect to the very small holders in the Western districts of Ireland, we are satisfied that on the slightest failure of their crops, they would be unable to exist on the produce of their farms, even if they paid no rent. It is proved by evidence that in some parts of Ireland agricultural depression arises from the population being larger than can be profitably employed on the cultivation of land."

Lord Carlingford, also, had expressed much the same opinion of the effect of small holdings. The noble Lord went on to say that the probability was that the intermittent employment of persons who had small holdings in Ireland, and who crossed over to England during part of the year, would continue to decrease, that less and less reliance would have to be placed on such employment, and that consequently, unless the circumstances of the very small occupiers were much improved, they would find their means of support insufficient. He entirely concurred in that view. It seemed that the only comfort offered to these poor people was the probability that they might be tempted by a sum of money offered by some other tenant to go out into the world in order to find a different means of livelihood. He (Mr. W. H. Smith) was afraid that was a very unsatisfactory prospect. If some practical attempt had been made in the way of appointing a Commission, consisting of such men as Mr. Tuke and Mr. King-Harman, whose knowledge of the subject and sympathy with the people were undoubted, with power to endeavour to grapple with the difficulty in a manner conducive to the honour and prosperity of the country, and at the same time equitably considering the claims of the small tenants, he would have admitted that at least an effort had been made to deal with the problem. It was a great and crying evil, and one that it was unanimously conceded ought not to be any longer tolerated; but he found in the Bill no practical endeavour to reduce it. Some time ago evidence was given of the effect of the Land Act of 1870 on the poorer class of occupiers. That Act gave them a claim for compensation for disturbance, which had several times been referred to in the course of the debate as an improvement in their condition, and as giving them a distinct interest in the land they occupied. What was the result? Why, it had come to his notice that many of those small tenants had been enabled in the early years after the Land Act to obtain credit. It was supposed that they were richer, while, in fact, they were only spending money. They contracted debts, till after a time the power of obtaining credit ceased, and their small properties were swallowed up by the money-lenders. Then came the bad harvests of a few years ago, and then the famine and the misfortunes which it had been so difficult to alleviate. The end was that they were worse off than ever; and it appeared to him that, as far as those small tenants were concerned, if the Bill gave them a new interest in their holdings, the same thing would happen again that had followed the passing of the Act of 1870. They would obtain credit, and for a time would appear more prosperous; but sooner or later disastrous harvests would occur again, their credit would be exhausted, famine would overtake them, and it would again be the sad duty of England to endeavour to save the perishing people from starvation. He trusted the House would allow him to speak of a circumstance that had come to his knowledge. It had been his duty while in Office to request an officer to distribute seed potatoes in the districts of the West Coast of Ireland. The officer reported that the failure of the crop was not at all remarkable, because the people reserved the smallest and blackest of their potatoes for seed, and from sheer necessity ate all that were eatable. By no possibility could the crop have been a good one. That, unhappily, was the story heard over and over again. Unless the country endeavoured to meet a real and serious difficulty, and unless some practical efforts were made by persons whose knowledge and position would forcibly recommend the course they proposed for adoption by the Government, the melancholy history of the last few years would repeat itself. Both the Prime Minister and the Chief Secretary for Ireland had told the House that the Land Laws of Ireland were generally more favourable to the tenants than the English Land Laws, and, indeed, than the Land Laws of any other country. Those were the statements of the two right hon. Gentlemen, and the owners of land were acquitted as having, in the main, discharged their duty by letting their land with consideration for their tenants, and with a full consciousness of the fact that the possession of land differed from the possession of other property. There were, of course, exceptions to the rule; but the Bill was not intended to deal with the exceptions—to supply a remedy for an admitted exceptional evil—but it would subject all the landlords to new and onerous conditions. The hunger for land, of which so much had been said, was, no doubt, a great evil, and, by producing competition, brought about an undue increase of rent all over Ireland. He accepted without hesitation the principle that a landlord ought not to exact an excessive rent from a tenant, such a one as he was incapable of paying. But how did the Bill affect that question? First of all, it declared that rents should not be raised beyond a proper level, and then it proceeded to fix that level. It increased the scale of compensation for disturbance; and as to that he had little to say, as he freely admitted that a tenant capriciously evicted had a claim for consideration. But the Bill went much further, and carved out of the property of the owner a share or portion that was to be for ever the property of the occupying tenant who had paid nothing for it. It gave the tenant the right to sell that newly-acquired property for the best price he could get, reserving to the landlord only his illusory right of pre-emption. As for the value of that right of pre-emption, the 1st clause of the Bill provided that the landlord might purchase the tenancy for such sum as might be agreed upon, or, in the event of disagreement, for such sum as might be fixed by the Court; but in the 45th section the landlord was informed that if, during the first period of 15 years, he let a holding in which he had purchased the tenant's interest, a new interest was at once created of the same character, and of the same description in every respect, and imposing on him the same peculiar burdens. It came to this—that if, under the 1st clause, the landlord purchased the interest of the tenant, he was compelled by Clause 45, unless he farmed the land himself, to set up and admit another tenant's interest. It was, therefore, hardly conceivable that any landlord could, or would care to, exercise his right of pre-emption. And afterwards the new tenant would go to the Court and have a judicial rent fixed, as if he had paid for and purchased his interest in the land. The argument used in 1870 by the Prime Minister against such a proceeding as that had already been referred to by another speaker, and he, therefore, would not read it again. It would be fresh in the memory of every one. It seemed to him strange and extraordinary that the only remedy for the scarcity of land was to take from the landlord the power of selection of his tenants and the power of dealing as he thought fit with his land; for it was shown by these Reports, and admitted by the right hon. Gentleman himself, that the majority of landlords in the greater part of Ireland exercised their rights with the gravest sense of responsibility to their tenants, that the rents were not high, and that the landlords used their power with an earnest desire to benefit their tenants. They were, however, no longer to be allowed to exercise that duty. If a hunger for land existed, was it to be met by an existing tenant offering his interest for sale to a man who wished to become a tenant, and by his obtaining, in the words of the clause, the best price he could get? He could understand the Bill if it were a measure to grant a property to a limited number of persons, irrespective altogether of other persons who in their turn might wish to be in possession of that property. But it was a Bill which, under any circumstances, must impose a large additional burden on the cost of cultivating the land of Ireland. There was to be under it a fair rent, and, added to that, a competitive value in the tenancy. This must go on increasing, if the land hunger remained, and if the desperate resolve of the people to cling to the land remained also. Could it be conceived that this was an answer to the demand for land and a cure for the scarcity of land without increasing the quantity of land by one single acre? Was this all that could be said to the hundreds of thousands of men who desired to become tenants in Ireland—"There is no good landlord who will give you a chance of a tenancy; but you may buy out another man by paying an enhanced price?" He thought this was a singular answer to the demand made, not for the existing tenants of Ireland, but for the people of Ireland to enter on the employment they loved most—namely, the occupation of land. Anyone who knew anything of Ireland would recognize in the Irish character an immense amount of family affection, and a desire to do the best they could for their children. What would happen under the provisions of this Bill? If a tenant of 12 or 15 acres died leaving three children, either all of them would try to live on the holding, or one of the sons would be charged with the duty of paying an almost impossible price to his brothers or sisters for the privilege of cultivating the whole of it. If hon. Members followed this, they would see in it the seeds of misfortune and a burden to the people of Ireland which had not yet been fully explained. He came now to that part of the Bill which professed to fix a fair rent. He maintained that no one who had any claim to credit or respectability desired to exact any more than a fair rent for any property of which he might be possessed; but there were a great many conditions which must be taken into account when a fair rent was being estimated. Only last year, he read a most interesting speech by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright) on the question of ascertaining a fair rent by a Government officer. That difficulty remained, notwithstanding the fact that right hon. and hon. Gentlemen might have changed their view as to the policy to be pursued on this subject. He agreed that improvements made by the tenant ought to be and must be fully secured to him by law; but he would ask the House carefully to examine the conditions of a fair rent set forth in the 7th clause of the Bill. His right hon. and learned Friend the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) had put certain questions on this subject to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant and the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Law). Those questions had been evaded, and no satisfactory answer had been given to them, on the ground that they were questions for consideration in Committee. But the question of fair rent was one that entered into the principle of the Bill, and if the Opposition pointed out that the construction of the Bill was so bad with regard to that question that it absolutely required to be altered in order to make the Bill acceptable, surely it was only reasonable that they should give right hon. Gentlemen opposite an opportunity of saying what it was they really intended. His right hon. and learned Friend said the tenant's interest was carved out of the property of the landlord. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant replied—"I say that would be very unfair. We do not believe that our clause will bear such an interpretation." What he (Mr. W. H. Smith) and his right hon. and learned Friend asked was that Her Majesty's Government should say distinctly what it was that they did mean. What was not intended to be done had been actually done in regard to this matter, for the tenant, at that moment, possessed, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, an interest which Her Majesty's Government, in 1870, asserted they did not intend to give him. If that were the case, it was absolutely necessary that in questions of this kind the words of the Bill now before the House should be made clear and without dispute. A question had been raised as to the proper meaning of the 7th section of the Bill. He found that Section 7 said that a fair rent meant such a rent as "a solvent tenant would undertake to pay one year with another;" and that was interpreted by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland, who was not to be trapped into answering his (Mr. W. H. Smith's) right hon. and learned Friend's questions, to mean that a fair rent was a competition rent minus the income of the tenant's interest. Now, he (Mr. W. H. Smith) referred to the Bill to ascertain what the tenant's interest was. He found it said—

> "That the Court, in fixing such rent, shall"—not may—"have regard to the tenant's interest in the holding, and the tenant's interest shall be estimated with reference to the following considerations; that is to say,
>
> (*a*.) In the case of any holding subject to the Ulster tenant right custom or to any usage corresponding therewith—with reference to the said custom or usage;
>
> (*b*.) In cases where there is no evidence of any such custom or usage—with reference to the scale of compensation for disturbance by this Act provided (except so far as any circumstances of the case shown in evidence may justify a variation therefrom), and to the right (if any) to compensation for improvements effected by the tenant or his predecessors in title."

That was absolutely mandatory to the Court, which must take notice of the interest that the tenant had acquired. What was that interest? The first words of the Bill said the tenant "may sell his tenancy for the best price that can be got for it." Well, he (Mr. W. H. Smith) contended that what the tenant thus sold was his interest, and that the sum paid by the tenant purchasing his interest at the best price would be the measure of the value of that interest, and that measure being ascertained by sale, perhaps three or four times during the course of the tenancy, and ascending each time, the Court must have regard to the price paid, under the powers given by this Bill, in open Court—that was, by the competition for the interest which the tenant had in his holding. With regard to the competition rent he had one word to say. It was to be a competition rent; but there was to be no competition, because the owner could not go with the land to the market and ask what they would give for the land. He could only say to somebody—"Will you come and buy my tenant out, and then take the land?" The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland spoke in a light way of the "lunatics" who gave large sums for tenant right in different parts of Ireland. According to the right hon. and learned Gentleman's view, there were a great many lunatics in Ireland; but they seemed to have a large amount of method in their madness. He held in his hand a Return that was published in *The Times* on the 28th of January, being a statement of sales of tenant right on the estate of the Duke of Abercorn, from which it appeared that between October, 1876, and October, 1880, 35 holdings, of the total rental of £1,093, were sold, and that the value of the tenant right which changed hands was no less than £26,143—an average of 25 years' purchase. In some cases the amount rose to 40 or 50 years' purchase; in others it fell to 11. If the clause remained as it stood in the Bill, the Court would be obliged to have regard to the amount paid in each of those cases. Then, the full value of the land, supposing it to be free of tenant right, having been ascertained, the interest of those payments would be deducted from that value, and what was called the fair rent would remain. If that was the proper interpretation of the Bill, and he believed no other interpretation could be put upon it, he was told on high authority that in that case a very large share indeed of the value of the land in fee would be at once taken from the owner. The tenant having purchased under the Bill would go to the Court and say—"Fix me a judicial rent for the next 15 years." The Court must do so; meanwhile, the same holding could be sold again and again during that period, the price constantly rising with the "earth hunger" to which the Prime Minister had referred, until the latest tenant might come to the Court and say, when the time for the revision of the rent had arrived—"I have been obliged to pay 25 per cent more for this holding than was paid 14 years ago, but the land is not worth a farthing more than it was then. Deduct that 25 per cent from the rent for the next 15 years." If he was not mistaken—and he had fortified his own opinion with that of eminent lawyers—that would be the effect of the Bill. Only a few days ago as much as 30 years' purchase was paid for tenant right on the estate of Lord Anglesey. With such a result as that encountering them on the threshold of this measure, he trusted he had justified his demands for a plainer answer to the question, What did the clause mean? As it stood, the clause was open only to one interpretation, as it seemed to him—namely, that it was intended to carve a large slice off the landlords' property for the benefit of the tenant. They had heard a great deal about the machinery by which the fair rent was to be fixed. For his own part, he objected entirely to the State undertaking the responsibility of fixing the rent of land all over Ireland—a task which none of the Commissions ever proposed to impose upon it. And how was that object to be arrived at? The Land Commission was to consist of three persons only, one of whom was to be a Judge of the Supreme Court in Ireland. Well, he should have thought that for the settlement of such important questions it would have been advisable to appoint more than one person of the rank and experience and independence of Judges. He attached the greatest importance to the impartiality which the Judges were able to exercise by reason of their being practically irremovable. For that reason, he did not at all object to the Court of First Instance, although County Court Judges were not, perhaps, the best judges of agricultural questions. When he came to consider the constitution of the Court of Appeal, however, he was lost in amazement. There were to be any number of Assistant Commissioners, possessing all the powers of the Land Commission itself, and there was no provision that those persons should know anything either of land or agriculture. What class of persons they would be might be gathered from Clause 43, which stated that—

> "No person being a member of or employed by the land commission shall by reason of such membership or employment acquire any right to compensation, superannuation, or other allowance on abolition of his office or otherwise."

That meant, practically, that the only persons who would accept the position of Assistant Commissioners would be those who were failures in life, men without present occupation and with no future before them. What was worse still, they could be absolutely the servants of their chiefs. They would not express any independent opinion of their own. Anything they might do which was inconsistent with the views of their chiefs would render them liable to instant dismissal. He thought that the Bill, as had already been said, simply meant litigation. Instead of being a boon, it was an apple of discord thrown into every part of Ireland between landlord and tenant, and he could not but deplore the fact. What was to be done with regard to the labourer's wages, which necessarily entered into consideration in the fixing of fair rents? The Bill took away the chance of a man bebecoming a farmer unless he got into debt by placing himself in the hands of the money-lender, and if that were the case, they would shortly have to determine what fair wages were. The Chief Secretary for Ireland the other day said the Poor Law had a good deal to do with that subject. It used to be said that the old Poor Law enabled farmers to reduce wages; but he had never before heard that the new Poor Law regulated wages. His objection to the proposed legislation was that in itself it was bad, and that it could not be confined to one description of property, but must be extended on the slightest agitation, or the first occurence of real distress in England to a great many other descriptions, and must affect a great many other relations besides those existing between landlords and tenants and the owners and occupiers of land. He cordially welcomed any proposal having for its objects to increase the number of small proprietors. Nothing could, he believed, be more beneficial to the whole country than that that should be done; but then it should be done naturally and with some prospect of success. Now, if the present Bill passed, he could not help thinking that there would be in Ireland no other persons to purchase land but the small proprietors. No regular investor, recollecting the result of the investments made under the Landed Estates Court, would be tempted by such legislation to invest in land in Ireland. A great many, on the contrary, would be desirous of selling out, and it would be only small purchasers who, as he had said, would be desirous of buying. Further, with his experience at the Treasury, he must say he objected most strongly to the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the time being becoming, on the part of the State, the mortgagee of the land of Ireland. Nothing would, he thought, be more dangerous, or tend more effectually to defeat the object which they all had in view. What in the circumstances would be the position of a Chancellor of the Exchequer in a shaky Government? When he (Mr. W. H. Smith) was at the Treasury, he had to look into many Irish advances, and he was told by gentlemen from Ireland, when he said that the Treasury would require repayment of those advances, that he was taking a very mean view of the question. Advances were urged on the Treasury which he knew would not be repaid; and how had they been urged? By hon. Gentlemen who had votes in that House. Was it not clear, then, that after a period of bad seasons, when everyone would naturally sympathize with the occupiers of land in Ireland, the Irish Representatives would come to the Treasury and say that their friends were unable to pay the money which had been advanced to them, and that they must have time? Would it be possible in these circumstances to refuse the time thus asked? And would not a pressure be brought to bear upon the Government by the voting power of Ireland which they might find it impossible to resist, in the desire to get rid of a liability which by honest endeavours might ultimately be met? Grave injustice would, he believed, be done to the future of Ireland if the State were made the mortgagee of the land of that country. They were giving a premium to agitation, and encouraging a dislike to meet the ordinary obligations of commerce. But how, then, he might be asked, was the object which the Government had in view of increasing the number of small proprietors in Ireland to be attained? No one desired that more than himself; but it might, he thought, be secured by another and a far better process than that which was proposed in the Bill. Capital was at present abundant, and if it were distinctly understood that the security was good, it might be had at the rate of 3½ per cent, that being the same rate as the Treasury proposed to advance it. Now, that being so, what he should desire to see done was that advances should be made from an Irish fund, constituted under the provisions of the Bill. There was a large amount of remaining property derivable from the land at the disposal of the Church Commission, and he should be prepared to concur in a grant to assist in the formation of a guarantee fund. His recommendation would be that this part of the Bill should be reconstructed so as to establish a Commission, whose duty it would be to deal with the question of purchasing estates, and giving them the power to issue debentures representing the amount of money to be secured on the land, and that these should be guaranteed by the fund in question. Once such a fund was established, those by whom it was administered would not be exposed to the pressure which would be sure to be brought to bear on the Representative of the Treasury in that House in times of trouble and difficulty, and there would be a guarantee against any possible risk which might result from the failure of the tenant from time to time to meet his engagements. He further objected to the proposal of the Government, on the ground that it involved an Annual Act, instead of allowing any scheme which might be adopted a reasonable time to develop itself. As to the purchase of land by the tenant, he was disposed to ask why the tenant should buy under the operation of the Bill? That was a question which deserved, he thought, the serious consideration of the Government. If the Bill gave the tenant something very substantial which he did not now possess, something very much more than he had in 1870, what would he naturally say to himself? Why, that he got what he had as the result of agitation; that if he bought now he must buy at the present value of land; but that if he went on agitating for another 10 years he would get something more. He would be aware that he could get a fair rent determined by the Court, subject to all the new conditions which the Bill would create, and that at the expiration of a few years he might get his rent reduced by one-third or one-half. He could, therefore, see no inducement, as matters stood, to the tenant to become a purchaser. Under the purchase clauses of the Bill, he might add, the Commission was to be authorized to buy any estate of which three-fourths of the tenants were willing to become the purchasers. If such a purchase should be effected, what would be the position of the new owner as to the remaining fourth part of the estate? The tenants who would be left would naturally be the least well-to-do, and the unfortunate landlord would have to get his rents as best he could. What price, if he wished to sell, would he get for that fourth part? It was clear that property sold in that way could not realize a reasonable price; the difficulties in the way of such a sale would be enormous. He would next say a few words about the advances to be made by the Treasury for the purpose of reclamation of waste lands. He had no objection to the Treasury's advancing funds to anybody willing to comply with the conditions of the Bill. But did it occur to anybody that a single individual could be found to advance money for the reclamation of land under the conditions of land ownership which were to be established by that Bill? What inducement was there to enter upon a large scheme for reclamation of land in Ireland when the real power, authority, and interest in the land were vanishing away from ownership? He admitted that the present condition of Ireland rendered some legislation on the subject absolutely necessary; but he objected to that measure, and could not give it his support, because he believed it would unsettle everything and settle nothing, and he had no reason to suppose it would satisfy anybody. He believed that that measure, which was held out as a boon, would not allay discontent, and would prove to be wholly ineffective. He wanted to know whether the Bill was a sham or a reality? Did it really mean to transfer property from one person to another, or was it wholly a delusive scheme? He did not believe that the Bill in its present shape would obtain the assent of the majority of the House. Extravagant expectations would be raised among large numbers of people who expected to be made prosperous by Act of Parliament. He had listened attentively to the eloquent speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Dundalk (Mr. C. Russell), and there were some portions of that speech with which he could agree, and with no part more than that in which the hon. and learned Gentleman said that no artificial contrivances would avail for Ireland's good. He thought that the Bill would be found to be one of those artificial contrivances which would make prosperity, happiness, and contentment impossible in Ireland for the future. He agreed with the hon. and learned Gentleman that much, almost all, must depend upon the people themselves, upon their energy, thrift, and self-denial. It was by the exercise of these qualities, not alone, but in the main, that they could hope to rise from the misery and degradation they had suffered for so many centuries to enjoy the full fruits of their labour. He did not think the people of Ireland ought to be encouraged to come to that House for legislation and money whenever they were in a strait; they should only expect from that House to be secured in the full return of all that their industry and labour produced, and they should be told that that was the best which it was in the power of the Legislature to bestow.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, that no one on his side of the House could take exception to the general tone and temper with which the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had approached the subject before the House. The right hon. Gentleman had spoken with a sense of responsibility, under the serious condition of things now existing in Ireland, very different from that in which the subject had been treated by the noble Lord the Member for Haddingtonshire (Lord Elcho). The right hon. Gentleman appeared to admit the necessity of wide legislation on the subject, though he did not approve the Bill before the House. There was one expression, however, which he thought the right hon. Gentleman would on reflection regret, and that was that the Government had not altogether discouraged the agitation of last year in the expectation that a stringent and drastic measure would in that way be made more feasible. He would not express an opinion on that kind of language. The Government were quite prepared to deal with an unlawful agitation in a proper manner; and the agitation of last year had been unfavourable to their plans for the amelioration of Ireland. The Bill was in no sense due to agitation. It was due to the rightful demands of the Irish people, which were expressed in a constitutional form at the last General Election. The noble Lord the Member for Haddingtonshire was quite right in saying that the Irish Land Question was not raised in the English and Scotch elections. But it was raised before the Irish electors throughout the length and breadth of the country. There was not a Member returned, with, perhaps, the exception of the two right hon. and learned Members for the University of Dublin, who was not pledged to deal with the question in a broad and extensive manner. If he recollected rightly there was not a landowner all over Ireland, except in Ulster, who succeeded in being returned to Parliament; and even in Ulster the few landlords who were returned pledged themselves to go, at least, as far as this Bill, which he would be surprised if they did not support now. They had, then, the voice of Ireland in favour of a reform of the Land Laws, and it would be impossible that the Government could refuse a demand made in so constitutional a manner. He was glad the right hon. Gentleman was not prepared to join the noble Lord the Member for Haddingtonshire in uncompromising opposition to the measure. He gathered from the speech of the right hon. Gentleman that he was in favour of legislating upon important points of the Land Question—for instance, upon the subject of multiplying the owners of land. The right hon. Gentleman approved of that portion of the Bill, but was in favour of funds being provided from some Irish source. He was glad to hear the right hon. Gentleman declare in favour of the principle of establishing a Commission for the purpose of purchasing land for distribution among the tenants. That showed a considerable advance in the views of the right hon. Gentleman, because he had in his recollection a speech of the right hon. Gentleman, delivered, if he remembered rightly, so late as in the early part of last year to his constituents, in which he denounced the whole scheme which went by the name of his right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster as impracticable, inexpedient, and absurd. The right hon. Gentleman even went so far as to say that he would be no party to such sham legislation. He (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) had reason to remember that speech, because in the previous Session he had carried a Resolution in favour of extending ownerships in Ireland, in which the late Government had concurred. He had himself suggested the application of the Irish Church Fund for the purpose; but, unfortunately, events had since happened which had caused the fund in great measure to disappear, and he did not see in what way any such fund could be brought into existence. If, however, the right hon. Gentleman suggested funds from any other source than that provided in the Bill, he was sure the Government would entertain it; but a measure of the importance of this should not be postponed from any expectation of that kind. Again, the right hon. Gentleman indicated that he was in favour of another very important principle in this Bill—namely, the principle of arbitration of rents by a Government tribunal. At least, that was his inference from the right hon. Gentleman's words when he said that the law should lay down the principle that rents should not be raised to a point at which the tenants could not pay. How was that point to be fixed by law except by such a tribunal? If that was so, the right hon. Gentleman had expressed approval of what he regarded as the cardinal feature of the Bill. Before dealing with some of the objections raised to it by the right hon. Gentleman, he wished briefly to recall to the House why it was that the Act of 1870 had failed to prove a settlement. That Act was a bold and important one in many respects. He thought it was in some respects even more important than the Bill now before them, because it acknowledged for the first time the legal interest of tenants in their holdings. It sought to protect and give security to tenants in their holdings, and therefore to give practically fixity of tenure, and to prevent the raising of rent so as to destroy their interest, by putting the landlord under the compulsion or fine of paying on eviction the full value of the tenant's interest, measured in Ulster by the Ulster tenant right, and in other parts of Ireland by the value of his improvements, and by a payment which was to represent the value of the goodwill. It also proposed, under the Bright Clauses, to create a peasant proprietary. Its objects, therefore, were the same—neither more nor less than those of the present Bill—though it sought to attain them by a different method. Why, then, did it fail to carry out their expectations? He would not admit it had wholly failed. It had, in fact, stopped almost completely capricious ejectments, or any ejectments other than those for non-payment of rent, and it had secured to hundreds of tenants leaving their holdings compensation they would not otherwise have been entitled to. It had not, however, succeeded in preventing the raising of rents to a point which appropriated the tenant's interest. If time permitted, he could show that this failure was partly due to the mischievous Amendments which were made to the Bill, chiefly in another House, and every one of which limited its operation and tended to prevent a settlement. He only alluded to them as a warning to the opposite side against treating this Bill in the same way. It was also partly due to Departmental incapacity and re-action, which smothered and destroyed the "Bright Clauses," and prevented their having effect. It was still more due, however, to the failure of Parliament to understand two features or conditions of human nature in Ireland, which appeared to differ, in degree at least, from those of other people. The one was the intense love of the Irish tenants for their holdings, their willingness to submit to any exaction in the shape of increased rent rather than give up their holdings and face a lawsuit for the recovery of the compensation intended by the Act; and the other was the perversity and almost criminal wilfulness with which certain landowners in Ireland set themselves to work to undermine the policy of the Act, the ingenuity with which they discovered that by trading on the unwillingness of tenants to give up their holdings, they could screw up their rents so as to rack-rent their tenants and appropriate the tenants' interest which it was the intention of the Act of 1870 to secure to them. Sometimes this was done by wholesale re-valuation of their estates; more often by what was called the silent process—namely, by taking the tenants in detail and raising their rents by 25 per cent, or by the nibbling process of successive raisings by small amounts each, so small as to make it a matter for doubt to the tenant whether he would give up his holding and claim the value of his interest. In Ulster it was accompanied also by the creation and invention of arbitrary office rules reducing the tenant right, or putting the tenant to great legal expenses in proving his right. These acts were undoubtedly the acts of a minority of landlords; but they were sufficiently numerous to create a widespread feeling of injustice, insecurity, and alarm through large classes of tenants who felt that they might be dealt with in a similar manner. The House might think he spoke too strongly on this point; but conclusive proof of what he said was to be found in the evidence of the two Royal Commissions. He supposed very few Members had read the evidence contained in the three gigantic volumes of the two Royal Commissions. He could not pretend to have done so himself; but he had read one part of the evidence which he commended to other Members—namely, the evidence of landowners and land agents themselves. The land agents of Ireland contained among their numbers some of the ablest men in Ireland — many, men of wide views—and from their contact with the peasantry they knew much more about them than did the landlords, and it seemed to him that their evidence was very interesting. What they said of their fellow-landowners and fellow-land agents, he thought, might fairly be considered as reliable evidence, coming as it did from men interested in making the best and not the worst of the existing state of things. After reading their evidence, he thought everyone would admit that we might neglect every word of complaint made by the 700 witnesses of the tenant farmer class before the Bessborough Commission, and still have a sufficient weight of evidence to justify all the complaints of the Irish people, and to show the necessity for this Bill. There were land agents of the highest position from every part of Ireland, and Judges and landowners who spoke of practices of landowners and land agents in the direction he had alluded to, which fully accounted for the complaints, fears, and alarms of the tenantry. Let him give, as an illustration, one short passage from the evidence of Mr. Murphy, the agent for properties extending over 50,000 acres in Donegal and Down; a gentleman also who acted as valuator for numerous railway companies in the North of Ireland, and who was recommended specially to the Commission by the Committee of Landlords, as one who could give reliable evidence. Mr. Murphy said—

> "I think if the Act of 1870 had been loyally received, it would be working well now. But it was not. Some landlords thought that their rights were invaded and they set to work to counteract it. It is possible that landlords by raising rents may eat up and do away with tenant right. It is a very unfortunate thing that it should be so. The consequence is that the tenants have a feeling of insecurity that their tenant right may be absorbed in that way, and in consequence they do not make improvements. There are instances where estates have been most generously managed and where the tenants lived as happily as possible, but when another landlord came into possession 'another king arose who knew not Joseph.' That has been the root and evil of land jobbing."

Mr. Johnston, another agent for 50,000 acres of land in Leitrim and Longford, said—

> "I think the Land Act failed in protecting tenants against a rise of rents. I knew one case in particular where an estate was overvalued and many of the tenants asked me what they were to do—they could not pay the rents and live; still what were they to do? If they broke up their homes and bought land claims they would have nowhere to go—they could do nothing but emigrate. Hence they elected to pay the increased rent, and did pay it for a few years. Now they have failed, and have not paid either last year or this, and at present are in a state of rebellion."

Going further South, he found Mr. Keane, agent for 100,000 acres in Clare, who said—

> "I have known many cases where tenants laid out money in improvements, and the result was that their rents were advanced."

Mr. Vernon, agent for properties worth £90,000 a-year, in all parts of Ireland, spoke of the feeling of insecurity caused by the office rules in the North making the sale of tenant right subject to the condition of a rise of rent, and of the paralyzing effect of such an unjust rule. Mr. Leahy, the agent for very large properties in the South of Ireland, said—

> "There is no question that on certain estates, on a great number of them purchased by the parties I have mentioned, it is absolutely necessary that there should be some Court of arbitration. The landlord, if he is willing and wishes to do so, can in a great measure nullify the tenant right interest by raising the rent unduly. I consider that is a practice that should be positively put down and that calls for legislation."

Mr. Andrew Kerr, agent for Lord Dartrey and Colonel Clement, says—

> "I have known some estates where the landlords have been in the habit of raising the rents. It has had the effect of checking improvements and ruining the tenants and of injuring the landlords in the long run."

Mr. Jackson, agent to Lord Arran, in Donegal, said—

> "I know the feeling in the minds of the tenantry is that of great insecurity. I believe that improvements would go on 40 or 50 per cent more than they do if they were sure that rents would not be raised for their improvements."

Mr. Brush, agent to Lord Belmore, Mr. Watson, agent in Antrim, and a host of others he could quote, gave evidence to the same effect. It was confirmed by many others of independent position; by such men as Sir Francis Brady and Mr. Ampthill, County Court Judges, and by Judge Flanagan, of the Landed Estates Court. The latter said—

> "The mischief arises from the fear that an increase of rent may happen any day and may follow upon an increased appearance of prosperity upon his holding. Nothing can be more fatal to the industry and prosperity of the smaller tenant than such a sense of insecurity."

Professor Baldwin and Mr. Robertson, who were specially selected by the late Government to report on the condition of agriculture in Ireland, spoke to the same effect. They reported numerous cases of nibbling at rents, and of increments of 25 per cent; and they said that the common complaint of the tenants was fully justified, and that they had verified them by reference to the receipts and to the office books of land agents. He believed that every one of the land agents he had quoted were recommended to the Commission as men who thoroughly understood the question, and whose evidence would be most valuable. Then came the question of remedy, and he was surprised to find what general unanimity there was among the Irish witnesses; not one of them had advocated the extreme measures propounded by the Land League—namely, the expropriation of landlords.

MR. PARNELL was understood to deny that that principle was propounded by the Land League.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, he was glad to hear that denial. At the same time he was surprised, because it did not tally with his recollection, nor with the information given to the public by members of the Land League. However, it indicated a return to common sense on the part of the hon. Member and his Colleagues. The hon. Member denied that was ever the proposition of the Land League; but he had in his hand a paper called *Modern Thought*, which contained an article by a member of the Land League and an hon. Member of this House—the Member for New Ross (Mr. Redmond). In the course of this article the hon. Member says—

> "The settlement of the question which the Land League proposes is thoroughly sound in principle, is likely to prove final in practice, and is a settlement made with the best results in other countries. It advocates compulsory expropriation. Such a proposal was certainly sound in principle."

This description, he submitted, tallied with all he had seen of the earlier doings of the Land League. He was aware that the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) had more recently abandoned these extreme proposals, and now only advocated the expropriation of bad landlords. How he was to select the bad from the good he did not know; but he was very much struck by observing that change in the attitude of the hon. Member, and he thought his abandonment of the wider programme showed a return to a sense of what was right and moral.

MR. PARNELL asked the right hon. Gentleman if he could quote a passage in which he ever advocated the compulsory expropriation of all landlords?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, he had not the passage by him, but he would promise to produce it. In the meantime he could but refer to the article he had quoted, which was written by one of the *protegès* of the hon. Gentleman, and one whom the hon. Gentleman had introduced to this House as a prominent member of the Land League, and that article put the same construction on the opinions of the Land League as that which he had ventured to give himself. He repeated, that scarcely a single witness of many hundreds had advocated the original scheme of the Land League of expropriating all landlords. It would be very easy to show how detrimental to the interests of Ireland that would be. Nor would it be possible to expropriate the bad ones. What tribunal would be strong enough to select the bad from the good, and to gibbet the bad as unworthy of existence? The almost universal testimony of those who admitted that wrong was being done was in the direction of giving greater security to the tenant's interest and preventing its confiscation by the landowner by the intervention of a Government tribunal on the subject of rent. He had been greatly surprised at the extent to which all the wisest and best of the great land agents of Ireland committed themselves to that opinion. He found from the evidence that no fewer than 24 of the largest land agents in Ireland, managing properties from 10,000 to 100,000 acres, and in the aggregate of more than 1,000,000 acres, had expressed the strongest opinions in this direction. In addition to those he had already named, Mr. O'Brien, agent to Lord Inchiquin, Mr. L'Estrange, agent to Colonel Cooper, Mr. Lepper, agent to Lord Donegal, and numerous others, were of this opinion; they were supported by landowners such as Colonel King-Harman, who owned 70,000 acres, and who was secretary to the Committee of Landowners, and by Lord Ventry, who owned 100,000 acres in the South. Of other witnesses of the same class, a very large proportion said that such legislation was unnecessary, because they always themselves recognized their tenants' interest, and did practically give fixity of tenure and fair rents appraised with reference to the tenants' interest; and most of them, though not quite all, permitted the sale of tenants' interest. The same witnesses pointed to the happy results which followed upon properties where these principles were acted upon, where practically tenants knew that by the long practice of the estate their rents would be fairly assessed, with full regard to the tenants' interest, and only raised at long intervals when the general rise in value of property justified it. They had practical fixity of tenure, and were allowed freely to sell their holdings to the highest bidder. The evidence was conclusive that on such estates the tenants were prosperous and content, improvements were effected, the cultivation was of the best, and there was a general feeling of security; while, on the other hand, the landlords' rents were perfectly secure, and ranged in the long run as high, if not higher, than on those properties where there was no security and where they were screwed up. Nothing could be more certain than that security of tenure under the conditions of Irish cultivation was as beneficial in the long run to the landlords as to the tenants. It was this system which the Bill proposed to extend from the best managed properties in Ireland to all properties. As regarded the best landlords, it did no more than put them under legal compulsion to do that which they always had done freely and willingly; and as regarded the worst landlords, it compelled them to do what experience showed was the true remedy for bad cultivation, insecurity, and discontent. Now, the cardinal point and principle of this part of the Bill was the tribunal for the determination of rent. It was this principle of fair rent and of an appeal from the landlord to a Court, which all parties who had looked into the matter were now agreed upon—the majority as well the minority of the Duke of Richmond's Commission, the whole of the other Commission, the Duke of Argyll, the majority of landlords and land agents in Ireland, the majority of hon. Members opposite. The concurrence in the necessity for this was almost universal. Why was it so? Was it not from the fact that all these people now recognized and admitted that the tenants had an interest or property in their holdings which ought to be fully protected? It had been said that that principle was in contravention of freedom of contract. If the tenants had no interest in their holdings, if they were in a position to contract freely with the owners of the land, the principle of freedom of contract might apply. But that was not so. The tenants had an interest in their holdings which in Ulster generally was equal to that of the landlords, and elsewhere in Ireland equal to one-third of the competition value of the holding; it was impossible for them to disentangle their interest from the holding so as to be in a position to contract freely with their landlords, and the result was conditions in which freedom of contract could not and did not exist. Let him illustrate that by an example. Suppose a holding let at £20 a-year, the tenant or his predecessors had effected all the improvements, had built the house, had reclaimed the land from the waste, had removed the boulders, and had from time immemorial exercised all the rights of ownership over it. The tenant right was probably worth £200. The fiat of the landlord went forth to raise the rent 25 per cent. This reduced the value of the tenant right by more than one-half by appropriating therefrom property to that amount. The tenant might leave the farm and might claim the full value of his tenant right; but to do so he must give up everything that was dear to him —his home, the place of his birth, his friends and neighbours; he must go into the wide world, and he had to recover the value of his interest by means of a lawsuit against his landlord, whom he would find represented by the ablest lawyers. He might be too old to begin life again in some other profession. What freedom of contract was there between him and his landlord, whom he could approach only through a Dublin agent? If the tenant should resist and combine with his fellow-tenants and neighbours in opposing the increase of rent, then again it might be asked where was the freedom of contract in the landlord? He contended that the conditions for freedom of contract did not exist. Those who contended for it must begin by denying the tenant's interest, and must be prepared to see it appropriated by the landlord. It was not a question so much of political economy. It was a question of justice and equity. The interest existed, and under the present conditions it was not safe, but was liable to be appropriated by a person to whom it did not belong. It was necessary, therefore, to give it protection, and the only way of doing this was by allowing an appeal to the law. He believed it was as much the interest of the landlord as of the tenant that this appeal should be to the tribunals of the country rather than to Rory on the Hills or to the self-constituted tribunal of the Land League. When we had once grasped the idea of a Government tribunal for rents, the other principles of this part of the measure necessarily, logically, and inevitably followed. The appeal to a tribunal as to rent necessarily implied a continued occupation. Could it be permitted to a landowner to turn the tenant out immediately after the decision? So also as to free sale; when we had recognised the tenant's interest, when we had given him a tenure, whether for 15 or 30 years, or in perpetuity, how could we resist the tenant's claim to be allowed to realize the value of it? Even if we should do so in law we should be defeated in practice. The incoming and outgoing tenant would come to terms behind the back of the landowner, as they did now in numerous cases, and we should have renewed agitation until full recognition of the interest was conceded. Here political economy was certainly in favour of the claim for free sale; for the free sale and disposition of an interest once recognized and protected at law was an almost elementary proposition of political economy. It was said that they were creating a dual ownership in the soil. He denied that they were creating such a system. They were recognizing and giving full protection to an interest which existed, and not creating it. It was not rightly described as an ownership in the soil; it was a right of occupation of the soil as distinguished from the ownership. The ownership of the soil was qualified, and out of it was carved the right of occupation, and the two togther exhausted the whole value of the soil and its produce. He would not weary the House by any historical vindication of this claim of the Irish tenant. There seemed to be an economic justification and cause for it. Where the system of cultivation of a country was that of small occupiers it was wholly impossible for the landlord to effect the improvements, to build the houses and the homesteads, or to reclaim the land and to maintain the general equipments of the farm. To attempt to do so in the English system would be ruin to the landlord, and would involve him in expenditure of more than the value of the fee. These improvements must be effected by the tenant; and where that was the case there must grow up a proprietary interest of the tenant, which would claim and must receive the recognition and protection of the law. It had been repeatedly said in this debate that the Irish tenant was more protected by law than the tenant of any other part of the world; but there was no other part of Europe where such a vast and universal system of small tenancy existed; and where the system of cultivation was in small holdings, it was always accompanied, supported, and fortified by the fact that a vast proportion of them had the security of ownership. It had been said that such a dual ownership as would be virtually created by the Bill would be a source of confusion, and that experience had shown that where it existed on the Continent it had led to an agitation to get rid of the landowner. That was perfectly true of that kind of dual ownership which came down from feudal times, and where the tenant was burdened with servile obligations to the landowner; but there were throughout Europe a vast number of tenures of a different character, not dissimilar to that which would exist under that Bill—namely, of hereditary leases, with fixed rents, or rents subject to periodical revision. Such tenures were common in Holland, in many parts of Germany, and France, and in North Portugal. They were highly appreciated. They were considered scarcely inferior to freeholds, as they gave security to small occupiers and led to good cultivation. He might quote from a recent and very interesting description of Portugal by Mr. Crawford, our Consul at Oporto. After giving an account of these hereditary leaseholders in the North of that country, he said—

> "This system has created in the Northern provinces a population of hardy, independent, contented yeomen. There are no great territorial possessions, no accumulation of agricultural wealth in one man's hands; but there is, again, no pauperism. If we cross into some of the Southern provinces, we find the reverse of this feature of prosperity and content—great estates ill-farmed, rich absentee landlords, and crowds of ill-looking, poverty-stricken, and woe-begone tenants and day labourers."

Another objection raised by the right hon. Member and others was mainly directed to the principle of free sale. It was put forward in the interest of tenants of the future. It was said that while they forbade the rack-renting of landlords, they would permit the rack-renting of tenants by themselves; that the incoming tenant would sell his interest to the highest bidder, and that the incomer would come in heavily mortgaged, and be unable to cultivate the farm to the best advantage. The argument was specious and plausible, and had something to recommend it from a theoretical point of view; but, fortunately, it was not confirmed by experience. Experience showed that on those estates where free sale was most fully granted, where the largest prices were given for tenant right, no such evils resulted. The estate invariably gained by the sale of tenant right in the exchange of a bad tenant for a good one. In the case of Lord Downshire's property, the tenant right was fully admitted; there was no limit to the price of tenant right, and the long practice of the family had given rise to the greatest confidence that rents would never be raised so as to interfere with tenant right. Tenant right there amounted often to £40 per Irish acre, or £25 per English acre—more than the value of the fee. There, at least, they would be likely to see cases of the evil result of over-burdened and mortgaged tenants; but it was not so. The agent for the property said that the rents were rather higher than on properties out of Ulster; the tenants were in a comfortable condition, the land was better cultivated than elsewhere, and there was general content. There was similar evidence from many other properties. In all cases it was admitted that whenever a sale took place a good tenant took the place of a bad one, and the landlord was paid arrears of rent. The supposed evils were purely imaginary. The reason was that full security for improvements attracted capital, and did not repel it. If a tenant on coming into possession had to borrow a part of his capital, he soon saved money by his industry and repaid it. Landlord and tenant were both benefited by the security and by the consequent improvements, and in the long run rents were higher on those estates than elsewhere. He recollected the late Major Dalton, the agent to Lord Headfort's properties in Meath and Cavan, told the Committee of three years ago that on adjoining properties of the same kind tenant right was allowed on the one and averaged £15 per acre, and was not allowed on the other; that where allowed the rents were higher, and the tenants were more prosperous and content than where it was not allowed. It was certain, then, that to attempt to prevent free sale or tenant right, or to limit the amount of tenant right, was unwise and not in the interest of either landlord or tenant. In fact, security of tenure and free sale had almost the same effect upon production, and industry, and content as a full ownership. Ownership was the highest form of security known to the law; but continuous occupancy, under the Ulster right, with fair rents and free sale, was closely approaching to it, and gave full security to the tenant. He would now say a very few words upon the second part of the Bill, that facilitating occupying ownership. That part carried out in its integrity, with one very slight exception, the Report of his Committee of three years ago, and he need hardly say that it was gratifying to him to observe what general concurrence there was both as to the subject and method of these clauses. He believed that if worked in the spirit of the Act they would prove the most important part of it, and give that stability and support to property which everyone now admitted was so much needed. There was no other country in Europe in the least degree approaching Ireland in the distribution of its property. In every other country it had long ago been recognized that every consideration, economical, political, or social, pointed to the expediency of a wide distribution of landed property, and to fixing the peasantry upon the soil as far as possible. He had on several occasions brought that subject before the House, and would not now repeat what he had said. He would add, however, that every foreign statesman, jurist, or economist, who had ever visited or written upon Ireland had pointed to the condition of its land ownership and the absence of proprietary interest of the occupiers of its land as the chief causes of its bad economic condition and its chronic agitation and discontent. Count Cavour, De Tocqueville, De Beaumont, Sismondi, Von Raumer, Kohl, and many others, had written in that sense. The ablest treatise on the condition of Ireland in the present century was that by De Beaumont, the friend of De Tocqueville, who visited it in 1839 and again in 1862. He might quote one short passage from it. He said—

> "So long as the Irish are only tenants, you will see them always miserable and indolent. With what energy do you suppose the poor tenant would be endowed who knows that if he improves his farm his rent will be proportionately increased?"

And, again—

> "If in France the acquisition of the soil has been so great an improvement for the people, of what benefit will it be for the Irish people? It is to be hoped that the day when there will be in Ireland small proprietors the greater part of her miseries will cease. The rich, ceasing to have the monopoly of land, will no longer be subject to the curse of the poor, and the small owner who protects with his body his field and his cabin will have nothing to fear from attacks of which in Ireland the soil is the object."

The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith), while agreeing in principle to that part of the Bill, had intimated that there might be danger to the State in the Government becoming the mortgagee of so many small properties. There was a danger which he had himself feared; and in the proposal which he had made to the Committee two years ago he had suggested that, if possible, funds for that purpose should be derived from an Irish source. The experience of the purchases under the Church Act had shown that there was not any very great danger in that direction. In circumstances of very great difficulty, the tenants had paid their instalments, and they had passed through a period of distress with greater ease than he should have expected. They must expect that if they had a similar period of distress 10 years hence there would be some difficulty; but they must also recollect that the security of the State was every year increasing. Let it not be supposed that peasant proprietary was the panacea of all the ills of Ireland. He had never put it forward in that way. It was no cure for bad seasons. Small owners, he had no doubt, would suffer greatly in times of depression and famine, though he believed they would emerge sooner from them and would bear them more patiently. It would be no cure for the evils of over-crowding in some of the remote parts of Mayo and Donegal, and he thought the other parts of the measure more suitable for such people at present; but he could not exclude them from the benefit of the trial. The case of the migratory labourers was a peculiar one, and seemed to him to require special treatment; but he would not now detain the House upon them. The case of other Irish labourers was important. He was glad to see the great interest taken in this subject by hon. Gentlemen opposite; it was somewhat unexpected. He hoped at some future time their case might be dealt with; but at present the Bill was already heavily weighted. They might recollect also that the labourers were closely allied to the small tenant farmers. In many parts of Ireland there was no class of labourers as distinct from the tenants, and the labourers were the sons of the tenants. Whatever they did to improve the condition of the tenants, to give security, to induce improvements, would re-act on the labourers. The passage from the one class to the other was continuous, and the prospect of being able to buy land or to buy a tenancy would be the best and surest promoter of thrift and industry among the labouring people. There were many other questions which had been touched on in the course of this discussion, such as the transfer of land, the Law of Entail, and others; but, however important, they were beyond the scope of the Bill. This Bill was already sufficiently freighted; and if it came into harbour with its present cargo, without any loss from jettison or otherwise, it would be, he believed, fraught with great benefit to Ireland. For his own part, he had not lost his faith in the future of Ireland, or in the generous qualities of its people, or in their respect for right and justice, if all were equally protected. There was much indeed to deplore in the weary cycles of agitations and discontent, and especially in the events of the last two years; but it had seemed to him that these most unfortunate events had their origin in intense suffering caused by agricultural loss, aggravated by a sense of injustice and wrong. If by this Bill they were able to remove that sense of injustice and wrong, it was his belief that under the auspices of better seasons they might look forward at no distant date to the return of prosperity, content, and order in that part of the United Kingdom.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY said, although he believed the Bill to be imperfect in many important points, he would confine himself mainly to the principles of the Bill which were contested, reserving questions of detail for Committee. He felt bound, however, to remark that the Bill did not give any substantial benefit to tenants who were under eviction for arrears of rent. It gave them some benefit; but it did not sufficiently recognize the case of those who had been suffering from rack-rents, which they had been unable to pay in consequence of distress arising from a succession of bad seasons; and yet he understood that one of the reasons for passing the Bill was the existence of rack-rents. The Government, therefore, could not escape from the necessity of applying strong remedies in this direction. Again, the class of leaseholders deserved as much consideration as the yearly tenants, many of them having been obliged to take a 30 years' lease under threat of eviction, the object of the landlord being to cause the tenant, by virtue of his being a leaseholder, to forfeit the advantages conferred upon the tenants by the Act of 1870. He would now answer some of the objections raised to the Bill on the Opposition side of the House—objections which had been candidly raised, and deserved a candid reply. The first part of the Bill regulating contracts was challenged, on the ground that the State had no right to interfere with the owner in imposing rent; but the Irish landlord had not been in the past the absolute owner of his land in respect to rent. Owing, probably, to the violent manner in which land had been transferred in the past, the people claimed the right of, at least, cultivating the land which had belonged to the tribe at a moderate rent, leaving the tenant a property. Irish landlords had formerly admitted and recognized this custom. They had not used competition, the owner's ordinary standard, as a test of rent. The right to this property, and the injustice of exacting a rack-rent which would destroy it, was shown by the Report of the Bessborough Commission. A tendency had of late years sprung up to violate the custom and destroy the tenant's property by rack-rents. This tendency had been introduced by means of middlemen and subletting, and also through undue competition; and it was very likely that the men who had taken farms over the tenants' heads now turned round and said they would pay no more than Griffith's valuation. The Landed Estates Court, too, had bought in purchasers who violated the old custom of the country, and charged rack-rents. The effect of the Bill would be to restore the custom, and only to prevent the usurpation of a claim on the part of the bad landlord inconsistent with it. They were told that the effect of this measure on the good landlord, who had been faithful to the traditions of his country, and had not rack-rented his tenants, but had left them their property in the soil—that the effect on those landlords would be *nil.* If they had not rack-rented the Court would not recognize a claim for the reduction of rent; but if they had, if they had destroyed the traditional interest of the tenants in the land, they would be liable to have their rents brought within reasonable limits. It appeared to him that that was a very fallacious statement of the effects of the Bill. It appeared to him that the landlord would always have the power of initiating proceedings in the Court by resisting the tenant's demand for the reduction of rent, because, if a tenant wished to continue in possession after a demand of increased rent, he would be compelled to go into court, and that was equivalent to a right to initiate proceedings in the Land Court. The right of free sale was absolutely essential to a property in the tenant, because without it, if a tenant found himself unable to carry on his business, the landlord, by refusing the right to sell, could annihilate the property. The interpretation which assumed that in measuring the rent the amount to which the tenant would be entitled to compensation should be deducted from a computation of the landlord's interest, seemed to him not borne out by the language of the Bill. It seemed to him that the object of the Bill was to preserve and take into account the property which the tenant had over and above the landlord's interest. The clause was, however, ambiguous, and as unsatisfactory with its present wording to the tenant as to the landlord, and would require explanation and amendment. Free sale properly guarded was absolutely necessary to the tenant; without it a tenant would feel himself always in a state of insecurity, and would be deterred from putting in the land his capital, labour, and skill. A great deal had been said about the increased prospect of litigation under this Bill; but if a wise and fair tribunal were established, he contended that litigation between landlord and tenant would be diminished rather than increased. With this view, he recommended the introduction into the Court of technical skill and local knowledge. With regard to the establishment of a peasant proprietary, he thought it was necessary, not only for the prosperity of farmers, but for the tranquillity of the country, that everything should be done that in reason could be done to develop a peasant proprietary. The principle of the Bill might well be enlarged without any danger to the taxpayer. The Treasury should receive a larger power of advance to be exercised in each case on its merits, and the time for repayment might also be safely extended. But if universal peasant proprietary were created, the land being divided into many small holdings, absolute free trade in land would be the result. Land would be accumulated in the hands of small capitalists who would develop into landlords, and he feared a class of tenants it would be impossible to protect would spring up, as much at the mercy of small and griping landlords as the Belgian tenants, whose condition was so bad. It would be futile to try and prevent letting. History taught that all attempt to interfere with the ordinary operations dictated by the love of profit were futile. The natural growth of an occupying proprietary would avoid these dangers. Men would learn from the experience of others how far a position of ownership suited them. They would see the benefits and dangers and undoubted responsibilities of proprietorship. They would learn what he supposed was the result of the competition caused by ownership, that proprietorship required more capital, more industry, and, above all, more agricultural skill than tenancy. Meantime tenants would be protected by the first part of the Bill; and while proprietors remained only as a portion of the community of agriculture, it would be easier to impose conditions on their contracts of letting than if there were a universal peasant proprietary immediately created. The emigration clauses could not but be viewed unfavourably by Irish Members, who went to the root of things, and saw that emigration arose from a bad system of Land Laws. But he believed these clauses were, in addition, unnecessary for any measure, whether of proprietary or tenant right. Giving a right of free sale would, for the present, strengthen the tendency to sell, to consolidate, and to emigrate. These were views which he had arrived at concerning this Bill. He was glad that it stepped in between landlord and tenant, because unless the rent was regulated they would be driven into a general expropriation of the landlords' property. The details of the Bill would require large amendments. Its principles were sound and wise. He hoped they would be adhered to, and fully developed by the House. If they were rejected, he trembled to think what would happen—not only as regarded the landlords' property, but the general peace of the country; but if they were accepted and became the law of the land he believed they would lay the foundation of true prosperity. That prosperity might not grow up in a single night like the gourd of the Prophet; but it would strike deep root, and be steady, permanent, and universal.

MR. THOROLD ROGERS said, that the noble Lord the Member for Haddingtonshire (Lord Elcho) had stated in his Amendment that the Bill, as far as its leading provisions were concerned, was economically unsound. He was afraid he must lie under the censure of that Amendment, because a dozen years ago he expressed his conviction in a Paper he then read, and had since republished, that the granting of fixity of tenure, fair rents, and free sale was essential to the pacification of Ireland. He felt certain, from an examination of the condition of Ireland, that nothing short of these three concessions would satisfy the legitimate demands of the Irish people, and bring Ireland into a state in which it would cease to be a reproach to the Administration of the United Kingdom. It appeared to him that the view he took a dozen years ago had been singularly justified by the events which had since happened. Certainly great concessions had been made to Ireland since 1869; but they had not touched what was at the bottom of Irish disaffection and of the Irish difficulty—the proper recognition of the right of the tenant to what his own industry had created, and of his place on the soil of the country to which he belonged. He listened the other day with great interest to the speech of the noble Lord the Member for Barnstaple (Viscount Lymington), who bore his testimony to what the wisdom and justice of a particular family could do in a part of Ireland. The noble Lord told them that on the estate in question rents were punctually paid, and that peace and contentment were general; but that happy state of things might be wrecked if the possessor of the estate determined to make use of the power which his own vices and the law of the land gave him over his tenants. They ought to provide by the operation of the law that persons should not be brought within the range of a system by which the permanent peace and the rights of the people might depend on the will of an individual. The noble Lord the Member for Haddingtonshire told the House that the Bill in its main provisions was economically unsound. He wanted to know what was meant by economically unsound. Eminent statesmen often used words in a special sense; and the noble Lord had not strengthened his case by quotations from any writers on political economy, such as Mr. John Stuart Mill, so that he was at a loss to know precisely what was intended. The noble Lord had, indeed, read extracts from the speeches of Judge Longfield; but he did not care much for Judge Longfield's speculations on the Irish Question, knowing that, as a rule, lawyers had but little acquaintance with either history or law. The Report of Mr. Bonamy Price was nothing more than pure assertion. He quite forgot the enormous difficulties in which the people of Ireland were placed, and those which the Government and Parliament had to deal with in order that complete justice might be done. Turning to the actual facts of the case, he contended that the insecurity of the Irish tenant farmer was the cause of most of his difficulties. A man could not be expected to sow without a certainty of being allowed to reap his crop. And, as things were, the position of the Irish occupier was aggravated by the exorbitant raising of rents and by the loss of the value of his improvements. That was the state of things that prevailed in very many parts of Ireland. It was often alleged that the Bill would seriously diminish and injure the property of the landlords; but that he was altogether disposed to deny. Similar fears had been entertained on other occasions, and particularly at the time of the repeal of the Corn Laws, when the country gentlemen complained that the agricultural interests were ruined, while, in point of fact, the agriculturists had suffered only from the consummate and idiotic folly of the landlords, who were now going about like sturdy beggars asking Parliament to relieve them. However, the present Bill, so far from injuring the landlords of Ireland, would infinitely enhance the value of their property. He ventured to predict that if the proposed changes were effected in Ireland, that disposition to save, which was characteristic of the Irish people, would drive them before long into those branches of manufacturing industry which in former days were destroyed in Ireland by the cupidity and greed of the manufacturers and landowners of this country. A good deal had been said about confiscation; but what did confiscation mean? When the Chancellor of the Exchequer called upon him to pay a tax, that was confiscation. Confiscation was the taxing part of a private man's substance for the National Exchequer. But there was another kind of confiscation, far worse than anything which could be done by any law proposed in that House—namely, the right which the stronger had to appropriate the property of the weaker. That had been done pretty freely in Ireland. He contended that the principle of the Bill was equitable, its essence was arbitration, and its purpose was a final settlement of the question. Much had been said about interference with that three-legged horse freedom of contract; but if they allowed persons to do just as they pleased in their relations with their fellow-subjects, the result would be universal swindling in the whole of society. They had interfered with freedom of contract in various ways, and in proof of this he need only refer to the laws relating to the employment of women and children in factories and the truck system. The noble Lord had told them that the production of this Bill was a yielding to violence and agitation; but it should be remembered that no great reform had been effected in this country without an agitation preceding it. Thus agitation preceded Catholic Emancipation, the reform of the representation, and the repeal of the Corn Laws. There was not a single European community which had not got rid of its feudal institutions. In 1846 there were as many outrages in Denmark as in Ireland; but a wise statesman arose, who made the Danish peasant proprietor of the soil he cultivated, and Denmark had ever since been a prosperous country. It was a measure of simple justice which the Government now proposed to extend to Ireland. It would be a great thing if they could by any means bring about a state of things in which they could dispense with every policeman and soldier who were now employed to maintain unjust and iniquitous laws; for the cost of all the machinery adopted nominally to maintain peace in Ireland, but really to collect rents, was pretty nearly as much as the value of the whole rents together. It was contemplated that under this Bill those who by their own labour had developed a value in the soil which they occupied should have the satisfaction of feeling that they possessed a property in that soil. The Bill had been described as Communistic. Communism was the sacrifice of the property of the few to the interests of the many; but a greater evil had long existed in Ireland—the sacrifice of the property of the many to the interests of the few—and it was that which the Bill was designed to remedy. Ireland ever since the Union had laboured under great social and political disadvantages. At the present time, for instance, she possessed nothing like an intermediate system of education. There were several points in the Bill to which he should object in Committee; but, as far as the principle was concerned, it seemed to him the Government had brought forth a measure which dealt with the relations of landlord and tenant in a manner thoroughly sound. The measure was an attempt to reverse the history of the past of Ireland. It was an attempt to make a new, and he believed a final, treaty of peace between England and Ireland, under which all lawful rights would be respected, all legitimate property secured, and all sound and economic principles vindicated. He did not pretend to say that when this measure of justice was done to the Irish people, and when the sound principles the Bill contained had begun to produce their fruit, all agitation in Ireland would cease. It was too much to expect that after centuries of discontent a nation would at once acquiesce in a settlement; but just as after a volcano had broken forth and rendered the surrounding country like a smoking furnace, for a time there would still be a fire glowing in the cracks, but when years had passed by the place which was the scene of desolation and misery would become a fruitful garden, so he believed it would be in Ireland. And he had no doubt that if he lived long enough to witness the results of the measure he would feel that the best days of his life, and the day on which he looked back with the greatest satisfaction, was that on which he strove in his place in the English Parliament to heal the discontent of centuries, and to do right to the country which had suffered wrong for centuries.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, he did not know whether the House looked upon the speech which had just been delivered with as much satisfaction as the author anticipated for himself when looking back to it some years hence. The hon. Member had been Professor of Political Economy at Oxford, and was the author of one or two extremely meritorious books on political economy; and he had therefore expected, when he saw him get up, to hear from him some sound and economic argument in defence of this Bill. Instead of this the hon. Member had treated them to a most extraordinary mixture of historical illustrations, which illustrated nothing, to miscellaneous invective, directed against everybody in general, to almost truculent criticism of every political economist but himself, with the one exception of Mr. Mill, whom he treated with a calm and contemptuous superiority. [Mr. Thorold Rogers: I never quoted anybody.] He (Mr. A. J. Balfour) did not accuse the hon. Member of quoting anybody; what he said was that he treated them to truculent criticism. As he listened to the speech he wondered what the Prime Minister would think of two statements in it. The first was that the Bill included provisions for fair rents, free sale, and fixity of tenure; and the next was as to the right hon. Gentleman's gradual conversion on the subject of Irish land. The right hon. Gentleman had, over and over again, stated that the Bill was not based on the three F's as alleged by his supporters; and as to the conversion, he (Mr. A. J.

Balfour) admitted its existence; but he must altogether deny that it had been gradual, since less than two years ago several Members of the Ministry declared themselves directly opposed to principles which they now embraced. Hon. Members who so triumphantly prophesied the success of this measure appeared altogether to forget that the Liberal Party had made several attempts to settle the Land Question permanently, and that every attempt had been hailed with the same approving chorus. In 1860 there was one final settlement of this question; in 1870 there was another; and now a third final settlement was proposed. Three final settlements in 21 years. He had no doubt if the present Bill passed into law it would be the parent of many future final settlements, introduced with the same hopes and ending with the same disappointments. This was not all. The Liberal Party had boxed the political compass on this question. For the Bill of 1860 was founded on free contract; the Bill of 1881 on Socialistic principles; while the Bill of 1870 was a transition between the two. But even this did not show the full incompetence of the Party opposite to deal with this problem; for it now appeared that by the Bill of 1870, without in the least intending it, they had conferred on the tenants property which properly belonged to the landlord, and they now thought it necessary to legalize deliberately this accidental confiscation, and to enforce those rights by means of the present Bill. With regard to peasant proprietors, although he doubted the economic advantages of the system, he believed it would be politically advantageous on the broad principle that if legislation was to be carried on under mob dictation, it was well in the interests of justice to have a mob on both sides. He did not propose to detain the House further on this question; but he wished to say one word on the subject of free sale. The whole object of the Bill, they had been told, was to counteract the land hunger which existed in Ireland. He wished to ask, when the tenant was allowed to sell his holding for full value, would his successor be rack-rented or not in effect? It was clear that if the operation of competition was allowed to drive up the tenant's interest to its full limit of value, the incoming tenant, between the claims of the money-lender and those of the landlord, would pay precisely the same rent as if competition had throughout been allowed full play, except that the money would not go into the right pockets. The only possible way in which this result could be avoided was by diminishing, through the operation of the Land Court, the rent paid by the new tenant in consequence of, and having regard to, the excessive price paid for the tenant right. But if that were the alternative adopted by the Government, the Bill was one of undisguised spoliation. Free sale, in short, must end either in rack-renting or in robbery. Then there came the question of fair rents. Even in England it was difficult to settle a fair rent by arbitration. But there was this great difference—that whereas in England there was a fair standard ascertained by competition, in Ireland, after the passing of the Bill, there would be no standard. But that was not all. What the Bill was really attempting was to fix the standard of living for Irish labourers. A large proportion of the farmers were really in the position of labourers. To fix their rents was really equivalent to fixing the amount of wages they were to receive. In parts of Ireland the tenants had no capital, and any law regulating the rents they paid was really a law regulating wages. The Bill was therefore Socialistic in its character. Socialistic schemes were always directed to redressing by Government interference the evils, or supposed evils, in regard to the distribution of wealth which flowed from unrestricted competition. From that point of view the Bill was clearly a step in the direction of Socialism. The Chief Secretary for Ireland had remarked that they did interfere between the employer of labour and the artizan, because they had a Poor Law; but he could hardly have been serious in maintaining that there was any analogy between the operation of the Poor Law and the operation of the proposed Land Court. Almost all the arguments of the hon. Member for Southwark (Mr. Thorold Rogers) were based on the supposition that it was impossible to give the tenant the value of his improvements unless they passed this Bill; but that proposition he altogether denied. Nobody wanted the tenant to lose his improvements; there were provisions in the Bill altogether distinct from those he had been criticizing which would secure the improvements he had made; and there was no necessity for them to choose between swallowing the whole Bill brought in by the Government and allowing the tenant to be deprived of that which his labour had produced. He did not believe they were bound to find a complete remedy for the state of Ireland. They would not think the more highly of a physician because he professed to cure all diseases; and a politician was not a great statesman because he conceived that by one Bill he could provide a remedy for ills so deep seated and of such long standing as those of Ireland. They were not to be cured by months of well-meaning administrative weakness, followed by a Coercion Act of unexampled severity, followed again by wild legislation of this kind. It was only slow improvement that could be permanent. He was not prepared with any other legislation; but he could not on that account give his adhesion to this. It was to be condemned, not only because it taught the lesson too often taught before that agitation would produce legislation, but also because it must fail in its intended object. It could not relieve the tenant from the rack-renting which was produced by competition; it introduced principles which no other Government had been bold enough to adopt, and which, he feared, might be applied to other countries than Ireland, and to other industries than agriculture; and for these reasons, if the noble Lord the Member for Haddingtonshire (Lord Elcho) persisted in his Amendment, he should support him; if not, he should vote for the Amendment of the noble Lord the Member for North Leicestershire (Lord John Manners).

Mr. P. J. SMYTH said, he had listened with pleasure to the temperate speech of the right hon. Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith), and all the more so because it was such a marked contrast to other speeches made from the same side of the House, except that of the hon. and learned Member for Limerick (Mr. O'Shaughnessy). It was an unfortunate circumstance that a purely social question, the relation of landlord and tenant, upon the satisfactory settlement of which the very existence of a nation depended, should assume in that House, at that early stage, a Party character. A Party triumph on such a question could be achieved only at the sacrifice of a nation's life. Ireland, without distinction of Party, appealed to the House for peace, and the most thorough partizanship might well shrink from the responsibility of making her wasted fields the theatre of Party conflict. It was scarcely justifiable in the circumstances of Ireland to meet a Bill of this character, framed, as it obviously was, in a spirit of justice and conciliation, with obstructive criticism, unless such criticism were accompanied by proposals better calculated to accomplish the object which all Parties in the House should have in view—the peace and prosperity of Ireland. Where were these proposals? Where were these grand schemes for the development of the resources of Ireland? Elcho answered, where? He looked on this Bill as a great measure of justice; he believed it to be entitled to the support of every hon. Member on either side of the House claiming to be a friend of Ireland. It stood alone, the first great Government measure ever submitted to this House which breathed throughout the spirit, not merely of abstract justice, but of Irish right. The Catholic Emancipation Act was marred by the abolition of the 40*s.* freeholders, and by the penal clauses against the religious orders. The Encumbered Estates Act took no note of Irish sentiments, traditions, and habits, and failed, in consequence, to realize the wise purpose of its authors. The Land Act of 1870, framed with the best intentions, put English contract in place of Irish custom, and hence the necessity for new legislation; but here was a Bill which, excepting particular details, a Grattan or a Flood might have presented to an Irish Parliament. ["Oh!"] He was speaking on the second reading, and he spoke not of details but of principles, and especially of the recognition of the unquestionable fact that the Irish tenant had co-property in the soil, and that he held it by tradition, by immemorial usage, and by force of sentiment as ineradicable as it was natural and laudable. Tenant right existed in every country in Europe formerly embraced by the feudal system; if it was to be found now only in certain counties in Ulster, the fact was to be accounted for by the wars and confiscations of the past. Ulster was the last part of Ireland brought under British dominion, and was, therefore, the last to alter tribal customs for feudal tenure. Another reason for its existence in Ulster was given by a witness in the Devon Commission—"Because," he said, "the people of that Province were Protestants, and had arms in their hands." The truth of the matter, as far as the Ulster Custom was concerned, was that it was a national and not a local custom, and this was the secret of the desperate tenacity with which the Irish tenant clung to his holding, and to which, even in exile, he dreamed of his return. Who that had seen the Irish exile as he had—by some river of the Great West on a festal day of his native land, pause in his task at noon and in fancy listen to the chimes of the Sabbath bells of home—who that had seen him, as he had, look up at midnight into the wondrous sky of the Southern hemisphere guessing which one of those bright orbs was then shedding its beams through his cabin door just by the wild wood, could fail to realize how vain the attempt to oppose to a rooted belief and a pious sentiment the cold precepts of a ducal philosophy? On one occasion an Irishman in the wilds of Australia showed him a sod of turf which he had carried with him from Ireland. In the spirit of a utilitarian, he asked why he had carried the turf with him from the other side of the world? He said that he meant it to be put into his coffin if he died away from his native land. There was more philosophy and feeling in that saying than in the essays of those Gentlemen who would fain have them believe that what was not contract was confiscation. They had heard a great deal about the rights of property, and he would yield to no one in his respect for the rights of property. They were based upon reason and common sense; but the rights of property and the rights of landlords, so far from standing on the same footing, were too often directly opposed to each other. The rights of property promote production; the rights of landlords too often impede it. The very reasons that should induce them to respect the one would lead them to limit and regulate the other. When representatives of the landed interests, both here and elsewhere, spoke of the rights of property in connection with this Bill, he wondered did they forget the several Acts of Parliament that had been passed since 1800 in favour of the landlord and against the tenant, in support of the landlords' right and to the injury of the tenants. In his view, if all those Acts had been repealed 12 years ago, and the ancient Common Law of England, in regard to the tenure of land, restored, the tenants would have been vastly benefited, and the rights of property would have been safer than they now were. The "three F's" were one and indivisible. Accepting one, they necessarily accepted the three; accepting free sale, they accepted permanence of tenure and fair rent, without which there could be no interest and no sale. On some of the best managed estates in Ireland that principle had long been acted upon; and if it was universal the rights of property would not have been injured, and landlord, person, and property would have been much more respected than they now were. As a class, with a few noble exceptions, the Irish landlords, since the year 1800, had not deserved well of their country, and the result had been a miserable warfare protracted through generations; it had been class against class, rich against poor, and both against the law. The machinery proposed by the Bill had been harshly and prematurely criticized, and he must express his opinion that it was fully adequate to give effect to all the principles involved in the Bill. The moral effect upon both landlords and tenants of the existence of a strong Land Court would be such that, after a little time, the intervention of the Court would not, except in rare instances, be sought. Landlord and tenant would learn to settle their differences amicably, and the principle of contract, for the first time free and unfettered, would assume its rightful sway. The portion of the Bill relating to a peasant proprietary met with universal approval. Believing that, under proper conditions, Ireland could support double her present population, he was no advocate for emigration. He thought reclamation ought to have a fair trial before emigration was resorted to. He admitted that there were omissions from the Bill—particularly in regard to absentees, and corporate bodies, and the labourers—but these could be remedied in Committee. He would not further detain the House, because he felt that this Bill should not only pass, but that it should pass speedily; while its defeat would be an irreparable disaster. Every day's delay in its passing would detract from its value. A great political architect had traced for them the lines and laid deep for them the foundations of a glorious temple of national concord and union. It was for them, with willing hands, to raise its massive walls high into the air, and to surmount the whole with a mighty dome, beneath whose shadow Irishmen of all classes might rest, oblivious of the past sorrows and hopeful of the future splendour of their common country.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Lord John Manners*).

MR. PARNELL: I am sorry to have to introduce a discordant note into the proceedings of this evening; but the fault is not mine. I have just learned that the Government have arrested my hon. Friend (Mr. Dillon), the Colleague of the hon. Member who has last addressed the House (Mr. P. J. Smyth); and I cannot help thinking that it presents a very strange irony that while one hon. Member for Tipperary is extolling Her Majesty's Government, the other Member for Tipperary is an inmate of a prison cell. I regret that Her Majesty's Government should have interfered with the Constitutional rights of my hon. Friend when he was on his way to this House. [*Cries of* "Oh!"]

MR. SPEAKER: I have to point out to the hon. Member that the question before the House is the second reading of the Irish Land Bill; and on the Motion for the adjournment of the debate no observations can be made by the hon. Member which are not relevant to that Bill.

MR. PARNELL: I propose, Sir, with your permission, to move that the House do now adjourn.

MR. SPEAKER: It is not competent for the hon. Member to make that Motion at the present time. The Question before the House is the adjournment of the debate, and it is necessary that the House should settle that question. Until it is disposed of the Motion of the hon. Member cannot be made.

MR. PARNELL: Of course, I have to apologize to you since you rule me out of Order, and say that I am not entitled to move the adjournment of the House. But I understand that there are precedents for the course I proposed to take, and that I should be in Order in moving the adjournment of the House, even on the Motion for the adjournment of the debate.

MR. SPEAKER: In any case, the hon. Member could not make any remarks except such as might be relevant to the Bill before the House.

MR. CALLAN: I rise to Order. May I ask if the hon. Member would be in Order in making the remarks he proposes to make when the Motion is made, on the next Question, that you do leave the Chair?

MR. SPEAKER: Any observations made by the hon. Member, even then, must be relevant to the Question before the House. But I am bound to say this—that if the hon. Member wishes to make any observations on any other subject, I think he would be in Order in making them when the Motion is made at the termination of the Business before the House for the adjournment of the House.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 263; Noes 34: Majority 229.—(Div. List, No. 190.)

Debate *adjourned* till *Thursday*.

MOTION.

PARLIAMENTARY OATHS BILL.

MOTION FOR LEAVE.

MR. SPEAKER called upon the Attorney General to make his Motion for Leave to bring in the Parliamentary Oaths Bill.

MR. R. N. FOWLER said, he had a Petition to present from the Committee of the National Club, praying the House to refuse its assent to any Bill which proposed to abolish the appeal to Almighty God, and that legislation upon the subject might not be hurried through.

Petition *ordered* to be laid on the Table.

MR. PARNELL: I rise now, Sir, for the purpose of moving the adjournment of the House.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is out of Order. I have already called upon the Attorney General.

MR. PARNELL: I beg, with great respect, to submit that I had addressed you, and had intimated my intention of moving the adjournment of the House before you called upon the hon. and learned Attorney General.

Mr. SPEAKER : I am simply carrying out the Order of the House. The House has already ordered that at this Sitting the Orders of the Day shall be postponed until after the Motion of the Attorney General with regard to the Parliamentary Oath, and in pursuance of that Order of the House I have called upon the Attorney General, who is now in possession of the House.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR : I rise to a point of Order. The Order of the House to which you have referred states—

> "That the Orders of the Day, subsequent to the Order of the Day for resuming the Adjourned Debate on the Second Reading of the Land Law (Ireland) Bill be postponed until after the Notice of Motion for the introduction of the Parliamentary Oaths Bill."

The debate on the second reading of the Land Law (Ireland) Bill has been adjourned ; the Orders of the Day, in pursuance of the Resolution I have quoted, have been postponed, and we have come to the Notices of Motion. The Notices of Motion are some 20 in number ; and the Notice which stands in the name of the hon. and learned Attorney General is No. 8 upon the list. The point I wish to submit to you, Mr. Speaker, is, whether the Orders numbered 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7, down to No. 8, must not be disposed of before the Motion can be taken which stands on the Paper in the name of the Attorney General ? If it be said that this is a Government Notice, and that it ought to have precedence on a Government night, then I would respectfully submit that if that were so, it would have been printed at the head of the Notices of Motion. What I wish to ask now, as a point of Order, is, whether the Notices which precede that of the Attorney General should not have precedence ?

Mr. SPEAKER : In calling upon the Attorney General to submit his Motion, I have only followed out the Order of the House. The Motion of the Attorney General, according to the Order of the House, was to be called up out of its place ; and, in pursuance of that Order of the House, I have called upon the Attorney General.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR : I do not for a moment, Sir, question the complete accuracy of your statement as to the ordinary practice of the House ; but I would submit further to you, whether, upon Notice being taken of the points to which I have alluded, it is not within the competence of any Member to insist on the programme furnished to us in regard to the Business of the House for this evening being strictly adhered to. Even if the custom be as you have mentioned, when an objection has been taken to a departure from the prescribed Orders of the Day, I would submit that although that custom may be as you have stated, we have a right to insist on the Notice Paper being gone through.

Mr. PARNELL : Upon the point of Order I wish to add for your further consideration, whether, where it is desired that a Notice of Motion should take precedence of other Notices of Motion which are before it on the Paper, as well as of the Orders of the Day which are also before it on the Paper, it has not been customary in times past to move a Resolution of this kind—that the Orders of the Day and Notices of Motion subsequent to the Order of the Day for resuming the second reading of the Land Law (Ireland) Bill be postponed until after the Notice of Motion for the introduction of such and such a Bill or Notice of Motion ? In the present case, I think I can recall to your mind the fact that there have been several such precedents afforded to us in the past practice of the House when it has been desired to move a Notice of Motion out of its usual order, and that the Notices of Motion have always been included as well as the Orders of the Day. On the present occasion, the only Resolution we have adopted is the Resolution moved by the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, which directs that the Orders of the Day subsequent to the Order of the Day for resuming the adjourned debate on the second reading of the Land Law (Ireland) Bill should be postponed until after the Notice of Motion for the introduction of the Parliamentary Oaths Bill. That refers only to the Orders of the Day; and I take it that the Notices of Motion which stand on the Paper after the Orders of the Day should now be taken according to the order in which they stand. Certainly, the Resolution which the House has adopted does not give precedence to the Motion of the learned Attorney General over the Notices of

Motion which stand before it on the Paper.

MR. SPEAKER: I can only repeat to the hon. Member, and to the House, that the ordinary course has been followed upon this occasion, and that I am only pursuing the ordinary and uniform practice of the House in calling on the Attorney General, who has charge of the Motion in question, to proceed with that Motion. I am, however, bound to say that, after the distinct intimation I have given, it does appear to me that this continued interruption is in itself disorderly.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): I have now to move for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the law relating to the Parliamentary Oath. In making that Motion, I think it would be the most convenient course that I should explain the reasons which render it desirable that the Bill should be brought in. In the statement I have to make, I can assure the House that I shall occupy its time as briefly as I can, and I shall do all in my power to avoid entering into matters of a controversial nature. It is necessary, however, to remind the House that the responsibility of introducing the Bill has been cast on the Government; how it is that the difficulty which the Bill proposes to deal with has arisen; and why it is that it has become necessary to meet that difficulty by means of the proposed legislation. In the first place, it is only seemly that I should give credit to the foresight displayed some time ago by hon. Members opposite, and especially to acknowledge that of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross), who, when this matter was before the House on the 1st of July last, expressed his views almost in the words of a prophecy, which prophecy now appears about to be fulfilled. When we were then discussing the proposed Resolution of the Prime Minister, the right hon. Gentleman said he thought the only course to be followed was to bring in a Bill to solve the difficulty; and he also added—

> "They might depend upon it that, whatever the fate of this Resolution was, it would not settle the question. Legislation must be brought forward, whatever the sacrifice of time."—[3 *Hansard*, ccliii. 1330.]

At that time it was thought that the Resolution of the Prime Minister might have been sufficient to meet the difficulty which the House had to deal with; because, if the judicial opinion had been in concurrence with the opinion of those Members of the House who thought that Mr. Bradlaugh had a right to affirm, there would have been no need for this legislation. But it was not so. The Courts of Law have decided that Mr. Bradlaugh was not entitled to affirm, and a claim is now made by him to take the Oath. The difficulty which the right hon. Gentleman referred to on the occasion which I mentioned has arisen; and, that difficulty having arisen, the prophecy which he made to the House seems about to be fulfilled. At any rate, the necessity for legislation has become apparent; and the first question which presents itself is upon whom shall the responsibility fall of introducing that legislation to the consideration of the House? With regard to the proposal now to be submitted to it, whatever may be its fate, I think there will be an universal concurrence of opinion that the responsibility should fall upon the Government, and not upon any private Member. We have now to consider for one moment what is the difficulty with which we have to deal; and I am very anxious that there should be an agreement of feeling amongst the Members of this House upon this point, however we may disagree as to the manner of meeting the difficulty. I understand it to arise from the fact that Members of the House who have been anxious and willing to take the Oath—or, at least, willing to take it—ought not, in the opinion of other Members of the House, to be allowed to take it. Sir, I think the reason why they ought not to be allowed to take the Oath must be narrowed to a very simple issue, and in that sense I am encouraged to believe that the difficulty we have to meet is a very small one. That encouragement proceeds from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devonshire, who said that he did not object to Mr. Bradlaugh sitting in this House, and that he had no objection to those who entertained the same views as Mr. Bradlaugh being Members of this House. ["No, no!"] I will not come into conflict of opinion with those hon. Gentlemen whose recollections are not the same as mine. I understood the right hon. Gentleman to say he had no objection to the fact of Mr. Bradlaugh sitting here; but that he objected to the profanity of his taking the Oath at the Table of the House. He objected, in fact, to an appeal to the Supreme Being, in whom there was no belief, as a mockery.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: That certainly was the point; but I do not think I made use of the term that I had no objection to Mr. Bradlaugh taking his seat as a Member of this House.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James): I am sure the right hon. Gentleman is more likely to be right than I; but I understood him to say that, as a matter of principle, he did not object to Mr. Bradlaugh being in the House, but that he objected to the profanity of his taking the Oath. At any rate, I believe there will be those who share that opinion. Again, as the law stands at present, persons entertaining opinions identical with those of Mr. Bradlaugh cannot be prevented from sitting in this House. There is no possible means of preventing the Oath being taken by such persons, because we have agreed that the Report of the Committee of the 23rd of June last is to prevail; and you, Mr. Speaker, have ruled that if a Member is silent on entering the House, and does not contemporaneously with taking the Oath make a declaration of his opinions, the House would not interfere. Thus, if a person, however atheistical in his opinions, and however morally certain this House may be, from what he has said or written out-of-doors, that he has no belief of any kind in the Supreme Being—if such a person shall come here and merely remain silent, that which hon. Members opposite so conscientiously object to and believe would be profanity in the case of Mr. Bradlaugh may day by day be enacted at the Table of this House, and there will be no means of preventing it. That is a condition of things which I understand hon. Members to say they must put an end to. In deference to the conscientious views of those who think thus, some legislation is necessary to prevent the repetition of that which has been so forcibly complained of by hon. Gentlemen opposite. But, Sir, it is not necessary to rest this Motion upon that ground alone. Without regarding the circumstances immediately before us, I believe there is a far stronger and better ground on which to base the introduction of this Bill—namely, that there should be no religious tests for persons entering this House. Therefore, I conceive there are ample grounds for this Motion being accepted. The necessity for legislation is almost unanimously admitted; but certainly to many Members of this House the question will present itself, as to what kind that legislation shall be? It may be that many will object to the proposals of the Government, thinking that there might be legislation on a much more extended basis. There may be many who will say they desire that all Promissory Oaths should be done away with; but probably most will agree that the present is not an opportune time to raise that question, and that it had better not be brought under our consideration so soon after the circumstances which have occurred within our walls. In doing anything to mitigate the necessity of the Oath, I am encouraged by the example set by the Conservative Government in the year 1868, who, in the Promissory Oaths Amendment Act of that year, showed that it was not always necessary that a Promissory Oath should be taken. In relation to the Oath of Allegiance, the importance of which one would suppose to be greatest in the case of those whose fidelity to the person of Her Majesty was most necessary in consequence of their forming her body-guard, a Conservative Government held in this House that the Oath was not necessary, and that a solemn Declaration would supply all that was required. The same Government also proposed to substitute a solemn Declaration for a Promissory Oath in the case of persons taking municipal offices; in short, in every case except those mentioned in the Act of 1868 the Promissory Oath was abolished, and a Declaration accepted in its stead. That was the proposal of a Government of which right hon. Gentlemen opposite were Members, and it received the acquiescence of the House of Commons. Notwithstanding this example, I confess it appears to me, on the whole, undesirable to raise the broad question whether or not Promissory Oaths should be abolished. I think, under the circumstances in which we are placed, it will be better to propose legislation that will relieve this House from legal difficulty, and which will also afford due consideration to the consciences of hon. Members. I trust, therefore, that the Bill will meet the views of hon. Members opposite, and be a remedy for the evil of which they complain. I have quoted the views of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, and if I am right in what I believe to be the view of the majority of the House, we have to deal with the difficulty not as to what is a proper test of the religious opinions of hon. Members, but as to what are the means, or what are the doors, by which hon. Members should enter this House. There are, at the present moment, two doors only, so to speak, by which they can enter, one of which may be represented by taking the Oath. The second is that which has been constituted in accordance with the terms of the 4th section of the Act of 1866, that provides that any Member of this House who claims to be a member of the Society of Quakers is entitled to make Affirmation as an equivalent for the Oath. We do not propose to open any fresh doors by which Members may come amongst us, nor to close any by which entrance is at present effected; but we propose to widen one of those of which I have spoken. The proposal of the Government is that the 4th section of the Act of 1866, by which Affirmation is allowed to be made by Quakers, shall be extended to every Member of the House who may desire to affirm in preference to taking an Oath.

SIR EARDLEY WILMOT rose to Order. He wished to know whether, according to the Standing Orders of the House, the proposal of the hon. and learned Attorney General should not be made in Committee of the Whole House?

MR. SPEAKER: The statement which the hon. and learned Attorney General is making is not out of Order. I presume the hon. and learned Gentleman will conclude with a Motion that the House resolve itself into Committee of the Whole House to enable him to ask leave to introduce the Bill which he has in charge.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): I have already stated that it was my intention to follow the course which you, Sir, have alluded to. The proposal being that any hon. Member may make Affirmation instead of taking the Oath, I presume that every person on whom an Oath is binding will still desire to take the Oath; and certainly those persons, for the most part, who will ask leave to make an Affirmation will be those on whom an Oath will not be binding. How can you wish men to take the Oath upon whose consciences it will have no binding effect? What advantage can possibly arise from compelling men to go through such an empty form? If you do so there will be the profanity of which you complained, and there will be an empty form without any good effect. It will be said that men now take the Oath who preferred to take the Affirmation; but what then? The Affirmation will have an equal effect upon their consciences to the taking of the Oath; therefore, all the advantage that ever accrues to anyone from taking the Oath will still remain, for those upon whom it is binding and effective will still take it, and those upon whom the Oath has the same binding effect as an Affirmation, if they take an Affirmation will be equally bound by that. It has been said that an Oath is a religious test; but I will remind the House that we can never enforce our test, because we cannot question a man in this House as to his conscientious belief, nor can we receive evidence in respect of it. Therefore, what is the use of seeking to apply the test of the Oath to a man upon whom it cannot have the slightest effect? No one man has ever been kept out of the House by means of the existence of the Oath, and it is now sought to substitute for it an Affirmation, which, for all practical purposes, will have precisely the same effect. It will give them exactly the same security that an Oath would give. There is only one other matter to which I wish to refer, and which I have heard much discussed. The question is raised that if this Bill becomes law a person in Mr. Bradlaugh's position will still be able to take the Oath in defiance of the feeling of the House; and it is suggested that there ought to be some legislation to prevent him taking it. That question, I think, arises from a misapprehension. The House on Tuesday last decided, under the very exceptional circumstances of Mr. Bradlaugh's previous declaration, and upon the ground stated by the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth (Mr.

Clarke) that the circumstances of last year and this year amount to a contemporaneous act, and are so continuous that they cannot allow Mr. Bradlaugh to take the Oath. I will not enter now upon the question whether the House ought to have arrived at that conclusion; but I will say this—that if the House had the power then to prevent Mr. Bradlaugh taking the Oath, it will have exactly the same power after the passing of this Bill. This Bill will make no difference in the power of the House. If Mr. Bradlaugh affirms, he will do so under this Bill; but if, after making the same declaration, he came again to take the Oath, the House can again exercise the same power and again prevent him taking the Oath. There is not the slightest desire on the part of Her Majesty's Government, in bringing forward this Bill, to interfere with the decision at which the House has arrived. In saying that, I am not saying for one moment that the position of those who voted against the admission of Mr. Bradlaugh is a right and proper position to take up, or that the power which the House then exercised was rightly exercised. But whether it was right or wrong, this Bill will leave matters in precisely the same position in relation to the exercise of that right. I do not wish now to enter into any matter of a controversial nature; but I have explained what will be the purport and substance of the proposed Bill; and, in conclusion, I can only say that I trust that the House will accept the measure in the spirit in which it is proposed, which is in no sense hostile to the decision of Tuesday last, and in no way desires to interfere with the discretion or the conscientious views of hon. Members opposite. Whether the Bill is accepted or dissented from, I hope it will, at least, be discussed in a spirit free from any tinge of religious intolerance. I now beg to move "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair, and that the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole House," with the view of asking leave to introduce the Bill.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."—(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE wished to offer one word of personal explanation with reference to the citation which the hon. and learned Gentleman had made from some remarks of his, and which might possibly produce a wrong impression as it stood in the hon. and learned Gentleman's statement. He could not remember the exact words he (Sir Stafford Northcote) had used; but what he had in his mind at the time was this—he was defining the point of the objection which he had been taking; he was taking objection to the use of the Oath by a person to whom some of the words were meaningless and an empty formality; and he meant to state that he did not take any objection on that occasion to Mr. Bradlaugh sitting in the House; but he did take objection to his taking the Oath. He did not wish, at the time, to raise the other question; but neither did he wish that it should go forth that he had no objection to Mr. Bradlaugh sitting in the House. He simply did not raise that point.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, that in accordance with the agreement arrived at earlier in the evening, he would now move that the Debate be adjourned.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned." —(*Lord Randolph Churchill.*)

MR. NEWDEGATE trusted that, as the subject was not introduced until a quarter past 12 o'clock, the House would see the desirability of adjourning the debate. He would only add that the Attorney General, in the very temperate speech which he had introduced to the House, had made assumptions which could not be supported by the practice of the House in this very case of Mr. Bradlaugh.

Motion *agreed to.*

Debate *adjourned* till *Thursday.*

MR. ONSLOW inquired whether the Prime Minister proposed that the debate on the Land Law (Ireland) Bill should be stopped at any hour on Thursday, in order that this debate might be resumed?

MR. GLADSTONE replied that, although the debate was formally put down for Thursday, it was intended, in conformity with his previous statement, that it should be resumed on Friday.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

—⁂—

ALKALI, &c. WORKS REGULATION BILL [*Lords*]—[Bill 119.]

(*Mr. Dodson.*)

COMMITTEE.

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 (Short title) *agreed to.*

Clause 2 (Commencement of Act).

Sir SYDNEY WATERLOW moved in page 1, line 9, to insert the year 1883, in place of the year 1882. He said this Amendment was proposed with the object of giving time to manufacturers and others to put their works in order. In the case of cement manufacturers, the works could not be altered without the expenditure of a large amount of time and capital; and he did not think the Government desired that persons should be subjected to those heavy inconveniences without having proper time given them for the purpose. Supposing that this Amendment were not agreed to, he was prepared with another on Clause 8, providing that the owner of cement works should have no fine levied upon him within six months after a first order was made against him under the Act; and if the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board was willing to accept the latter Amendment he was ready to withdraw the former.

Mr. DODSON was of opinion that the first Amendment was quite unnecessary, inasmuch as no Court would convict a man and inflict a penalty for not having altered his works in obeyance to the requirements of an Inspector under the Act, unless sufficient and reasonable time had been given him to do so. The alkali manufacturers had been subject to similar legislation under previous Acts, and he was not aware that any case of hardship of that kind had arisen. Therefore, although the principle of the Amendment was reasonable, it was entirely unnecessary; and as the effect would be to prevent the Act coming into operation until 1883, it was one which he could not accept. In regard to the latter Amendment, he could only say that he approved the principle of it, and would consult the Law Officers to see whether words could be introduced to that effect.

Mr. WARTON could not understand how the right hon. Gentleman could undertake to recollect the proceedings of Courts of Justice. The right hon. Gentleman seemed conscious of the weakness of his position, because he undertook to consult the Law Officers. In his (Mr. Warton's) opinion, it would be far better to have words inserted in the Bill than to trust to what the right hon. Gentleman and the Local Government Board would guarantee in the Courts of Law.

Colonel MAKINS inquired whether, in the event of the hon. Member for Gravesend (Sir Sydney Waterlow) withdrawing his Amendment the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Dodson) would postpone Clause 8 until he had the opportunity of considering the point?

Mr. DODSON replied that he did not say that he would postpone Clause 8; but that he would consider whether it was necessary or desirable to introduce some words in another part of the Bill to give effect to what the hon. Baronet proposed.

Amendment *negatived.*

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 3 (Condensation of muriatic and other acid gases in alkali works).

Mr. ERRINGTON moved, in page 1, line 17, to insert after the word "work" the following words, "to the extent of ninety-five per centum and." The hon. Gentleman complained that the Bill proposed to substitute the percentage standard regulating the consumption of noxious gases by a new standard which would be less stringent. Therefore, he regarded his Amendment as very important, and hoped the Government would accept it. The law hitherto had required manufacturers to condense 95 per cent of the noxious gases evolved by their works; and he thought there would not be the least objection on the part of the manufacturers to guarantee that the new law should not be less efficient than the old.

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, line 17, after the word "work," to insert the words "to the extent of ninety-five per centum and."—(*Mr. Errington.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. STEVENSON, on behalf of the Alkali Manufacturers' Association, stated that they would agree to the Amendment. It would be a pity to lower the present standard of condensation and to decrease the stringency of the law in that respect. Unless this proviso was inserted the manufacturer would be enabled to allow three times as much gas to escape as he did at present; in fact, in some cases, it would raise the amount of escape to about 15 per cent. Those who were connected with the trade declared, and legislation had been based upon the principle, that the law ought to compel negligent manufacturers to keep their works up to the standard maintained by careful manufacturers. He should propose that the gases mentioned in sub-section 6 should be only those of sulphur and nitrogen; and he would venture to strongly recommend the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Dodson) to accept the Amendment.

Mr. DODSON: I have no objection to accept the Amendment which the hon. Member proposes on behalf of the manufacturers. I am willing to insert in the Bill, in line 17, after the word "work," the words "to the extent of 95 per centum and," if the manufacturers desire it; but we must accept the Amendment on its own merits, and I cannot undertake, in consequence of its adoption, to agree to accept from the hon. Member for South Shields (Mr. Stevenson) any definition as to the gases mentioned in sub-section 3 being gases of sulphur and nitrogen. I could not accept any proposal to confine the gases under that definition. According to the information I have received from the Inspectors, the text would apply to muriatic acid, and to other acids, whether as chimney or flue gases.

Major NOLAN wished to know from the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill whether it applied to Ireland. It was not clear whether it did or not, although, at the end, there were several references to that country. If Ireland were included in the scope of the measure, he should think it would be desirable to amend the measure by omitting all reference to Ireland, for there was not much chance of the air being contaminated by alkali or other works there. If Ireland were included, the rating for sanitary purposes might be increased; and he, therefore, asked that she might be left out, unless the Irish Members asked that the Bill be extended to their country. He should be disposed to look with considerable jealousy upon the measure, unless he received an assurance that it would not affect Ireland. He should like to see small alkali works established there; but the passing of this Bill, if it applied to that country, would render the starting of such works there even less likely than it was at present. There had been a manufactory in Galway that would have come under the definition of an alkali works. No doubt, in England there were some districts which were considerably injured, almost poisoned, by works of this kind, and legislation in their case was necessary; but he could not imagine such a case occurring in Ireland. It would be quite time enough for them to provide this remedy for Ireland when any of her people suffered from the inconvenience which the measure was designed to remove. In the last clauses of the Bill several Irish Acts were quoted; and it would, to his mind, be an advantage if the Committee had an assurance from the Government that the measure would not apply to Ireland.

The CHAIRMAN: I must point out to the hon. and gallant Member that this is scarcely the time, when we are discussing the Amendment of the hon. Member for Longford (Mr. Errington), to consider the general question of the extent of the operation of the Bill.

Major NOLAN said, he thought it right to give Notice that he should jealously watch every clause of the Bill. He did not profess to be interested in alkali works, and he did not wish to be understood as implying that his constituents were interested in them, although he believed, as he had said, there had been a kelp works in Galway which would come under the definition of alkali works. He had a right to jealously watch every clause of the Bill, and when an Irish Member got up and said that he did not want to have the measure extended to his country, unless other Members from Ireland rose and expressed a desire that it should be so extended, the Government should give him an assurance that Ireland would not be affected.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, it seemed to him most extraordinary that at this hour (1.10 a.m.) they should be discussing the question as to whether the Bill did or did not apply to Ireland. To make way for the discussion of this measure they had interrupted the course of a most important Bill affecting the interests of the Irish people. The discussion on the Irish Land Bill had been interrupted for the alleged purpose of enabling the Attorney General to introduce a measure of great and pressing importance; but it was now plain that, in the opinion of the Government, it was not necessary, for the purpose declared, to take that step at all, as they had not even thought it expedient to take a division on the question that the Speaker leave the Chair. It seemed to him that the Irish Members, after having seen the debate on the Land Bill adjourned, could hardly be expected to sit there quietly to discuss this Alkali Works Regulation Bill, which they had had no reason to expect would be brought before the House to-night. He would move to report Progress.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Arthur O'Connor.*)

Mr. DODSON: I hope the hon. Member will withdraw the Motion, and allow us to make some progress with this Bill. It is a measure in which a great many Members on both sides of the House are interested; and there is a general feeling throughout the Assembly to see it carried. The manufacturers who are interested are anxious to see the thing settled; and the residents in the districts affected by noxious gases are anxious to have the nuisances from which they suffer abated. An hon. and gallant Member below the Gangway has appealed to me to know whether Ireland is included in the Bill. Ireland has been included in all the Alkali Acts, and in all the legislation which has taken place on this subject; and I fail to see any reason why, on the present occasion, it should be omitted from the operation of the measure. But, whatever may be the merits of the case as to including or excluding Ireland from the operation of the Act, I venture to submit that the question does not arise on the Amendment before the Committee.

Mr. CALLAN wished to know whether any demand had been made for the Bill on behalf of the Irish people, or whether the official Representatives of that country, who were Irishmen, had considered whether the measure should be extended to Ireland or not? He would ask some Member of the Government who knew something about Ireland to reply.

Mr. HIBBERT said, he would give the hon. Member the information he required. The Representatives of Ireland in the Government had been consulted; and, moreover, the Bill had been framed in accordance with the recommendations of a Royal Commission founded upon evidence drawn from Ireland as well as other parts of the United Kingdom. It could not, therefore, be said that this measure had come upon the Irish Members by surprise.

Mr. RATHBONE would appeal to Irish Representatives on this question. The Bill, it was true, might not affect Ireland; but it certainly affected a large number of Irish people—in fact, he might almost say that it affected more Irish than any other people. There were enormous Irish populations in the neighbourhood of some of the most injurious chemical works; and it was to protect the residents in the districts surrounding such manufactories that this Bill was promoted. Irish Members complained that the Land Bill had been interrupted to make way for this measure; but that was not the fact. The Land Bill had been interrupted solely for the purpose of going on with a measure which had nothing whatever to do with the Bill before the Committee. He would point out to the Irish Representatives that this was a measure affecting the health of a great many of their countrymen; consequently, he appealed to them not to persist in their present course.

Major NOLAN said, that the hon. Member who spoke from the Government Bench had informed them that the official Irish Members had been consulted. He presumed, from the words in which the information had been couched, that the Official Irish Members had simply been consulted as to the drafting of the Bill. No doubt, the measure had been drafted very properly; but had they been consulted as to the necessity for the Bill? That was a very different matter, and he failed to see how connection with the Departments they represented should enable them to give a sound opinion as to the necessity of the Bill. He did not complain of the drafting of the measure; but he said there was no Irish demand for the Bill. He could understand the necessity for legislation in crowded neighbourhoods, such as the hon. Member for Carnarvonshire (Mr. Rathbone) had referred to; but he thought it would be a great mistake to pass such a measure for Ireland, as it would have the effect of fettering manufacturing enterprise. If anyone could show him the necessity for such a Bill, he should be satisfied; but, seemingly, nobody could. He could not see why the Government should hesitate to concede their simple demands. The Irish Members had not been consulted. The Bill was unnecessary; if it passed in its present form, a staff of Superintendents would be established for Great Britain alone, and the work of inspecting would be badly carried out in Ireland. No doubt, help works could be conducted in Ireland; but the Board of Trade had refused to give him statistics about them last year, and that was another reason why he looked with jealousy upon this Bill. Unless some case was made for extending the Bill to Ireland, he should support the Motion for reporting Progress.

Dr. COMMINS was at a loss to know who the parties were who were in such a hurry to see the Bill passed. The Board of Trade seemed to think that some people were anxious that the measure should be passed without delay; but he had been in communication with two of the largest alkali manufacturers, and, so far from being in a hurry to see the Bill carried, they considered that it would interfere with their trade, and do enormous damage to their interests, and also to the interests of the labourers employed by them. The next point was this. What was the necessity for extending the measure to Ireland? He should like the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Dodson) to point out to him one single alkali works in the whole of Ireland. He believed there was not one, and he would point out to hon. Members who wished to extend the measure to Ireland that if, before the principal alkali works in England came into existence, such a Bill as this had been passed, at this moment we should not have a single alkali manufactory in the country. It was because it was necessary to discharge noxious fumes into the air from these manufactures that works had been set up in the wastes of Widnes and on the sands of Flintshire. If it had been possible to sue the manufacturers for allowing noxious vapours to escape from their factories, these works would never have been established. Who, he would repeat, was in a hurry for this Bill? The manufacturers themselves were not, and the operatives were not anxious to have it, for they had never asked for it. He thought, therefore, that further time should be afforded for the consideration of the matter, so that the Government might not hastily take a step which would affect most injuriously not only the capital, but the labour employed in these manufactures.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS: The hon. and learned Member asks—"Who is in a hurry for this Bill?" Perhaps he will allow me to reply that everyone who lives in the neighbourhood of these alkali works is in a great hurry for it. In the vicinity of these works the country is destroyed for miles; in fact, the country is becoming a desert. The hon. and learned Member says that two alkali manufacturers have informed him that they are not in a hurry to see the Bill passed, because it will destroy their trade; and he further says that if the measure had been passed earlier the trade of Widnes never would have arisen. It is clear that the hon. and learned Gentleman knows nothing about the subject, and I am afraid "the two gentlemen interested in the alkali trade" who have spoken to him are gentlemen who care little what injury they do to the trade or to anyone but themselves. The best manufacturers are content with the Bill. They know they can manufacture under the provisions of this measure, without material loss to themselves, and they are willing to come under these provisions, always provided one thing—namely, that all manufacturers are brought under the Bill, because there are some inferior manufacturers who do not care what they do to their neighbours. The *bonâ fide,* well-established alkali manufacturers are anxious not to interfere with the interests of their agricultural neighbours.

Mr. MAGNIAC thought the hon. and learned Member (Dr. Commins) was labouring under a mistake. He knew of two very considerable works in Ireland which, when they were extended—as he hoped they would be—would, without such a measure as this, cause great damage to the surrounding country. The hon. and learned Member, no doubt, had spoken in the interests of his country; but he (Mr. Magniac) also was speaking in the interests of Ireland and in the interests of the Irish manufacturers. This Bill was brought in after the works at Widnes had been carried on for a great number of years. These works had been carried on without regulations, and the result had been that so much damage had been done to the surrounding country that legislation had become absolutely essential. In the course of the debate this afternoon on the Irish Land Bill, he had been surprised that the result——

Major NOLAN: Mr. Chairman, is the hon. Member in Order in referring to what occurred in another debate?

The CHAIRMAN: I have not yet heard what the hon. Member is going to allude to.

Mr. MAGNIAC, resuming, observed that the opinion had been expressed that a result of the measure would be the application of capital to Irish industries. He trusted that would be the case; and he believed from his knowledge of the subject that one of the first industries to which such capital would be applied would be the manufacture of manure, which he considered absolutely essential to the proper cultivation of the land. He also believed that by this measure an immense amount of capital would be saved, and he hoped that a considerable number of works would be established. If such works were established and placed under the regulations of this Bill, capital would not be wasted in works which did not consume their gases, and deleterious results would be prevented. If Irish Members opposed the Bill, and ill-regulated works were established in Ireland, there would be such an outcry that at the eleventh hour a Bill similar to this would have to be brought in. Ill-regulated works would cause great damage; and he was sure that any Member who understood the question would agree with him that it would not only not be for the benefit of Ireland to exclude that country from the Bill, but that it would cause much waste of capital.

Mr. MAC IVER, speaking as one acquainted with Widnes and the neighbourhood, said, the damage done by these works was really residential damage, and that, after all, what might be objectionable near a town like Liverpool might be perfectly unobjectionable in certain districts in Ireland. He thought the question raised in reference to Ireland was most important, because he felt, and many hon. Gentlemen on both sides of the House felt, that the industrial condition of Ireland was a matter of the first importance.

Earl PERCY admitted that the statement of the hon. Member for Birkenhead (Mr. Mac Iver) was one which came from a great authority, coming from a Gentleman who lived near Widnes; but he confessed, having visited Widnes, that the statement that the works there only caused residential damage was a most surprising one. The agricultural value of land in the neighbourhood of works of that kind had greatly deteriorated, and there was a general outcry for legislation. Several hon. Members wished that the Bill should not apply to Ireland, and would watch it very jealously if it did apply to that country; but, although the Committee would be glad of their scrutiny of the Bill, he did not see why the question whether or not it should apply to Ireland should be raised at that stage. He would suggest to those hon. Members that they should allow the Bill to proceed, and then raise that question in Committee.

Mr. HEALY gathered from the noble Lord who had just spoken that this was really a landlords' Bill. It was objected that the Irish Members had risen at the wrong moment to interpose; but he wished to point out that if the hon. Member had not raised his question now he would be easily defeated at a later stage, and so no satisfaction would be obtained from the Government. He, therefore, would ask the Government to consider the hon. Member's point immediately. There had been some chemical works in Ireland which were now killed, and he complained that such measures as these were not mentioned in the Queen's Speech; but that, in order to pass measures placing restrictions on manufacturers, other measures were mentioned, to throw dust in people's eyes.

Mr. WILBRAHAM EGERTON, referring to the previous speaker's statement that this was a landlords' Bill, said, that as a Member of the Royal Commission he had heard a great deal of evidence on the part of working men, among whom there was a very strong feeling that noxious gases affected their health and made life almost intolerable. In Widnes and St. Helen's there was a large number of men engaged in these works, and they suffered very greatly from the effects of the gases upon their respiratory organs. He hoped that hon. Members from Ireland, who enjoyed pure air, would not prevent the passage of this Bill, which was so necessary to obtain pure air in some districts in England. If there was no impure air in Ireland the Bill would not affect that country. It was simply in the first instance, a consolidation and extension Act, and it did not affect Ireland to any great extent. The objections of the hon. Members from Ireland appeared to him unsubstantial; and he only wished there were more works in Ireland with more employment for the people. He did not think the hon. Members would benefit Ireland by raising objections to Ireland being included in the Bill, and so stopping its progress.

Mr. WHITLEY, speaking as the Representative of a large constituency deeply interested in this subject, hoped the House would support the Government. A Royal Commission had been appointed upon this question, and he regretted that the Bill did not go further in the direction of the recommendations of that Commission. Every large town in the country had reported in favour of the Bill, and he was surprised to hear that the hon. and learned Member for Roscommon had not heard anything of it. The hon. and learned Member for Roscommon (Dr. Commins) was a member of the Corporation of Liverpool, and that Corporation had petitioned in favour of the Bill. The Corporations of Manchester, Warrington, and of other towns had done the same, and there was hardly a large town in the North of England which was not very much interested in the Bill. Thousands of working men were interested in the promotion of a Bill affecting the question of their health, and he regretted that any objection had been raised to a measure which he hoped would have met with the universal approval of the House. Hon. Members from Ireland might renew their objections when that portion of the Bill affecting Ireland came under discussion; but at present the House was not considering what parts of the country the Bill referred to, and he hoped the House would allow the Committee to pass the clause.

Sir SYDNEY WATERLOW explained that he did not wish to stop the Bill; but hon. Members who had spoken had discussed the Bill as if it were purely an Alkali Works Bill. If it had been only such a Bill, there would have been unanimity of opinion in the House in favour of the manner in which alkali works were to be regulated, to prevent their injuring and interfering with the cultivation of the land. But the Bill included, besides alkali works, sulphuric acid works, cement works, chemical manure works, gas liquor works, nitric acid works, sulphate of ammonia works, and muriate of ammonia works. He did not know whether there were any such works in Ireland; but what he would venture to suggest to the Government, in order to secure unanimity on the Bill, was that they should confine it to alkali works and sulphuric acid works. There would then be no opposition to it.

Mr. CALLAN said, that when the hon. Member for Bedford (Mr. Magniac) sat down, he was under the impression that the object of the Bill was to facilitate industrial enterprize in Ireland, for the hon. Member's speech was one showing the inestimable benefits to be conferred on Ireland by the passing of the Bill in reference to works none of which existed in Ireland. In a Committee of that House an alkali manufacturer at Widnes and Liverpool had said that day that he objected to any facilities, such as cheap coal, being given for the benefit of foreign countries. Probably that gentleman, Mr. Muspratt, looked on Dublin as a foreign country, and he wished to place restrictions on that foreign country, which might compete with Liverpool or Widnes. It was not surprising that one of the hon. Members from Wales, where there were many alkali works, should object to Irish Members endeavouring to exclude Ireland from the operation of the Bill; but if there were no alkali works in Ireland, why should the Government wish to place restrictions on works which had no existence? Did not that give rise to the suspicion that the Government apprehended that, in consequence of the restrictions they were imposing on works in England, a new industry might arise in Ireland, and that, with that foresight which was so peculiar to the English character, they wished to guard themselves against the consequences of this Act, and prevent rival works in Ireland? As the English Members were so anxious that the Bill should pass, he thought the President of the Local Government Board should ease the minds of Irish Members by undertaking that Ireland should be excluded, so that they might then leave the criticism of the Bill entirely in the hands of the English Members. If he would not concede that, the Irish Members might have to criticize the Bill in such a way that it might not pass even by September next; but they would not wish the people of Widnes to be subjected to that result.

MR. M. BROOKS could not help thinking that hon. Members opposite were opposing the Bill through misapprehension. In the City of Dublin there were several alkali works. He was sorry there were not more; but through the absence of such legislation as was proposed large portions of the City were placed at a great disadvantage by works which were not placed under regulations. He was of opinion that if the Bill was passed Dublin would largely benefit; and although many hon. Members knew of manufactories in various parts of Ireland, there were many who could not be aware of the enormous advantage which Dublin had derived from the works established by Sir Robert Kane, who did so much to promote industrial works in Ireland. But the extension of such works had been hindered by the great injury that had been done to Dublin through the want of proper regulations respecting noxious vapours. The population of that City were very anxious that there should be good regulations under which manufacturers could enlarge their operations without increasing the injury to health and property. He believed that if Dublin were polled upon the question there would be an enormous majority, not only of the working men, but of those who represented the City on the Boards of Guardians and other public bodies, and of all who had at heart the prosperity of the City, in favour of such regulations as were proposed. He could not say what would be the effect of the Bill in Galway or in rural districts; but it would be of great advantage to Dublin and the surrounding districts. And he hoped that hon. Members opposite would see the benefit the Bill, if passed, would effect, at least in the Metropolis of Ireland, in promoting the manufactures they were so anxious to enlarge.

MR. O'DONNELL said, he only rose to take part in the debate for the purpose of saying a very few words. He certainly hoped that at that advanced hour of the night (1.40) the discussion of so important a Bill would be postponed until another day. The strain which Her Majesty's Government had already brought to bear in the course of the evening upon the mental constitution of the House ought to be sufficient. The Bill was a very important one. He had been quite inundated by representations in regard to it on one side and the other; and he confessed that he should like to have a little more time for the consideration of the clauses. If the Bill were a simple Alkali Bill, the simplicity of the measure would commend itself to the House; but it included every noxious product except the noxious Bills of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. Forster).

MR. HIBBERT observed, that the Government had been in correspondence with persons in Ireland who were interested in the question. Hon. Members who had spoken from Ireland seemed to fancy that Ireland at present was not under the Alkali Acts. It so happened, however, that Ireland, as well as Scotland, was under the Acts affected by the present measure. The Bill itself was a consolidating as well as an amending Bill. It consolidated all the existing Acts, and brought other works under the operation of the law. So far as alkali works were concerned, they could not be in a more disadvantageous position if the Bill, so far as it affected alkali works, were allowed to pass than they were now. He would suggest that if the House allowed the Government to take this clause, in regard to which there were really only two Amendments on the Paper, his right hon. Friend (Mr. Dodson) would then consent to report Progress.

MR. BIGGAR thought the Government ought to allow the Chairman to report Progress at once. It was rapidly approaching 2 o'clock in the morning, and the clause now under discussion contained details which would require still further consideration. He felt bound to protest against this practice on the part of the Government of pushing forward the different stages of important measures at such an advanced hour of the night, when hon. Members could have no real opportunity of discussing the merits of the different clauses. He would remind the House of the course which had been pursued by her Majesty's Government in regard to this identical measure. It was introduced without any explanation, read a second time at a late hour of the night without discussion; and now it was before the House in Committee without any information having been supplied by those who were responsible for it, as to the details of the measure, and the consequence was that the majority of the Members present knew nothing whatever of the provisions of the Bill. The Irish Members had been under the impression that it was simply an Alkali Bill, which proposed to deal only with questions which affected England; and now they had found out, for the first time, without having received the slightest explanation as to the merits of the Bill, that it applied to Ireland as well as to England. It was no answer at all to their objections for the hon. Member the Secretary of the Local Government Board (Mr. Hibbert) to tell them that it was merely a Consolidation Bill, because, if it was a Consolidation Bill, it was also something more, and included various provisions which were intended not only to consolidate, but to amend and extend the existing law. Under these circumstances, it was only right that they should report Progress, in order that the Irish Members might have an opportunity of reading the Bill and carefully considering its provisions, so that, at least, they might have some idea of what the whole thing was about, and be able to approach the discussion of the clauses with something like a reasonable knowledge of the effect they were intended to produce. Many Irish Members, whose constituents were interested in the Bill now that it was found to apply to Ireland, were absent, and it was unreasonable in such circumstances to ask them to discuss the Bill, and to alter and extend the law, at 2 o'clock in the morning. The course which Her Majesty's Government were endeavouring to take appeared to him to be a most unreasonable one, and they were bound to give much stronger and more satisfactory reasons than they had done for inducing the House, at that late hour, to continue the consideration of matters of such extreme importance.

Mr. OTWAY said, he was able to confirm to a great extent the remarks which had been made by the hon. Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar) as to the manner in which the earlier stages of the Bill had been disposed of. The Bill, no doubt, was of a very important character; but it was read a second time between 1 and 2 o'clock in the morning, and in the absence of any discussion upon the principle of the measure. If it had not been for the circumstance that he (Mr. Otway), knowing that his constituents were very much interested in the provisions of the Bill, had come down to the House at a very late hour, there would not have been a word said upon the Bill at all. He had felt it his duty to raise an objection to some part of it, and the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, who had charge of it, promised that the objections he urged should receive consideration. The promise of the right hon. Gentleman had not, however, been carried out, and the proposals contained in the measure in regard to that portion of it to which he had objected were very far from what he had expected to find them. But his hon. Friend the Secretary of the Local Government Board (Mr. Hibbert) now made a proposition which he (Mr. Otway) thought was one of a reasonable character, and one which the Committee might fairly accept—namely, that they should dispose of Clause 3—the clause now under consideration — and then report Progress. When they had got rid of Clause 3, they would reach some very important provisions concerning the alkali manufacturers. If hon. Members opposite would consent to accept the proposition which had been made by his hon. Friend the Secretary to the Local Government Board, they would not debar themselves from discussing hereafter the question which they considered to be of importance—namely, whether the Bill should apply to Ireland or not; but they would afford an opportunity to the alkali manufacturers to settle the question which affected them with the right hon. Gentleman below (Mr. Dodson). He thought the proposal that they should report Progress after they had gone through Clause 3, was only a reasonable one, and he hoped the Motion now before the House for reporting Progress would be withdrawn.

Mr. MACARTNEY said, he had listened with some astonishment to the course of the debate. It was first contended that the Bill ought to apply to Ireland; then that there were no alkali works in Ireland at all; and now it was said that there were a large number of such works in Ireland, and that the provisions of the Bill would injuriously affect them. Even a further objection was raised—namely, that it was improper to discuss the Bill at so late an hour, and that the Committee ought to have been brought on at an earlier period of the evening. He need not remind hon. Members that it was altogether impossible to bring on every Bill at an early hour. So far as the necessity for applying the measure to Ireland was concerned, everyone who was acquainted with Belfast must know that there was a very large manufacture of chemical manures carried on in the suburbs of that town. In Dublin there were also large manure works; and so far as the City of Cork was concerned, a former Member for that City had given evidence that he was at the head of very large manure manufacturing works in the County of Cork. Personally, he (Mr. Macartney) was an unfortunate shareholder in a mining company in Wicklow, established originally for the production of copper, but which now manufactured manure instead. The sanitary state of the City of Dublin alone ought, he thought, to induce every Irishman to hail with satisfaction any measure that might be brought before the House for reducing the sickness and mortality in that City. There could be no doubt that the disagreeable smells which emanated from works engaged in the manufacture of chemical manures must have a serious and prejudicial effect upon the health of the people who lived in a neighbourhood where they were carried on. And what might be said of Dublin would apply also to Belfast and Cork, and to every other place where these works existed. He certainly did not envy the feelings of those who wished to have chemical works established in the localities in which they lived. To say the least of it, they must have very strong nerves.

Major NOLAN remarked, that various Irish Members had taken part in the debate; but the hon. Member for Dublin (Mr. M. Brooks) went a little too far when he said that the City he represented was seriously injured by the escape of noxious gases from manure works already in existence. He (Major Nolan) represented a constituency who knew a good deal about the matter, and he was satisfied that if there was any great danger to the lives of the inhabitants from the escape of chlorine or sulphuric acid, or nitric acid, he would have heard something about it. It appeared to him that the majority of the Irish Members were opposed to the extension of this legislation to Ireland. The Bill, however, had been introduced without consulting the Irish Members, and there was very great danger that a country already largely interested in the establishment of alkali works might make regulations which would be very detrimental to a country that wished to engage in such manufactures. His hon. Friend the Member for the City of Dublin said that this legislation would be beneficial to the manufacturers in Dublin; but whether that were so or not, it was believed by the Irish Members that, as a general rule, it would not be advantageous to the rest of Ireland; and he confessed that he should like to hear some arguments from those who were thoroughly acquainted with the subject before he consented to apply the Bill to Ireland. The provisions of the Bill would allow Inspectors to go all over the works, and do a good many things which might be altogether unnecessary, and which would certainly involve a large expenditure of capital. He, therefore, failed to see how the existing works would be benefited by the Bill. He was of opinion that if the division which was about to take place showed that there was a large majority of the Irish Members against the Bill, Her Majesty's Government might strike out Ireland from the operation of it. That would only be a reasonable concession to the Irish Members, and he thought they might occasionally consider the interests of Ireland in their legislation.

Mr. DODSON felt bound to call the attention of the Committee to the extraordinary proposition which had been made by the hon. and gallant Member who had just sat down. At present the Alkali Acts extended to Ireland. Alkali works in Ireland were subject to what was known as the 95 per cent test. It was proposed to re-enact and preserve that 95 per cent test, which was the test to which the works already existing in Ireland and Scotland were now subjected and had been subjected for many years. And upon the Motion that that test should be preserved, the hon. and gallant Member suggested that they should take a test division whether the Bill should be extended to Ireland or Scotland at all.

Mr. M. BROOKS wished to point out to his hon. and gallant Friend (Major Nolan), that this was not a restricting measure, but a regulating measure; and he thought he could show his hon. and gallant Friend that in the absence of a regulating Bill the alkali manufactures in the City of Dublin were already restricted. They were restricted in this way. The City of Dublin had great advantages for the manufacture of manures; but, in consequence of the absence of a regulating Act, the deleterious gases which emanated from such works had such an injurious effect upon the property in the surrounding district that the inhabitants of the City of Dublin, in the absence of any Act regulating the manufacture, had hitherto opposed the establishment of new works.

Mr. T. D. SULLIVAN regarded the Bill as a measure which had been introduced in favour of the public health, and he did not see that any substantial objection had been offered to it on the part of those of his hon. Friends who opposed its application to Ireland. He was himself aware that there were many noxious vapours emitted in the City of Dublin. He had had a painful experience of them, and he was surprised to find that any Irish Member could be found who was favourable to the conservation of bad smells. He thought the people of Ireland had as good a right to be preserved from these poisonous gases as the people of England, and from that point of view he supported the measure. It was said that there were no alkali works in Dublin. If there were none, this Bill would not hurt them; and if there were some, as he knew there were, then the application of the Bill to Ireland would do something towards preserving the public health. He would not dwell further upon the matter; but as so much had been said about the feeling of the Irish Members, he was anxious to add that there was no absolute unanimity among the Irish Representatives on this subject, and that he, for one, was in favour of legislating for the preservation of the public health, and for the regulation of manufactories which at present emitted noxious gases and smells which were deleterious to the public health.

Mr. BIGGAR said, the question, as he understood it, was not whether it was a desirable Bill or not—for this was not the second reading of the Bill—but whether or not, at 2 o'clock in the morning, they should be asked to go on with the discussion of a measure which they had not examined, and which they really knew nothing about. In the remarks he had made he had not said one word about the Bill itself, and he could not do so until he had had an opportunity of reading and considering its provisions. Seeing that the Irish Members, generally, were in the dark in regard to the provisions of the Bill, and did not know whether or not it would be injurious to the manufacturers of manures in Dublin, Belfast, Cork, and other places, he was only anxious to find out whether it was drawn in such a manner as to be favourable to Irish interests. It was only reasonable, he thought, that Her Majesty's Government should afford him an opportunity of making such an examination. It was most unreasonable that the Government should endeavour to force on the Bill before the Irish Members had an opportunity of forming an opinion as to the character of its provisions. The hon. Member for Rochester (Mr. Otway) advised the Irish Members to accept the proposition of the Government, and agree to report Progress after the 3rd clause had been disposed of. He did not think the advice of the hon. Member was sound advice. His hon. Friend the Member for Galway (Major Nolan) wished to have Ireland excluded altogether from the operation of the Bill, and suggested a test division; but it was always a dangerous plan to allow a question, which they wished to see settled in a particular way, to be decided by a division in a House in which they knew they were in a minority. It was far better that they should have time to examine the provisions of the Bill thoroughly.

MR. FINDLATER thought the Bill might with advantage be extended to Ireland, in order that works of the character dealt with might be regulated and rendered less injurious to the health of the people.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR pointed out that he had, an hour ago, moved that Progress be reported. Since that time it had been made manifest that there was a considerable difference of opinion amongst Irish Members with regard to the measure, and that fact was an additional reason for concluding at the stage which had been reached, in order that further time might be allowed for consideration. It was, in his opinion, very desirable that Irish Members should have an opportunity for considering what would be the effect of this proposed legislation upon Ireland as a whole, and not merely upon the town of Belfast.

Question put.

The Committee *divided:* — Ayes 13; Noes 133: Majority 120.—(Div. List, No. 191.)

MR. BIGGAR said, as the Bill would affect a considerable number of works in Ireland, and several hon. Members were absent who were not aware that the Bill was to be extended to Ireland, and, further, on the principle upon which he always voted with regard to Bills taken at an hour when they could not be sufficiently discussed, he begged to move that the Chairman do leave the Chair.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do now leave the Chair."—(*Mr. Biggar.*)

MR. DODSON: I am, of course, unable to agree to the Motion that Mr. Chairman do now leave the Chair; but I am willing that Progress be reported at this point, if the Motion be withdrawn.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Motion made, and Question, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Mr. Dodson,*) —put, and *agreed to.*

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Thursday.*

MOTIONS.

EXTRAORDINARY TITHE RENT-CHARGES.

MOTION FOR A SELECT COMMITTEE.

MR. INDERWICK said, he was prepared, if necessary, to give up the latter part of the Motion of which he had given Notice—namely, that relating to the redemption of ordinary tithes.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire as to the expediency of abolishing extraordinary Tithe Rent-charges, and providing a scheme for their redemption upon equitable terms; and also to inquire into and report upon the expediency of providing greater facilities for the redemption of ordinary Tithes upon equitable terms."—(*Mr. Inderwick.*)

MR. PELL thought that, on account of the great importance of the questions involved, the Motion should hardly be taken at that hour (2.20). Again, he considered that the appointment of a Committee to settle the whole question of Tithe Rent-charge was a matter of too great weight to be taken in hand by a private Member, and its adjustment upon equitable principles in accordance with the general desire of the country was clearly a matter to be dealt with by the Government of the day. For his own part, however, he had never heard any desire expressed that the question should be dealt with at all, either by those who paid tithes or those who received them.

MR. COURTNEY pointed out that the Motion of the hon. and learned Member for Rye (Mr. Inderwick), as it originally stood, was simply for a Committee to inquire into the expediency of abolishing extraordinary Tithe Rent-charges. He thought that the Inquiry should be restricted to that point, and if the latter part of the Motion were omitted, he was prepared to assent to the appointment of the Committee. In conclusion, he would move that the terms of Reference be omitted so far as they related to providing greater facilities for the redemption of ordinary tithes.

Amendment proposed, to leave out from the word "terms," in line 3, to the end of the Question.—(*Mr. Courtney.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. INDERWICK said, that if the Government were of opinion that the Committee should confine its labours to an inquiry into the extraordinary tithes, he was content to accept that, and withdraw his Motion as to the rest.

Earl PERCY said, he objected to the appointment of a Committee, when the terms of the Reference seemed to be undecided in the mind even of the hon. and learned Member who proposed it. The subject was an important one, and the House should not be asked to decide it at half-past 2 in the morning. He should move the adjournment of the debate.

Mr. WARTON seconded the Motion, partly because of the thin attendance.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Earl Percy.*)

Mr. RATHBONE said, he begged to point out that that was not a thin House at all.

Mr. COURTNEY hoped the noble Earl would, on re-consideration, not press his Motion. This question of the extraordinary tithes was no new one, and it was desirable that it should be considered. It was, at the same time, a question of great complexity, and could not be approached without a preliminary Inquiry.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question," put, and *negatived.*

Main Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to.*

Resolved, That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire as to the expediency of abolishing extraordinary Tithe Rent-charges, and providing a scheme for their redemption upon equitable terms.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDER (BIRMINGHAM) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Hibbert, Bill to confirm a Provisional Order of the Local Government Board relating to the Borough of Birmingham, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Hibbert and Mr. Dodson.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 144.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (GAS) PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Hibbert, Bill to confirm a Provisional Order of the Local Government Board under the provisions of "The Gas and Waterworks Facilities Act, 1870," and "The Public Health Act, 1875," relating to the Borough of Bridgnorth, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Hibbert and Mr. Dodson.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 145.]

House adjourned at half after Two o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 3rd May, 1881.

MINUTES.] — Public Bills — *Ordered—First Reading*—Water Provisional Orders * [146]; Gas Provisional Orders * [147].

Second Reading—Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 2) * [139].

Select Committee — Coroners (Ireland) [73], *nominated.*

QUESTIONS.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)— COUNTY GOVERNMENT.

Mr. W. J. CORBET asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he has any objection to give, in the form of a numerical Return, the number of Lord Lieutenants of Counties, Deputy Lieutenants, County Court Judges, Unpaid Magistrates, Paid Magistrates, Clerks of the Crown, and Clerks of the Peace, in Ireland, by Counties, showing the number of Protestants of all Denominations, and the number of Roman Catholics respectively, for each County?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: The information asked for as to the number of officials of various ranks is already to be found in official and other documents. I have no means, as Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, of ascertaining what may be the religion of the various individuals. I can state that, as far as this Government is concerned—and I have no reason to believe that any different practice was pursued by former Governments—questions of religion form no element in such appointments.

Mr. W. J. CORBET asked whether the information as to religion could not be obtained from the Census Returns?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I have nothing to do with Census Returns.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881 — THE PRISONERS UNDER THE ACT—SUPPLY OF NEWSPAPERS.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is the fact that the political prisoners in Kilmainham and elsewhere are prevented from receiving certain newspapers; and, whether the "Newcastle Chronicle," "Echo," "Graphic," "Illustrated London News," "Nation," and "Irishman" have, amongst other papers, been stopped when forwarded to the prisoners; and, if so, why so?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: I presume the hon. Member refers to the prisoners confined in Kilmainham Gaol under the Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act. [MR. HEALY: Hear, hear!] I cannot admit that such prisoners are political prisoners; but concerning them I may say that it has been arranged that they shall receive the Dublin daily newspapers and the newspapers published in their own localities. I think that all reasonable requirements will be met by this arrangement.

MR. HEALY: Will the right hon. Gentleman answer the last part of my Question?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: I think I have answered that Question, that the prisoners were allowed to receive the daily papers, and the papers of their own locality. I did not think it necessary to add that the papers published in Newcastle and the other places mentioned in the Question were not in the locality to which the prisoners belonged.

MR. HEALY: I will ask the right hon. Gentleman whether it is a fact that the papers mentioned have been stopped?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: I have already stated the papers received by the prisoners, and that is sufficient.

MR. HEALY: I beg to give Notice that, to-morrow, I will ask the right hon. Gentleman, Whether it is true that *The Newcastle Chronicle*, *The Echo*, *The Graphic*, *The Illustrated News*, *The Nation*, and *The Irishman*, had been forwarded to Kilmainham and other Irish gaols, and whether they have not been stopped?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: I will answer the Question at once. If they have been sent they have been stopped. It is necessary to have a rule in this matter. We considered that we have fully met the intention of this House while passing the Bill, and we have given every arrangement which ought to be made for the prisoners, by allowing them the newspapers which I have stated.

MR. HEALY: Will the right hon. Gentleman state——

MR. SPEAKER: The Question of the hon. Member has been put three times, and fully answered.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881 — MR. JASPER TULLY, A PRISONER UNDER THE ACT.

MR. O'KELLY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that Mr. Jasper Tully, editor of the "Roscommon Herald," now a prisoner in Kilmainham, has been refused permission to follow his usual avocation, as provided in the Regulations issued by the Lord Lieutenant in reference to the treatment of persons detained under the Protection of Person and Property Act; whether Mr. Tully has been refused permission to receive American newspapers, notably the "New York Herald;" and, if so, whether he will state to the House the reasons which have induced the Prison Board to adopt this course towards Mr. Tully?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: My answer to the last Question covers a part of the inquiry of the hon. Member. In reply to the remaining part of the Question, I may say that the Government does not propose to preclude the prisoner Tully from following his avocation, as far as is consistent with the prison regulations; but they will not suffer the privilege to be improperly used.

ARMY—ROYAL HIBERNIAN MILITARY SCHOOL, DUBLIN.

MR. W. J. CORBET asked the Secretary of State for War, What has been the result of the inquiry held regarding the alleged cruelties practised towards the boys of the Royal Hibernian Military School; and, whether he has any objection to lay the Report upon the Table?

MR. GIBSON: Will the right hon. Gentleman, in answering this Question, be also good enough to state whether the Report has been submitted to the

Lord Lieutenant and the Governors of the School?

Mr. CHILDERS: In reply to the Question put to me by the hon. Member, and also by the right hon. and learned Gentleman, I have to say that since my former answer to a similar inquiry I have received and carefully considered the Report of the Committee appointed by Sir Thomas Steele, the facts disclosed in which revealed a very unsatisfactory state of things. The Report has since been transmitted to the President of the Corporation (the Lord Lieutenant), with a request that the Governors will furnish me with any remarks on the facts so disclosed; and when I receive their reply I shall deal with it. I doubt whether it will be necessary to lay the Report, which is a very bulky document, on the Table.

GEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF IRELAND—THE RE-SURVEY.

Mr. W. J. CORBET asked the Vice President of the Council, If he can inform the House what benefit is expected to be obtained by the extensive resurveys of the work done by the late Mr. Jukes, director of the Geological Survey of Ireland, in the counties of Cork, Kerry, Limerick, and Clare; whether these resurveys have been duly authorized by the Treasury; and, if not, on whose authority are they made; whether any, and what, discoveries have as yet resulted from them; and, whether he has any objection to lay the whole Correspondence on the subject upon the Table of the House?

Mr. MUNDELLA: Investigations since Mr. Jukes's death having thrown fresh light on the relations of the strata in the South of Ireland to the representative formations in Britain, a re-survey of the area was considered necessary by the Director in Ireland, Professor Hull. The reasons for this were stated to the Director General, Professor Ramsay, and approved by him. The re-survey was authorized by the Director General in the usual manner, it never having been the custom to consult the Treasury on minor matters of detail. Professor Ramsay states that during the progress of these investigations, now approaching completion, the observations of strata in the field have fully justified the re-survey, which is expected to be completed by the end of this summer, and will bring the Irish maps into complete accord with the British maps. The only correspondence is that between Professors Ramsay and Hull, which I shall be happy to show to the hon. Member, and he will, I think, agree that it is unnecessary to publish it. At a later period of the Session I hope to be able to state what steps have been taken by Her Majesty's Government to facilitate the survey.

Mr. DAWSON: Is not the English survey in bad condition?

Mr. MUNDELLA acknowledged that that was the case.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACT — COMPENSATION FOR COMPULSORY SLAUGHTER — IMPORTATION OF CATTLE.

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD asked the Vice President of the Council, Whether his attention has been called to the fact that £44,999 were paid last year by local authorities as compensation for animals slaughtered; that, in the opinion of the Veterinary Department of the Privy Council, this addition to the cost of meat "might be easily prevented by a proper system of investigation," inasmuch as that department has reported that "a large number of animals are slaughtered every year on account of disease from which they are entirely free;" whether, with regard to the 63 sheep reported to have been infected with foot and mouth disease, in a total of 66,722 sheep imported last year from the United States of America, he can state what was the number of cargoes of which these 63 sheep, or any of them, formed part; and, whether, having regard to the very serious decline in the importation of sheep from the United States from 119,350 in 1879 to 66,722 in 1880, in consequence of the Order in Council of 23rd November 1879, and to the impossibility of this disease being latent in a cargo arriving healthy after a voyage from America, he is prepared to advise the Lords of the Council to reconsider the terms of that Order?

Mr. MUNDELLA: My attention has been drawn to the amount, £44,999 1*s.* 3*d.*, paid last year by local authorities on account of animals slaughtered under the Act of 1879. The amount in the previous year was £65,049 18*s.* 6*d.* It is the opinion of the Veterinary Department that the saving would have been greater if a careful inquiry was instituted by the local authority in the case of every outbreak, and if in all cases of slaughter a *post-mortem* examination was required. The 63 sheep referred to formed part of eight cargoes. The subject of relaxing the Order as to American sheep, &c., has been carefully considered by the Privy Council, and the difficulties in the way of doing this with safety have been found to be insuperable. Sheep are brought in the same vessel with cattle and swine, and it might well happen that the sheep might remain uninfected until on the point of being landed, and only develop the disease after they had been allowed to go inland. If, on the other hand, they should develop the disease in a landing place for foreign animals, although it is true that the whole cargo would be slaughtered, it is equally certain that the animals which have been landed there from other countries whose animals are not subject to slaughter would be exposed to the infection, in which case they would also have to be slaughtered instead of being allowed to go inland as they are entitled to do. Under these circumstances, we regret that we cannot advise any relaxation of the terms of the Order which applies to the United States.

COAL MINES REGULATION ACT—THE PEN-Y-GRAIG EXPLOSION.

Mr. MACDONALD asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If, in compliance with the recommendation of the Commissioner who on part of the Home Office attended the inquiry into the cause of the Pen-y-Graig explosion, whether he will, in addition to the action which has been taken to deprive the manager of his certificate, order a further prosecution against the manager and one or more of the proprietors to be instituted for the various breaches of the general and special rules as pointed out by the Commissioner in paragraph 6 of his Report?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: As the hon. Member is aware, proceedings are now pending which may result in depriving the manager of his certificate, which in itself would be a very severe punishment. The question of the prosecution of either the manager or the owners of the mine has been very carefully considered, and it has been thought that, the chances of a conviction in the circumstances being very small, such prosecutions will not be undertaken.

COAL MINES—THE SEAHAM EXPLOSION—REPORT AND EVIDENCE.

Mr. MACDONALD asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If he will direct the Report of the Inquest into the cause of the Seaham Explosion, and include in it the Report of Professor Abel on the influence of coal dust in colliery explosions, together with the Report of the Commissioners who attended the inquiry on behalf of the Government, to be laid upon the Table of the House, and to be printed for circulation among the Members?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: The evidence taken at the inquest, with the Report of Professor Abel on the influence of coal dust in colliery explosions, and the Report of the Commissioners who attended the inquiry on behalf of the Government, will be laid upon the Table of the House.

STATE OF IRELAND—CONFLICT NEAR CLOGHER—VERDICT OF "WILFUL MURDER."

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that the coroner's jury empanelled at Clogher, county Sligo, to inquire into the cause of the deaths of Joseph Corcoran and Brian Flannery, tenant farmers, have returned a verdict of "wilful murder" against certain members of the Royal Irish Constabulary and a process-server named James Broder; whether the circumstances under which Joseph Corcoran and Brian Flannery lost their lives arose out of the fact that the process-server Broder, after having desisted from an attempt to serve processes of ejectment, in consequence of the attitude of the population, returned to the scene, after an interval of a day, for the purpose of executing his function, accompanied only by four members of the police force; whether Broder and the policemen, unauthorised by a magistrate or superior officer, and without receiving any adequate provocation, or giving any proper warning, fired upon men, women, and children, dangerously wounding a number of persons, and killing the two men Corcoran and Flannery; whether the officer of police examined at the inquest refused to produce the rules drawn up for the guidance of the police in case of hostile contact with the people; whether the Government still regard the use of buckshot as humane, seeing that in every case in which it has been used the consequence has been loss of life; and, whether the Government propose to take any steps in consequence of the evidence produced before the coroner and the verdict delivered by the jury?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: The hon. Member asks six Questions, which I will answer. The Coroner's Jury at Clogher did return a verdict of "wilful murder" against certain members of the Royal Irish Constabulary and a process-server. I have already explained to the hon. Member the cause of the small force of police which accompanied Broder. He met the police whilst proceeding along the road, and when still somewhat distant from the place where the processes were to be served, and where a sufficient force of police was assembled, and he asked the police to accompany him there. The circumstances under which the men Corcoran and Flannery lost their lives were not as suggested in the Question, the fact being that the police and the process-server were savagely attacked by a numerous mob without the smallest provocation. Constable Hayes was badly beaten, his life being despaired of; Armstrong was fatally injured. With regard to the police, they were fully justified in acting as they did under the circumstances. I understand the officer of police refused to produce the rules referred to; and, as these are confidential, he was justified in his refusal. As regards the fifth Question, I am still of opinion that it would be dangerous to resort to the use of bullets in collisions with the people, on account of the danger of persons not connected with the fray being killed. With regard to the last part of the Question, the course of the law will be followed in this as on all other occasions when a Coroner's Jury has returned a verdict of "wilful murder." I need not inform the House that the verdict of a Coroner's Jury is not a final verdict, but leads to a committal of the person against whom it is found just as a Magistrate's order does. The proceedings will be laid before the Attorney General for Ireland in the ordinary way for his direction.

Mr. CALLAN: Is it the fact that a Coroner's Jury gives a verdict which has no more effect than a Magistrate's decision?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: It is followed by a trial to ascertain whether the person is guilty or not.

Mr. SEXTON: Does the right hon. Gentleman adhere to the use of buckshot as being the more humane practice?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: Nothing can be more inhumane than to use bullets, which might cause the death of persons not engaged in the affray.

Mr. HEALY: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that a person totally unconnected with the affair was badly wounded by a discharge of buckshot?

[No reply was given.]

EJECTMENTS (IRELAND)—NUMBER OF FAMILIES.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, How many families in Ireland are, at the present moment, threatened with eviction from their homes, and loss of their means of living, by reason of the issue of decrees of ejectment against them at the suit of their landlords?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: From the Returns which I have received, which are not quite complete, I find that about 2,273 decrees of ejectment for non-payment of rent have been granted at the recent sessions. I believe that by the time the sessions have been brought to a conclusion that number will probably be increased to 2,500. A good many of these cases, however, may be expected to be settled; because, although I do not doubt there are cases in which tenants are unable to pay, there are many where they are able, but unwilling, to pay.

Mr. SEXTON: To what extent will the 2,500 evictions be increased by decrees made in the Superior Courts?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I cannot give the exact estimate. It is impossible for anyone to do that. From the Returns already given to the House, the hon. Member will be able to make out for himself how many previous ejectment decrees have been made. The Returns I have given do not include the Returns from the Superior Courts. I do not believe, however, that there will be any large addition made from those Courts.

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL (CASUALTIES).

MR. S. LEIGHTON asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he can state what is the total loss of killed and wounded in battle, and incapacitated from sickness among Her Majesty's troops in the late war with the Boers, and what is the approximate estimate of loss among the camp followers and teamsters?

MR. CHILDERS: As soon as the hon. Member placed his Question upon the Paper I telegraphed to Sir Evelyn Wood for information on the subject. I cannot expect to receive an answer to my telegram for some days.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS)—OUTBREAK OF FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE AT NEWCASTLE.

MR. LOWTHER asked the Vice President of the Council, with regard to the cases of foot and mouth disease in Carlisle, Whether any cases of foot and mouth disease have been reported in Newcastle; whether it has been declared an infected area; and, whether the Privy Council would not think it advisable to send an inspector to Newcastle to make inquiries on the subject?

MR. MUNDELLA: An outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease was reported to us from Newcastle-on-Tyne as having taken place in some lairs there on the 20th ultimo, whereupon we immediately declared those lairs an infected place. Our next step was to send down an Inspector to institute a full inquiry; his Report came to hand yesterday, together with an account of another outbreak, and we have to-day declared Newcastle an infected area.

FRANCE AND TUNIS—OCCUPATION OF BIZERTA.

MR. MONTAGUE GUEST asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the attention of Her Majesty's Government has been directed to the importance of the position occupied by the French at Bizerta, which affords one of the finest harbours in the Mediterranean, and commands the Malta Channel; and, if they will ask for further assurances from the French Government that it is not their intention to hold it permanently?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Her Majesty's Government are aware of the importance of Bizerta as a position; but it is doubtful whether even a large expenditure on the dredging of the lake would make it available as a harbour. The permanent occupation of Bizerta would be quite outside of the statement as to the objects of the French expedition which was made to Lord Lyons by the French Minister for Foreign Affairs.

MR. MONTAGUE GUEST said, that he had reliable authority for stating that an expenditure of £100,000 would make the harbour a perfect one.

DISTRESS (IRELAND)—COUNTY OF GALWAY.

MAJOR NOLAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he has given or will give directions to provide employment on a moderate scale, between the middle of May and the middle of July, in the county of Galway, particularly in the neighbourhoods of Loughrea, Athenry, Tuam, Dughterard, Clifden, Cort, and Ballinasloe?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: I only saw the hon. and gallant Gentleman's Question last night. I have communicated with the Vice President of the Local Government Board, and I will give the hon. and gallant Gentleman as much information as I can on the subject if he will postpone his Question. I must at once state, however, that it is not in the power of the Chief Secretary to give employment to everyone who is out of it.

STATE OF IRELAND—SHERIFFS' SALE AT HOWTH.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, at the Sheriffs' sale at the farm of Mr. John Butterly at Howth, all the animals put up for sale, with the exception of some pigs, were not disposed of; whether the sales did not realise the sum of £62, the full amount claimed by the landlord; whether the members of the Emergency Committee present were not all armed; whether, when one of the number was accused of having displayed his revolver, Sub-inspector Heard refused to remove him on the ground that he could not interfere with him unless the revolver was presented at some one; whether any of the members of the Land League were armed; and, whether a single assault was committed on the police or any of the persons engaged in the sale, either at the sale itself or during the procession of many hours' duration from Howth to Dublin?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: As far as I can ascertain, the facts are as stated in the first two Questions put to me by the hon. Member. With regard to the third Question, I am not aware whether the members of the Emergency Committee present were armed. I have reason to believe that one or two of them—perhaps two or three of them—were armed; but I must remind the House that they were engaged in a perfectly legal occupation, and I cannot be surprised if they did carry arms for their own defence. With regard to the fourth Question, I am informed that one of these persons put his hand in his breast pocket and caught hold of his revolver, and that the sub-Inspector present did refuse to interfere because he had not presented it at anyone. I cannot say whether any members of the Land League were armed. I am not aware that any assault was committed on any person at the sale or during the procession.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—ARREST OF MR. DILLON.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it appears by reports in the public press that the honourable Member for Tipperary, in his speech at the meeting of the Irish Land League in Dublin on the 27th ultimo, made the following statement:—

> "Next week a last appeal will be made to the Government to suspend process of eviction in Ireland for the next year. We have frequently appealed on this subject before and have frequently been refused, but, at the present moment, the situation is more desperate and critical than it has been at any time. At this moment over five thousand—I can only make a rough guess, probably I would be nearer the truth if I said ten thousand—families are under the sentence of eviction. We will ask the Government next week whether they intend to proceed with these evictions by force;"

whether the honourable Gentleman was not entitled to give public warning of the spirit excited amongst the Irish people by the circumstances thus set forth by him; and, whether the Government will take any steps to suspend or restrain the present legal power of evicting tenants in Ireland which may deprive them of rights to be vested in them by impending legislation?

Mr. R. POWER: Before the right hon. Gentleman answers that Question, I should like to ask him, Whether it is a fact that Mr. Dillon was arrested at Portarlington yesterday, and why the fact of that arrest was not communicated to the House the same day, as required by Section 3 of the Coercion Act?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I will answer the last Question first. I have heard by telegraph that the hon. Member for Tipperary was arrested at Portarlington yesterday under the Protection Act, and I have reason to believe that full compliance will be made with the section of the Act, which requires that the arrest shall be communicated to the House immediately, as in the case of persons charged with a criminal offence. The last precedent was the arrest of Mr. Smith O'Brien; and in that case a communication was made by letter from the Lord Lieutenant to the Speaker. I have no doubt that my noble Friend the Lord Lieutenant will follow that course on the present occasion. He could not have communicated yesterday, because he would not have known of the arrest in time to send by post; but I shall be surprised if he does not take the first opportunity of making that communication. With regard to the Question of the hon. Member for Sligo, I believe that the words which he read are a correct extract from the speech, which also contained other passages, which I cannot too strongly condemn. With regard to the other Question, I must refer the hon. Gentleman to the provisions of the Bill now before the House, and which are still the subject of debate.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR: Will the right hon. Gentleman read the other passages to which he refers?

[No reply was given.]

MONUMENT TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE LATE EARL OF BEACONSFIELD.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON: Mr. Speaker, I wish to put a Question to you on a point of Order with reference to the Motion to be proposed on Monday next by the Prime Minister for the erection of a Monument to the late Earl of Beaconsfield. It is stated in the Journals of the House that the Queen's recommendation of that Motion has been signified. It is, I believe, Sir, a Rule of this House that when the Sovereign is pleased to make a recommendation, such recommendation is signified by a Minister of the Crown. I desire to ask you, Sir, whether Her Majesty's recommendation has been duly signified to this House; and, if so, when it was so signified?

Mr. SPEAKER: Her Majesty's recommendation was, upon the occasion referred to, duly signified to this House by a Privy Councillor in this House. If I remember rightly, that Privy Councillor was Lord Richard Grosvenor.

VOTE OF THANKS FOR THE MILITARY OPERATIONS IN AFGHANISTAN.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I wish, Sir, to ask the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India, Whether he intends to proceed on Thursday with the Vote of Thanks to the Army for the recent operations in Afghanistan?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Yes, Sir; that is my intention.

MOTIONS.

AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS (DISTRESS FOR RENT).—RESOLUTION.

Mr. BLENNERHASSETT, in rising to move—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, it is desirable to abolish the power of levying Distress for the Rent of Agricultural Holdings in England, Wales, and Ireland,"

said, the Law of Distress was oppressive and without parallel in our legal system; and as it was opposed to the general spirit of the law of the country, and at variance with sound economic principles, he believed no satisfactory arrangement could be arrived at except by its total abolition. The interest which the farmers of the entire Kingdom took in this question was indicated, not only by the large meetings of the Farmers' Alliance which had taken place in different parts of the country, but by the many discussions at Chambers of Agriculture, one of which, at a meeting held only two or three days ago, demanded the total repeal of the Law of Distress. He did not wish, however, to bring forward the question as a mere farmers' question, or to approach it from the point of view of any particular class. The Law of Distress was a class privilege in every sense of the term. It was exercised by one class at the expense of every other class of the community; and it was not only injurious to the interests of those against whom it was employed, but to those who employed it. It was not only a class law, but it was a class exceptional from all law. The Law of Distress stood alone in our legal system, in that it enabled a man to take the law into his own hands to obtain satisfaction for a wrong merely arising out of a breach of contract. The very day after the rent fell due the landlord was allowed to go himself or to send any man whom he pleased—it might be a dissolute ruffian out of the streets—to run riot on the tenant's premises; and all that merely to enforce a pecuniary obligation in regard to which all the ordinary legal remedies were open to him. The practical effect of the exercise of that power often led to serious hardship. The persons employed to exercise it frequently were not very careful of the amount of goods they took or of the way in which they disposed of them; and the result might be utterly to break up the home of the farmer and inflict on him an injury altogether out of proportion to the debt which he owed. The Law of Distress, moreover, was not only an exceptional remedy which was harshly and cruelly enforced, but it was unjust in that it gave a preference to one class of creditors over every other class. He denied that there was any analogy between it and liens and hypothecations. The right of lien for service rendered depended on possession; but in what sense could the landlord be said to be in possession of the goods of the tenant on his farm, or it might be the goods of a third person which were accidentally or temporarily on his farm? Again, it was quite impossible to bolster up the Law of Distress by attempting to draw an analogy between it and the Law of Hypothecation arising out of the power of a master of a ship to pledge the ship or her cargo for expenditure necessary to repair the vessel and enable her to proceed on her voyage. There was a complete difference between the Law of Maritime Hypothecation and the Law of Distress. The owner of a bottomry bond could not take the law into his own hands, but must enforce his rights through a legal tribunal; and, again, bottomry bonds were only justified by extreme necessity. He did not wish to trouble the House with a long argument on legal and technical points. He entered into these points fully two years ago when he brought forward the question. He relied with confidence upon his own position, which was simply and clearly this—that the Law of Distress was an exception to the general law of the country, and enabled a man to take the law into his own hands in order to obtain a remedy for wrong arising out of contract. How had it come to pass that this anomalous right existed? There were few chapters in the legal history this country more peculiar than this. The right of distress was part of the old Common Law of England. In primitive societies, where the ordinary means of legal redress, Courts of Law, and police were not available, there was no more convenient way to obtain satisfaction for a wrong done than to take possession of the goods of the wrong-doer. From the reign of Henry VIII. downwards a long series of changes took place in our legislation on that subject, the object of every one of which was to sharpen the remedy and make it more severe and stringent in the hands of the landlord, until distress became an almost unique specimen of one-sided legislation. No argument could be based on the antiquity of the remedy, because its ancient form was entirely different from what it was now. It was originally only a power to retain goods in pledge. The position of the modern farmer in this country was not that of a feudal tenant owing everything to the landlord, but was the position of a man of business, engaged in various and complicated transactions with all sorts of persons and with many creditors having claims upon him. Under those circumstances, it was impossible that the Law of Distress could be allowed to remain. He asked the House to consider what was the effect of the unjust Law of Distress upon the farmer. The law was injurious to the farmer because it stimulated undue competition for the hiring of land. He did not object to this competition where commercial principles applied; but the Law of Distress was a premium to persons of insufficient capital to bid recklessly for the occupation of land. Mr. Scott, a very eminent Scotch farmer, gave evidence on this point before the Royal Commission which investigated the Scotch Law of Hypothec, and he strongly condemned it. He (Mr. Blennerhassett) objected that landlords should be protected at the expense of other classes, and contended that there was nothing in their position which entitled them to that special and peculiar protection. Landlords could protect themselves in a great variety of ways, and the risk of the landlords was extremely slight. The merchant ran the risk of losing the whole of his capital; but the landlord, if he took precautions, ran no more risk than half a year's rent, which might be looked on as the interest on his capital. Looking at the position of the landlord, his risk was less and his security greater than any other class of creditors. The Law of Distress might be called a law to discourage the application of capital to land, and to diminish the production of the country. He might give instances of the most oppressive abuse of the right of distress; but he would not weary the House. It might be suggested that the question would best be solved by a compromise, so that a tenant should not be liable to the present law except by his own contract. But the effect of that would be simply to add a clause to every lease and agreement, as the landlord would always insist on the right. The present law stimulated undue competition and made it unnecessary for the landlord to exercise proper caution in accepting a tenant. It would be said that the tenant would be deprived, if the law was altered, of the indulgence afforded him by his landlord. That would not be so in the case of good landlords; and if it was, he objected to a landlord being indulgent to a tenant at the expense of others. Hypothec had been abolished in Scotland, and it was much less oppressive than the Law of Distress. The laws of foreign countries had moved, or were moving, in the direction of his Resolution. In America the law was tending to assimilate the rights of landlords to those of ordinary creditors, although the English law had originally been established there. In Ireland, distress could not be levied from more than one year's rent—in England for six years. They heard many professions of friendship for the farmers from both political Parties; but what the farmers wanted was not so much friendly professions as representation of their opinions, and no division of the Session would be more closely scanned than that on this question. Tenants and landlords alike would be benefited by the passing of this Resolution, for the interests of the landowner were bound up with the prosperity of agriculture. He, therefore, asked the House to affirm this Resolution in favour of the abolition of an antiquated piece of class privilege, which was mischievous, unnecessary, odious, and unjust. The hon. Gentleman concluded by moving his Resolution.

MR. B. T. WILLIAMS, in seconding the Resolution, maintained that the Law of Distress could not be justified on any principle of jurisprudence, because it enabled one party to a contract—the landlord—to be at once judge and executioner in his own case. It empowered the landlord, without question by the tenant, or by any tribunal, to decide what the tenant owed him, and also to seize and dispose of his goods. Good landlords, however, never exercised their power except in the case of hopelessly bad tenants; and, but for the forbearance of the great majority of landlords, the present law would long since have ceased to exist. The hardship of the tenant in case of an unjust exercise of the power of distress had lain in the fact that Courts of Equity under the old system never interfered, as was shown in the recent case of Shaw *v.* The Earl of Jersey, by Lord Coleridge; so that full power had been given by law to the landlord to commit any wrong, and the only chance of remedy the law gave the tenant was, after the injury had been done and his goods had been seized, to enter into a dilatory and long litigation with the landlord. In the old action of replevin by a tenant upon whom an unjust distress had been levied against his landlord, the process was tedious and the remedy most inadequate. In the present system even, if a tenant brought an action against his landlord for an illegal distress, his course was by no means an easy one. With the aid of a shrewd solicitor, a landlord could always put in a counter claim against the tenant, and the Judge would very probably send the case to arbitration, or to an Official Referee for final adjudication. In such a case the tenant, seeing endless expense before him, would, in the vast majority of cases, be driven either to make a miserable compromise or to abandon the proceedings altogether. Such cases as he had just referred to had occurred within his own knowledge and experience, and were due to the fact that the law allowed the landlord to begin at the wrong end—namely, to issue his execution before he had obtained the decision of a Court in his favour. One of the ways to make a tenant farmer prosperous was to give him full security for the capital which he invested in the land, and for the profit of his own industry; but the unequal rules under the Law of Distress had the effect of stopping the investment of capital in the land on the part of the tenant farmer, and even the property of a third person put on the land was liable to be seized by the landlord. He trusted that Her Majesty's Government might bring in a Bill on this subject. When it was discussed in the last Parliament several Members who now sat on the Treasury Bench gave the Resolution their support, and he trusted they would join him in doing so now.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That, in the opinion of this House, it is desirable to abolish the power of levying Distress for the Rent of Agricultural Holdings in England, Wales, and Ireland."—(*Mr. Blennerhassett.*)

MR. H. T. DAVENPORT, in rising to move the Previous Question, admitted the importance of the subject, but said it was one as to which the tenant farmers were to his knowledge greatly divided in opinion. That division of opinion justified him, he thought, in the course he adopted, as he did not wish to be committed to a definite or distinct opinion on the subject. There were three classes principally interested in the question—the landlords, the other creditors of the tenants, and the tenant farmers themselves. As to the landlords, he was not prepared to admit that the preference existing in their case was altogether unique in the English law. They all knew that creditors who had been clever enough to secure re-payment of their debts by contract under seal, or whose liabilities were created under settlement or by the judgment of a Court of Law, had preference over other creditors. The landlord was in this position of disadvantage as compared with the other creditors of the tenant farmer—that he could not put a stop to the credit as they could. If the tenant farmer did not pay his seedsman or other tradesman, those creditors could at once stop the supplies; whereas the debt to the landlord constantly increased till the tenancy came to an end. Again, if the Law of Distress was done away with, the landlord would be obliged to refuse the application of a man wishing to take a farm simply on the ground that if he had not sufficient capital he could not give that security for the payment of the rent which was afforded by the existing law, however desirable a tenant he might be in all other respects. The other creditors of a tenant knew what the present law was, they knew the claim the landlord had on the tenant's goods, and, therefore, if they gave too much credit to a tenant they did it with their eyes open. It was not to the interest of the other creditors that a tenant should be turned out of a farm, because, if his home were broken up, their prospect of being paid was very much diminished. It was in their interest that he should be allowed to remain in his holding, because if he were treated with indulgence, he might ultimately be able to meet his obligations. The tenant farmers of England were not in favour of the abolition of distress for rent; at least, its abolition was not desired by the small farmers of Staffordshire, with whom he had been brought into contact. Do away with the Law of Distress, and it would be incumbent on the landlord to institute very strict inquiries as to the means of any man who applied for a farm, and the result would be the rejection of many a desirable tenant, because he was in temporary difficulty, and did not at the moment possess the amount of capital which might be deemed necessary for the proper cultivation of the farm. An applicant would be entirely in the hands of a landlord, and the opinions of landlords would varyvery much as to the amount of capital that was necessary. But as long as the Law of Distress remained, landlords would be able to accept tenants who otherwise would not be able to get farms at all. Without the law, when once the tenant was admitted it would be absolutely necessary that the landlord should insist on the regular payment of rent when due. If that had been done during the recent period of distress, what would have been the position of many tenants? How many would have been deprived of their farms and had their homes broken up? Therefore, in the interest of men wishing for farms, and in the interests of men wishing to keep them, the Law of Distress ought not to be lightly tampered with. It was stated by Mr. Carrington, whose authority on this subject was recognized, that during the last few years many industrious men had taken farms with small capital, and had pushed their way up to a sound and respectable position. Was it the wish of the House that additional difficulties should be placed in the way of such men working their way up to a position of independence? All commercial transactions were carried on with a certain amount of credit; it was important to consider who was the creditor and what was the amount of the credit; and the question for the farmer was whether he would be as safe in the hands of any other creditor as he was in those of his landlord? Apart from sentiment, the landlord was likely to be more lenient than the banker or the money lender. It was the interest of the landlord that the tenant should remain and become prosperous. Among suggested alterations of the law, there was one which would meet with almost universal approbation, and it was that some limit should be put to the arrears of rent for which the landlord might destrain. But a reason why they should defer any expression of opinion was that they were awaiting the Report of a Commission on Agriculture, which would embody information, although it might not materially affect their judgment on a question of common principle. Another reason for delay was that they were told that there was to be legislation in this Parliament on the question of the Land Laws. It was only right that the House should come to the consideration of that question unfettered by the expression of any judgment on the question of distress for rent. For all these reasons, he moved the Previous Question.

Previous Question moved, "That the Original Question be now put."—(*Mr. H. T. Davenport.*)

MR. HENEAGE said, his opinion of the principle of distress was that it was indefensible. He believed that the abolition of the Law of Distress would do away, to a great extent, with that system of credit which had done so much damage, not only to the agricultural interest, but to all other classes. He considered it would be a great advantage to the landlord, even if, in consequence of it, his rents were reduced, if he obtained them punctually; and, therefore, he for one, as a landlord, could not see any objection to the abolition of the Law of Distress. One of the points that had been made by hon. Gentlemen opposite was that the landlord's preference was, after all, only the preference that was given to all preference creditors by the law, in the case of a bankruptcy, as a judgment creditor. There appeared to him, however, to be this essential difference between the two classes of creditors. The one had not the authority of the Court for what he did, while the other had. If any preference was given to a creditor in a Court of Law or Bankruptcy, it was because that creditor had done something to gain that preference, and therefore he thought the two cases were entirely different. No doubt, it would be said that it would be very hard upon the small farmers if this alteration were made at once; but this was not a class question, and if the tenant farmers wished for the abolition of the Law of Distress, he did not see why the landlords, or this House, should object. Reference had been made to limiting the time during which a landlord should be entitled to enforce distress; and, for his part, he did not see why it should not be reduced from six years to two. After all, it mattered very little to a tenant, who was reduced to insolvency, who got the little money he had; and, therefore, it could not matter to him whether the landlord got preference or not; but it did matter very materially to the trader whether the tenant was solvent or not, for they went on giving him credit and allowing him to deal with them, on the strength of the fact that they supposed that the landlord had seen that he had got some capital, and then they suddenly found out that the man was, after all, only a man of straw, and that what little straw he had went into the landlord's pocket. There was one other point which had been made; but he did not think it affected the question before the House, and that was the question of bills of sale. It had been said that the landlord should be given a power of re-entry a certain time after his rent became due; but he wished to point out that the landlord would be perfectly able to get his rent as soon as it became legally due to him, for he could sue for it on the day it became owing, and there was not a single agreement that would prevent him doing so. He would be able to sue as soon as the rent fell due, in the same way as any other creditor. Without, therefore, detaining the House any longer, he wished to state that he should give his support to the Motion put forward by the hon. Member for Kerry (Mr. Blennerhassett), although he could not help thinking that it had been brought forward at rather an inopportune time. He considered that it was an inopportune time for this reason—that many tenants were in arrears with their rents, and any change in the law would necessitate the calling in of those arrears; but he did not see that that would affect the question before the House, because if the House was asked to say "Aye" or "No" on the principle of the Law of Distress, it was not a question of whether the time was opportune for doing so or not.

SIR WILLIAM HART DYKE said, he did not think this was a good time for introducing the Motion. He could not admit that the Law of Distress had been generally enforced harshly or cruelly by landlords, as the Mover of the Resolution had asserted.

MR. BLENNERHASSETT said, he had made no such statement. What he said was that the law might be, and occasionally was, harshly enforced.

SIR WILLIAM HART DYKE was glad to hear the disclaimer of the hon. Gentleman. He thought he heard him use the words he had attributed to him, and had taken them down. He was strongly in favour of the limitation of the law; but whether the limitation should be fixed at one year or 18 months he did not think of any great consequence. He was also in favour of an alteration of the law which would prevent the great injustice of the property or stock of a third party being seized under the Law of Distress. This was, in the main, a tenant's question. As a landlord, he was very much opposed, both in principle and practice, to the harsh enforcement of the Law of Distress; but to abolish it unconditionally at the present moment would be a grievous hardship to the tenant farmer himself. He had no hesitation in saying that statistics might be easily adduced to show that during the past three disastrous seasons, if the Law of Distress had not prevailed, one-half of England would now be out of cultivation. They were told that the tenant farmers demanded this change in the law. He had spoken to many tenant farmers upon this matter; and, except those who attended the Chambers of Commerce and Agriculture, the majority of those he had consulted were not in favour of a change in the present law. It was perfectly true that if a state of things could be produced in which the landlord would be certain to get his rent, and when a farm became vacant found no trouble in getting a capitalist to take it, then by all means abolish the law, and put the relation between the landlord and the tenant on a business footing. But he submitted that they must deal with the state of affairs and the times and seasons as they found them; and he thought it would be almost barbarous for the House of Commons now to abolish the Law of Distress, and thereby produce a state of things which must result in the turning out of their homes of a large number of tenant farmers who had been struggling for years against fearful odds, and were now receiving forbearance and consideration from their landlords, whom the hon. Member for Kerry admitted had not harshly enforced the law. As practical men, he believed they must come to the conclusion that the time had not arrived when the Law of Distress could be abolished without aggravating, instead of removing, the difficulties which at present affected the agriculture of this country. He was not altogether prepared to vote for the Previous Question, and would have preferred that the Amendment had been framed to carry out some improvement in the existing law.

Mr. JAMES HOWARD said, that the hon. Baronet the Member for Mid Kent (Sir William Hart Dyke) had deprecated sweeping away at one fell swoop the Law of Distress. But he (Mr. J. Howard) would ask—Did the hon. Baronet remember, when speaking, that Parliament, with the assent of the Conservative Party—of which he was a distinguished Member—had swept away at one fell swoop the sister Law of Hypothec in Scotland? The right of the landlord to priority for debts due for rent over every other creditor had remained unquestioned until recent years; the Law of Distress had come down to them as a legacy from feudal times, and had been quietly acquiesced in. It had, indeed, been regarded as one of those natural rights which could hardly be called in question. But they lived in times when class privileges, however ancient, were no longer regarded as natural rights, but when the title of their possessors was rigidly investigated and their effects on the general community were looked fairly in the face. The long-sustained agitation in Scotland upon the Law of Hypothec, and the discussions and debates from time to time on the subject, very naturally called the attention of English farmers to the sister Law of Distress; and the more intelligent of them soon began to perceive that the evils alleged to flow from the Law of Hypothec flowed equally from the Law of Distress. During recent years the growth of opinion among English tenant farmers upon the question, therefore, had increased considerably, and at nearly all the meetings held by them it had been warmly debated, and its injurious operation denounced, and resolutions passed, not only for the amendment, but for the total abolition of the law. It was to the credit of the Scotch farmers that they were shrewd enough to perceive the baneful influence of the Law of Hypothec on their interests many years before the English farmers had their interest aroused to the results of the corresponding Law of Distress in England. Possibly the earlier discovery was attributable to the Scotch practice of letting farms on tender, which system brought the evils flowing from the law more prominently and visibly before the eyes of the Scottish tenantry. What was said of the Law of Hypothec might be said with equal truth of the Law of Distress. The evils attendant on the system were three-fold. First, by the operation of the law, rents were raised beyond their natural level; secondly, the credit of the tenant farmers had been impaired; and, thirdly, the operation of the law had begotten a tendency to repel capital from agriculture and the cultivation of the soil. If these charges could be sustained—as he (Mr. J. Howard) believed they could—then the days of the Law of Distress were as assuredly numbered as those of hypothec had already been. That the Law of Distress had had a potent, though silent effect in raising the rental of farms throughout England, no doubts existed in the minds of practical men, although it was just one of these knotty points which it was next to impossible to prove to demonstration. It could not be disguised, as had been urged on the other side, that the present was not, from one point of view, a favourable time for bringing forward the proposal of his hon. Friend the Member for Kerry (Mr. Blennerhassett), inasmuch as that many points in his arguments were blunted by the untoward circumstances which at present surrounded agriculture. In prosperous times, when a score or more applicants were running after every vacant farm, then was the time when landlords could take advantage of the Law of Distress; but in times of depression like the present, it could not be disguised that to a great extent the law remained inoperative. With that admission, however, he maintained that it was not the practice of Parliament to legislate for abnormal conditions, but for the ordinary—the normal—circumstances of the country. He would, therefore, take the House back a few years when prosperous times had for a long period prevailed. A landowner, whom he would style Sir Herbert Settlement, was the owner of an estate upon which a desirable farm became vacant; the applicants were numerous, and the competition for the occupancy was brisk; the agent, knowing that the owner was protected by the Law of Distress, felt that a tenant with three-fourths of the capital or even half the capital necessary to stock the farm was just as safe for the rent as the man with ample means for fully stocking it. The farm was let probably at a considerable advance upon the previous rental to a tenant of the kind he had just described. The owner soon after meets his neighbour, whom he (Mr. J. Howard) would call Lord Limited Owner, and informs him that The Grange—the farm in question—had been let at 35*s*. per acre to a very eligible tenant. Lord Limited Owner, in turn, meets his own agent, and calls his attention to the fact that The Grange had been let at 10*s*. per acre more than the rent of his own farm adjoining The Holt, which was every bit as good. The result was that in process of time the rent of The Holt was raised, and perhaps a score other farms upon the same estate—not one of the tenants ever dreaming for one moment that the rise was directly or indirectly connected with the Law of Distress. He might be told that he had drawn an imaginary picture. ["Hear, hear!"] Hon. Members opposite cried "Hear, hear!" He could only say that he had drawn precisely the same picture at a meeting of the Farmers' Club, 13 months ago; and upon remarking that some present might regard it as a fancy picture, the room resounded with cries of "No, no!" He would ask—were not the practical farmers present upon that occasion competent judges upon the point? There was no need, however, for a fancy sketch to pourtray the evil effects of the law under consideration. There was the inexorable doctrine of political economy that any law, or set of circumstances, which had the effect of bringing more customers into the market for a given article, brought about a rise in the price of such commodity. That the Law of Distress had, in the past, had the effect of increasing the number of applicants for farms no practical man for a moment doubted. If such was the case, the enhancement of rent was the inevitable result, and the inexorable law to which he had referred could not be gainsaid. The agricultural rental of the Kingdom, as he had reminded the House three weeks ago, increased between the years 1857 and 1875 by no less a sum than £9,000,000 sterling, the rise being 21 per cent in England and 26 per cent in Scotland. Turning to the second effect said to be produced by the Law of Distress upon the credit of the farmer, the effect of the law might be judged by the case of a tenant resorting to a banker for an advance to tide him over a crisis. At the interview, nothing would of course be said by the banker upon the ugly question of the Law of Distress, nor would it probably for one moment cross the mind of the would-be-borrower. But did anyone of commercial experience suppose that the law was absent from the mind of the banker, when he blandly informed the would-be-borrower that he could be accommodated with the advance, but that security would be expected? He had been assured by eminent bankers in agricultural districts that the credit of the farmer was seriously curtailed by the Law of Distress. Leaving, however, the bankers, he would call attention to a speech of a noble Lord opposite, who took an active part in the Business of that House—he referred to the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill). Some 18 months ago that noble Lord, addressing a meeting of Oxfordshire farmers, spoke as follows upon the subject now before the House:—

> "He saw one great evil, and that was the Law of Distress. They could not expect the capitalist in these bad times to advance money to the farmer for the most legitimate and promising objects, at any rate at moderate interest, on the security of his stock or his plant, when he knew that through some unforeseen circumstances, or some temporary embarrassment, or circumstances over which the farmer might be able to exercise no control, he happened to be behind in his obligations to his landlord, that security would at once be taken possession of by his landlord. He had no hesitation in saying that the Law of Distress was a remnant of feudalism, and its days were numbered. The Government had consented to the principle of its abolition in Scotland, and what was sauce for the goose was sauce for the gander; what was good for the Scotch farmers was, he imagined, equally good for English farmers."

He (Mr. J. Howard) was glad to find that the noble Lord was imbued with some of the Radical sentiments of his elder brother upon Land Questions. He had given this extract from the noble Lord's speech with two objects—first, as an answer to the speech of the hon. Member for North Staffordshire (Mr. H. T. Davenport); and, secondly, in order to claim the vote of the noble Lord for the Motion then before the House. With respect to the third effect alleged to flow from the Law of Distress—the tendency to repel capital from agriculture—he would observe it was notorious than men of capital and standing seldom or never were willing to give such high or extravagant rents for land as men of straw were willing to offer. That was a fact, known to every land agent in the Kingdom. So apparent had been the tendency under the Scotch system of letting farms by tender, that the fact fomented the agitation against hypothec, and the conviction had served to keep it alive. He was surprised that the hon. Member for North Staffordshire should commend a law which tempted landlords, especially needy ones, to accept as tenants men who were ready to bid high rents, but who had not capital enough to fully develop the resources of the soil, and which, therefore, inflicted a distinct injury on the community. He believed that such a law was also injurious to the landowners themselves, because but for it, and its operations in the past, he was convinced that probably not half of the bankruptcies of the last few months would have occurred, and not half of the now vacant farms would have remained tenantless. He had dwelt hitherto upon the three evils which flowed from the Law of Distress; but he had said nothing about the injustice of that law toward the trading, the manufacturing, and the banking class—this was so obvious that he felt that it required no enforcement. That debts due to the most opulent, the most wealthy, and the most powerful section of the community should be secured by an exceptional law seemed to his mind little short of iniquitous. He would ask—suppose that the bankers were in possession of this preferential right as had been playfully suggested by one of the bankers he had referred to—he would ask would such a class privilege stand for a single Session? Again, could it be believed that if the Law of Distress had never been in existence, and was proposed either to this House or even to the House of Lords, it would be for one moment entertained? Were such a measure proposed for the first time, it would, unquestionably, be deemed to be and would be denounced throughout the land as a piece of unjustifiable class legislation of the very worst kind. Further, the merchants, bankers, and all classes of traders would be up in arms against its unfairness. Believing that the Law of Distress had been injurious not only to the three classes directly interested in agriculture—landlords, tenants, and labourers—but to the general interests of the whole community, he heartily supported the Motion of his hon. Friend the Member for Kerry.

Mr. PELL said, he was also inclined to think that it would not have been easy now-a-days to enact for the first time the Law of Distress; but that was by no means a sufficient reason for repealing it. The circumstances of its origin certainly justified the law at one period of our history. There had been a time in which the landlord supplied the entire plant and capital of a farm, and everything that was necessary, with the exception of labour, so that he was not only the landlord, but the capitalist whose money was being used. A little earlier, the cultivation of land was managed by a still simpler method, by which the landlord received a part of the produce from the tenant. At one time, therefore, the Law of Distress was amply justified by all the conditions of agriculture. New methods, however, had superseded the old, and other persons besides the landlord and the tenant were now interested in the cultivation of land. Some of them were persons who, whatever might be said of the acceptance by landlords of extravagant rents, had certainly lured farmers into expenditure that their better judgment condemned. It was not all profit to the farmer who invested £200 or £300 in artificial manure, or spent his substance in the gay paint and glittering fittings of agricultural instruments. Those to whom he alluded, a large section of the manufacturers and the acute and theoretical persons who supplied artificial manure, were now complaining that certain consequences resulted from the Law of Distress which would interfere with their speculative proposals. With regard to the operation of the law itself, he did not think it was fair to those who supplied other commodities than land to the farmer that the landlord should have a claim upon the tenant's property for something like six years back. He had always thought that was an extremely unfair thing, and a cruel thing, in the first instance, to the tenant, and, in the next place, to the community generally. But it was not clear to him that it was an unfair proposal, considering the laws of tenancy generally, that the landlord should have a lien upon the produce of the farm for one year, or for a short period not much exceeding one year. Owners of agricultural implements, and other matters that the farmer required, did not part with their goods for a year or a month upon credit, unless they had urgent reason for doing so; but the landlord sold the possession of his land not for a week or for a month, but for a period long enough to allow crops and harvests to be gathered in, and was, so far, less advantageously situated than the ordinary commercial creditor. He thought, on the whole, that the existing law, with limitation, was best in the interests of both parties. The agricultural implement maker usually parted with his goods to an agent, to whom he gave an enormous discount. That, of course, did not make the articles any cheaper to the farmer. In fact, a plough or a drill which might be sold to a farmer for £12 or £14 on the cash system cost him £18 or £20 under the system of agency and credit. He was not sure that a slight Law of Distress would not operate more to the advantage of a farmer who was going to buy these goods than such an enormous percentage. He had, moreover, a great objection to the present proposal, for he was afraid that after all it was only a bid for the support of the farmers. The truth was that the Law of Distress was very seldom exercised; and he was inclined to think that the wiser course for the occupiers of land to take would be to endeavour to amend the law rather than abolish it, for it ought not, at the present moment, to be swept away altogether. And when the law was altered, he should be pleased to see the Amendment extended to other holdings besides farms; for, as far as his experience went, the power of expelling the occupier of a small tenement had been more unduly used in the case of house tenancies than in the case of land.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he thought he could congratulate his hon. Friend the Member for Kerry (Mr. Blennerhassett), not merely on the support he had received from those who were avowedly in favour of the Resolution, but still more on the course which had been taken by those who were opposed to it. When he (Sir William Harcourt) considered the manner in which the Resolution was met, and the arguments by which it was supported, he could come to no other conclusion than that the real object at which his hon. Friend aimed was really attained. If this Law of Distress were really the valuable commodity for the farmers of England as was pretended by hon. Members opposite, why was the Motion met by the "Previous Question" and not with a direct negative by their Representatives and advocates? The hon. Member who made that Motion of the "Previous Question" (Mr. H. T. Davenport) said he was quite satisfied that the farmers of England were not, in a majority, in favour of the present proposal. He (Sir William Harcourt) confessed that he had a little doubt of this at the time; but it was removed by the hon. Gentleman who just spoke (Mr. Pell), because he said this was to be used as a "farmers' friend" question. That seemed to betray that at the bottom of his heart there was a suspicion that that was really what the farmers did want. What were the arguments used against the Resolution? It was said that the law enabled a landowner to take a tenant with an insufficient capital. Why, that argument was really the most conclusive in its favour, for the worst thing for the landowner or the farmer, and for the general community, was that very thing. It was because it enabled and encouraged the landowner to take a tenant without sufficient capital, because it encouraged a man without sufficient capital to become a tenant, that the Law of Distress was fundamentally wrong, and injurious to the interests of the community. Then there was the hon. Member for South Leicestershire (Mr. Pell), who really, at times, appeared to be a Liberal, and then, at other times, a Tory of the rankest and most antiquated description, who said—"In the present miserable condition of agriculture let us protect the farmer from his natural enemies." What were the natural enemies of the farmers? According to the hon. Gentleman opposite, agriculture had been destroyed by implements. Let them maintain the Law of Distress, because it would prevent the farmer indulging in implements. If they could only put the farmer in a position that no implement maker would trust him, they would put him in a flourishing position. But it was not only the implement makers of whom he complained. There were the artificial manure manufacturers also. The hon. Gentleman was convinced that if the English agriculturist was to be saved from the competition of the virgin soil of America, he was to be saved by one thing only—namely, a cessation in the use of artificial manure. Maintain the Law of Distress, and that would be accomplished. Another enemy of the farmer was the banker, and they were asked to hope that the farmer could never be in a position that a banker would trust him. Let there be no agricultural implements, artificial manure, and national bankers, and then the distressed agriculture of England would be delivered from all its misfortune, and be on equal terms with the world. That was what was put forward by the most brilliant agricultural light of the Conservative Party. The argument on the opposite side was that a man must have credit to go on with his business; but let them take care that the only creditor should be the landlord, and the real fertilizing influence upon land which could restore it to its true productive power was rent. It was not implements, and it was not manure; but if rent was maintained, that was the fertilizing element of the soil, and in order to maintain rent they must maintain the Law of Distress. He must say, when argument had sunk to that level, he thought the cause was lost. He was quite sure, if there were better arguments which could be produced, they would have been put forward. The hon. Member for South Leicestershire, although he occasionally appeared in the highest phase of Protection, was not unamenable to reason, or the process of conversion; and he (Sir William Harcourt) might venture to predict that they would yet live to see the hon. Member voting for abolition of the Law of Distress. This, in fact, was no new question. Upon the Law of Hypothec, two years ago, everything had been said upon this question which it was possible to say. All these objections had been made before. They were all argued out on the Scotch Bill. The Conservative Party, from year to year, opposed the abolition of the Law of Hypothec, and the same arguments were produced then; but it was the conviction of a very acute class of people—the Scotch farmers, who certainly could not be accused of not knowing where their own interests laid—that the Law of Hypothec ought to be abolished, and it was abolished. There was one man, of course, who was staunch to the last—the noble Lord the Member for Haddingtonshire (Lord Elcho). He remembered, in one of those wails from the noble Lord with which they were so well acquainted, he denounced the late Government for conceding the abolition of the Law of Hypothec. But the abolition of the Law of Hypothec was a brilliant, and he would say the best, act of that Government. It was done on the very eve of a General Election; and after a Dissolution was announced, the Duke of Richmond, the then Lord Chancellor, and the lights of the Conservative Party went down to the House of Lords, and entreated them to pass the Bill for the abolition of the Law of Hypothec, which was, in fact, the abolition of the Law of Distress. They did that on the eve of a General Election, not supposing for one moment that it was to be considered in any respect a "farmer's friend" question. That was the process by which conversion took place on those subjects. If his hon. Friend the Member for Kerry, instead of moving a Resolution, had introduced a Bill, they would have seen how Gentlemen sitting opposite would have met it. He would rather that he had done so, as he (Sir William Harcourt) should have supported the Bill, as he intended to support the Resolution. Of course, as in the case of the Law of Hypothec, when the subject came to be dealt with in a Bill, there ought to be just and proper securities introduced by which the landowner who parted with the possession of his land should have a summary and effective method of recovering that possession if he did not get his rent. There remained one other point. The hon. Baronet the Member for Mid Kent (Sir William Hart Dyke) said, what would be the position of the tenants in this country if the Law of Distress did not exist? They would all have been turned out by the landlord. He (Sir William Harcourt) ventured to disagree with that expression of opinion, because he did not think that that was the view which the landlords had taken of their position. As far as his observation went, their great object seemed to be to keep their tenants if possible; and even if the Law of Distress did not exist, they would not have done such a suicidal thing as evict them. In fact, every landlord in England at the present moment appeared to be doing his best to retain his tenants. It was, consequently, impossible that any tenant could suffer by the abolition of the Law of Distress. If they had not spoken so strongly on the subject as the Scotch farmers, it was because the latter were shrewder agriculturists and larger capitalists, who had long come to the conclusion that such a system as this was incompatible with good agriculture. The very arguments which had been adduced against the Resolution were the strongest arguments in its favour; and, therefore, he should vote against the "Previous Question," and in favour of the Resolution of his hon. Friend.

SIR GABRIEL GOLDNEY complained that the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department had made no reference to one subject closely connected with this question—namely, the mode of obtaining the rent-charge into which the Church tithes had been converted in the 12,000 parishes in the Kingdom, in which case the only remedy was the same as that employed by the landlord—that was distress.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: This Resolution does not refer to that subject.

SIR GABRIEL GOLDNEY said, the one question would be involved in the other, and if the Law of Distress were swept away there would be no means of recovering it, otherwise than by substituting a personal liability. He would go further in the way of opposition to the Resolution than simply moving the "Previous Question," for he had had a long experience in matters connected with land, and he had never known the Law of Distress act oppressively. Before, therefore, such a Resolution as that before the House was agreed to, some information ought, he contended, to be given by the Government as to what process they would suggest with the view of remedying the great inconvenience which would result from the abolition of the Law of Distress.

MR. GREGORY supported the "Previous Question," maintaining that the law as it at present stood had been productive of considerable advantage in enabling many struggling men to take farms who would otherwise be debarred from doing so, and to bring up families in a respectable way of life. There was no comparison between the position of a landlord and an ordinary creditor of the tenant. The former found a portion of the capital, on which the tenant treated the land as raw material, of which he necessarily parted with the possession. The ordinary dealer could give credit for the goods supplied, or require payment for them as he thought proper; but it appeared by the evidence taken by the House of Lords that the loss to ordinary dealers, under the circumstances, was very small, amounting to less than 1 per cent on their dealings with agricultural tenants. The law ought not, therefore, in his opinion, to be abolished in the summary way proposed, although he admitted that some alteration in it was desirable. He contended that it did no practical evil to anyone, and that much of the distress which had fallen on the English farmer arose from the competition of bankers to lend him money. If the law were abolished with respect to agricultural holdings, it could not logically be retained for house property; and it was in dealing with the latter that the abuses of it, if any, arose.

Mr. WARTON said, he did not think that the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department had fairly represented the arguments used by the hon. Member for South Leicestershire (Mr. Pell); but it was not wonderful for the right hon. and learned Gentleman to endeavour to excite a laugh, especially a Liberal laugh, against the hon. Member for South Leicestershire. It was easy to do so when representations were made which were not exactly in accordance with the utterances of the speaker referred to. The right. hon. and learned Gentleman said that landlords ought to have easy means for obtaining possession of their land if their rent was not paid; but he did not say what those means should be. He wished to know whether the right hon. and learned Gentleman was of opinion that such a principle ought to apply in the case of Irish land also. Did not the right hon. and learned Gentleman know that there was a Bill before the House which applied to Ireland, and which would, when passed, clog the right of the landlord to obtain possession of his lands in every possible way? Why, he would ask, should this Motion be limited to agricultural holdings, and not apply to the occupiers in towns? Why should they deprive the farmers of the protection which they now had from their landlords? No answer could be given to those questions; but, instead, hon. Members opposite contented themselves by cheering, jeering, and sneering at the arguments of the hon. Member for South Leicestershire, which they could not meet, more especially that in which he directly charged the Liberal Party with seeking to make this a "farmers' friend" question, because they wanted to catch the farmers' votes, which they had not got.

Mr. STORER said, it was well known from personal experience that many English farmers, and many Scotch farmers too, could not but for the Law of Distress have raised themselves from the position of labourers to be the occupiers of farms. There was this peculiarity which had not been much touched on in the condition of the farmer as compared with other classes. The farmer invested his capital in the land, where it remained for a year or two. It was impossible for him to turn his money over so rapidly as the merchant or banker; and, therefore, it was necessary that consideration should be shown him by somebody. If he got no consideration from his landlord, he certainly would get none from his other creditors; and if the Law of Distress were done away with his chances of consideration from the landlord must necessarily be greatly diminished. While admitting that there should be some limitation of the present Law of Distress with advantage, both as to time and the property of other persons on the land, he considered that in the interest of the farmer as well as of the landlord, the Law of Distress ought to be maintained upon the Statute Book.

Colonel BARNE said, there appeared to be some Friends of the tenant farmers who wished to abolish the Law of Distress; but he contended that to do so would be an injury to the small farmers instead of a benefit. The landlords would be driven to recover their rents in some other manner. At the present time, that was their only security. He maintained that if the Law of Distraint were abolished, landlords would no longer be in a position to give the tenants any latitude in regard to the payment of their rents. He considered that if it had not been for that law, many farmers would have been obliged, owing to the prolonged distress, to leave their homes and seek other occupations. He believed that three out of every four farmers were at present in heavy arrears to their landlords; but, thanks to the Law of Distress, the landlords were able to give them time to recover themselves. The only people who would be benefited by the abolition of the law would be the oil-cake merchant, the manure merchant, and the money lenders. The mass of the tenant farmers of the country did not desire the abolition of the law. He would admit that the large tenant farmers—the men who came to London to speak at the Farmers' Club, the Farmers' Alliance, and the Central Chamber of Agriculture—did wish for its abolition. But why? Because if it were abolished, the competition of the small farmers for the land would cease. That was the whole truth of the question.

MR. D. DAVIES said, he was not there to defend the landlords; but he wished to call the attention of the House to the fact that the great proportion of small farmers were, because of this law, protected by their landlords. It was quite clear that the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department did not know anything about the farmers. Of course, it would be an advantage to the large farmers, because it would lessen the competition for land. The abolition of the Law of Distress would be the ruin of many small farmers, and would drive them out of the country. He (Mr. D. Davies) had lived all his life among tenant farmers, and he could say that this would be a most unpopular measure among them. And what about the hundreds and thousands of farmers who would be bankrupt under this Bill? Give him a practical farmer with little or no money against a man with immense wealth who was not a farmer, and he would guarantee the former's farm would be the best. To that man the Law of Distress was a protection as against those creditors who might press him at a time when his landlord would refrain from so doing. On this occasion he should vote against the Government and against his Party simply in the interests of the tenant farmers; but he regretted being compelled to do so.

MR. WHITBREAD discredited the statement of the hon. and gallant Member opposite (Colonel Barne) that three out of every four farmers were in arrears to their landlords. He admitted there was a great deal of truth in the plea that the Law of Distress was a protection to an insolvent tenant; but what, he asked, would be the effect of abolishing it? As it stood now, the pressure was enormous upon the landlord to let the tenant go on getting down lower and lower, till at length the latter was immersed in helpless insolvency. That was the result of the Law of Distress. It did act as a protection in the first instance, but it was a fatal protection. He submitted whether this system of bolstering up insolvency was not a bad thing, and that it would turn out to be a great mistake in the long run?

MR. O'SULLIVAN, in supporting the Resolution, said, he failed to see any reason whatever why the landlord should be placed in a position superior to that of the ordinary creditor. In many cases the ordinary creditor was the person who supplied the tenant with the seeds and manure for his farm, and why he should not occupy the same position with reference to the tenant's assets as the landlord did was a thing he could not for the life of him understand. It seemed to be forgotten by those who supported the Amendment that the landlord never lost more than his year's profit on the land, whereas the ordinary creditor who supplied the seeds and manure lost not only his profit on that year, but his principal also; so that he was really in a far worse position. The hon. Member for Cardiganshire (Mr. D. Davies) stated that by the Law of Distress many tenants were protected by their landlords. That was true; but, as an illustration of the instance of the protection afforded, he (Mr. O'Sullivan) might mention that about 12 months since a tenant who owed him a couple of years' rent came and asked him to distrain his cattle. He told the man at once that he only wanted to defeat his creditors; and, of course, he refused to be a party to any such fraud. He thought, therefore, that hon. Members who asked the House to protect the tenants by the Law of Distress were asking the House, to a certain extent, to countenance fraud. No better argument could be adduced in support of the Resolution. Why not a landlord go into the Bankruptcy Court and take his share like everyone else? He hoped the House would not, by sanctioning the continuance of this law, protect dishonest tenants from their honest creditors.

MR. WIGGIN said, that it had long been felt as a great injustice that the landlord should, by the Law of Distress, have a preferential claim over other creditors; and, therefore, the time had come when it should be abolished. He maintained that it affected the agricultural interest most injuriously, because the agents of landed proprietors were disposed to let farms to men of insufficient capital, as they knew the landlord had a priority over the other creditors.

MR. J. G. HUBBARD said, he did not believe that any law could come down, as this had done, from antiquity to the present day, without there having been some very good reason for its existence. When it was asked that the landlord should be placed on the same terms as the other creditors, it was forgotten that their positions were not at all analogous. Where was the analogy between the debt that accrued from the tenant to the landlord and the debt which the tenant might incur to brewers, grocers, implement makers, and manure makers? Every one of these men saw the tenant's progress, and were able to judge how far it was competent to them, with a due regard to their own safety, to trust him, and for how long; the debt due to the landlord was the inevitable result of time. Rent grew without any further action on the landlord's part beyond putting the tenant into possession; the products of the land were the representatives of the rent; and naturally became, in the first instance, liable for the rent. Everything was absolutely in their own disposal. As far as he (Mr. Hubbard) could judge, in his own county, the practice was this—the rent due from the tenant to the landlord was not exacted when it became due. It was due every three months; but it was practically taken half-yearly, with a delay of three or six months, and sometimes the lapse was even longer. The working of the system was that the landlord provided the tenant with capital to the extent of a year's rent. He (Mr. Hubbard) held that if the law were limited, as everyone seemed to desired it should be, to a claim by the landlord upon one or two years' crop, no mischief would ensue. On the other hand, to sweep away the right of distraint would be high-handed interference, seeing that the tenant had a distinct advantage in the continuance of this system of indulgence; and he should oppose any abolition of a system which was so beneficial to the tenant farmer, and which had on its side long-established usage.

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD protested against the doctrine that a thing was necessarily valuable because it had existed for a long series of years. He would admit that the Law of Distress operated humanely in the case of dwelling-houses; indeed, in many cases no doubt it kept a man's roof over his head. The present question, however, was a different one altogether. The Law of Distress, with regard to agricultural tenements, was a question of public policy, of expediency, simply of good husbandry. The question they ought to put to themselves was—did the Law of Distress tend or not to good husbandry in this country? To that there could be only one answer—certainly not. Even if limited, as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of London (Mr. Hubbard) suggested, to a year's rent, it was obvious that a landlord standing between two bidders for a farm, one comparatively a man of straw and the other a man of substance, was induced to take the man of straw, because he had in the Law of Distress a certain amount of security. It was not for the public advantage that he should have that security. The public interest was most directly concerned in the most rapid passage of land from a man who desired to quit it to the man who desired to obtain it. The husbandry of a farm would be distinctly promoted by a landlord getting rid of a tenant who had not sufficient capital to cultivate it properly. Of course, if it were now proposed to abolish the Law of Distress, it would be obviously unjust to the landlord not to make a provision with regard to rent due; but when the right hon. Gentleman who had just spoken talked of the value of a law because it had come down from antiquity, he certainly held a different opinion. Lord Coke said the Law of Distress was a feudal law, a feudal remedy. It was distinctly a feudal law, and because it was, he (Mr. Arthur Arnold) was heartily in favour of its abolition.

Colonel RUGGLES-BRISE said, that at that moment three out of four of the tenant farmers of England had not sufficient capital to cultivate their farms. The reason of that insufficiency was that the bad harvests of the last three or four years had washed capital out of their pockets. Those tenants that had the largest capital were the worst off at the present moment. There were other matters connected with the occupation of land of as great importance as capital. Capital was of no use without experience, industry, and knowledge of his business on the part of the farmer. He did not advocate the retention of the Law of Distress in the interest of the landlords; but he thought that three out of four of the small farmers of this country would hold up their hands in favour of its retention. The only argument against its retention that he had heard seriously used was that it enhanced the rent; but he denied the fact. The tradesmen were not injured by it, for they protected themselves by putting a higher price on the articles they supplied. They, together with the implement makers, knew how to take care of themselves. The implement makers, who, he believed, were agitating for that change more than anybody else, supplied implements to the farmers through agents who were responsible to them, and the farmers were at that moment paying some 50 per cent more for implements than they ought to pay. If they abolished the Law of Distress, they could not stop there; but they must extend the abolition to the case of houses. He could not see how or where they could draw a distinction. He did not think that working men would favour that proposal. He hoped, in the interests of the tenant farmers, that the law would be retained in a modified form.

MR. COLMAN said, he rose for the purpose of answering, directly he heard it, the most unwarrantable assertion made by the hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite (Colonel Ruggles-Brise). He desired emphatically to contradict the assertion that the agitation against the Law of Distress had been brought about by the implement makers and others who trusted the farmers. He (Mr. Colman) knew very well that many tenant farmers felt that the present state of the law was, in many districts, at the bottom of some of the most serious evils connected with farming, and especially that of the want of adequate capital. The hon. Member for Bedfordshire (Mr. Howard) had spoken of the law as promoting competition for farms; but if he had called it unhealthy competition, his remarks would have been nearer the truth, because, under existing circumstances, people were induced to take larger farms than their capital warranted. Believing that that was a question in which the farmers were interested, and that the judgment of the country condemned that unjust law, he would heartily support the Resolution.

MR. DAWSON also cordially supported the Resolution, holding that the landlord was not entitled to an anomalous means of recovering payment of rent, and that the arguments by which his claim to such exceptional protection had been defended were fallacious and untenable.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, that when the debate commenced he had no intention of taking part in it; but the more the discussion had progressed, the more he felt it to be necessary that they should, if possible, put aside Party considerations on that occasion. Hon. Gentlemen on his side of the House had been taunted by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department; but there was no man in the House who ought to put aside Party feeling more than that right hon. and learned Gentleman. They were all specially interested in the Home Department; but since the right hon. and learned Gentleman had held that particular Office he had more frequently embittered strife than any other Member of the House. He was sorry to have to say that, because he wished the right hon. and learned Gentleman well in every way; but the right hon. and learned Gentleman apparently had to learn that the tongue was a very unruly member, for he could say sharper things than most other men. Instead of that, however, they wanted advice from the right hon. and learned Gentleman, who ought to be their counsellor and friend. The Secretary of State for the Home Department had the whole domestic interests of that great country in his hands, and the speech he had made that night was utterly unworthy of the occasion, and of anyone holding the position he did. ["No, no!"] There was not a unanimous feeling on this subject. It was not a question of landlords. It was not a question of the vote of their tenants. The real question was—Was this a law which was beneficial to the tenant, or was it not? [MR. JAMES HOWARD: No, no!] The hon. Member for Bedfordshire cried "No." He was not a man, perhaps, who cared for the tenant; he was looking to some other interest, and not to that of the tenant farmer.

MR. JAMES HOWARD rose to Order, and asked whether the hon. and gallant Member was justified in imputing motives to another hon. Member?

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT denied that he had cast any imputations; but if he had said anything offensive to the hon. Member he was sorry for it. What he was saying was that the great question they were discussing was whether it was to the interest or not of the tenant farmer that this Law of Distress should be maintained? [MR. JAMES HOWARD: No, no!] Did the hon. Member for Bedfordshire mean that it was of no interest to the tenant farmer? If not, surely the time of the House had been wasted. He held it was a question of serious interest to the tenant farmer—for the small farmer as well as for the large farmer. They were proposing to establish small farmers in Ireland. Did he understand the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department to say that no encouragement should be given to small farmers in this country? He had heard many say that the Law of Distress had been of the greatest benefit to them, and believed that this was an exceedingly unfortunate time at which to raise the question. They knew that prejudices had been aroused, and that fair discussions did not take place. After the Crimean War, owing to the competition which arose for land, many of the old tenant farmers, rather than give up, even wished to increase the size of, and did increase their farms, and were glad to give more rent than before. A new class of tenants, also—men who had been in business and saved money—came forward and increased the demand for farms. But that had nothing on earth to do with the Law of Distress. The last thing a landlord thought of when he took a tenant was the Law of Distress. The question the landlord looked to was whether the tenant was a solvent and respectable man, who would farm the lands to the best interest and advantage. Passing as they had been through critical times, the landlords of this country had endeavoured fairly and honestly, under the most adverse circumstances, to discharge their duties to the best of their ability to their tenants, whether they paid their rent, or whether for the time they did not. Where had they heard of landlords distraining or selling up their tenants in this country? Had they not, on the contrary, given time and indulgence to their tenantry when adverse circumstances called for forbearance on their part? The right hon. and learned Gentleman had referred to the implement makers, the manure dealers, and the bankers; but not only these, but the small tradesmen of the country had increased their prices enormously. There was something also to be said about the banking question. As long as prosperity reigned, they could not induce people to come and ask for too much money; but in the last few years of adversity they had cut short the supply at a very critical time, when it was of the utmost importance to the tenant that he should have that supply. He believed this question deserved more serious attention than the right hon. and learned Gentleman fancied. Believing, as he did, that a limited Law of Distress would be for the advantage of the tenant farmers, he would suggest to his hon. Friend (Mr. H. T. Davenport) to withdraw his Amendment, so that a division should be taken on the question whether a limited Law of Distress should be allowed or not.

Mr. J. W. BARCLAY said, he agreed with the hon. and gallant Baronet opposite (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) that this was a question which affected small tenants as well as large. With regard to the small tenants, it was rather curious to remark that they had the same class of arguments raised against the abolition of the Law of Distress as they had previously heard in regard to Scotland and the abolition of the Law of Hypothec, which was practically the same thing, on the other side of the House. They were told that it would be for the benefit of the large farmers that it should be abolished, but that it would be for the advantage of the small farmers to retain the law as it stood. The smaller farmers in Scotland considered this question carefully for a good many years, and at last they gave no uncertain answer as to what their views were. In those counties which had small farmers, such as Aberdeenshire and Forfarshire, they clearly and unequivocally expressed the opinion that the Law of Hypothec was as disadvantageous to the small farmer as it was to the large. They had heard the Law of Hypothec defended by extraordinary arguments. He thought the landlords had scarcely done justice to themselves. If he had ventured to make the accusations against them which they had made against themselves, he should have felt that he was doing an injustice to that body. One hon. Member said, if he (Mr. J. W. Barclay) mistook not, that if the Law of Distress were abolished the landlords would turn out three-fourths of their tenants. He was not disposed to accept that statement, because he thought better of the English landlords. It was said that the landlord protected the farmer against his other creditors. That, put in other words, meant that the landlord and tenant entered into a conspiracy together to defraud the other creditors of the tenant, who were as justly entitled to payment of their money as the landlord was to his rent. That was not a position, he thought, that the landlords of England ought to place themselves in. He wished particularly to refer to some of the remarks made by the hon. Baronet the Member for Mid Kent (Sir William Hart Dyke), who said the present agricultural distress was due to the recent bad times. He (Mr. J. W. Barclay) was not disposed to coincide in that statement, for he attributed some of it to this very Law of Distress which they were discussing, and he thought the arguments brought forward in support of the law supported his conclusion, because the whole of the arguments brought forward by the opposite side were to the effect that the Law of Distraint enabled a landlord to accept a tenant with inadequate, insufficient, or very small capital. The consequence of that was that there had been a constantly decreasing amount of capital employed in farming. It was easy to see how this came about. The landlord, or more frequently his agent, naturally felt disposed to prefer the tenant who offered the largest amount of rent, being assured that he would be fully protected by the Law of Distraint; and one great advantage of the abolition of that law would be to induce a little more supervision by the landlord, who would then have to take a greater interest in the management of his estate. It was said that this was a very inopportune time for considering the abolition of the Law of Distraint; but he did not understand that it would be proposed, if the abolition of distress was passed to-morrow, that it should affect existing rents, past arrears, or any contract now in existence. These exceptions had been made under the abolition of the law in Scotland; and although the exception of existing leases would lead to considerable confusion, he did not think it was expected that any Bill would pass that House that did not make such exception. Therefore, this could not be said to be an inopportune time, because the same rights would belong to the landlord that he possessed at that moment. He thought, on the contrary, that this was an opportune time for making this reform. Farmers in Scotland and England were rapidly coming to the opinion that the law had acted adversely to them in past times; that if they were going to have reform in the matter, the laws as affecting the tenure of land should be put upon an equitable basis; and that the Law of Distraint should be entirely abolished. The tenant farmers did not claim exceptional legislation on their behalf; but they said that this backing up of the landlord—by giving security for persons of inadequate means—put the tenant with the requisite amount of capital at a disadvantage, discouraged their putting capital into the soil, and was, to no small extent, responsible for the existing scarcity of capital on land. Hon. Members opposite had supported the law on the ground that it allowed a landlord to give a farmer a considerable amount of indulgence; but they, at the same time, proposed to cut down that power of the landlord to give the tenant accommodation to one year or 18 months, without giving any corresponding advantage to the farmer in any respect whatever. He had heard a good deal of sympathy expressed for the implement manufacturers and manure dealers on the other side of the House, and in order to meet their complaints hon. Gentlemen opposite seemed disposed to make this proposal; but it surprised him that he did not hear one word of sympathy from hon. Members opposite for the poor farmers themselves, and that these hon. Gentlemen did not see that this reduction of the Law of Distraint to one year would cause greater pressure upon farmers. It would be an inducement to the landlords to be harder with the tenants than they were at the present moment. One year's priority of right would give a needy landlord security for taking a tenant with inadequate capital, and would induce him to come all the more suddenly upon him should he fall short in the payment of his rent. He was quite prepared to admit that the tenant farmers of England were not unanimous upon this question; but he was surprised at the rapidity with which they had come to the recognition of the fact that this law was a great disadvantage to them. The question was discussed for 15 years in Scotland before the Law of Hypothec was abolished; but it had only been discussed for about five years in England, The hon. Baronet recommended that urban hypothec should also be included in this Resolution. If the hon. Baronet felt strongly on that subject, he (Mr. J. W. Barclay) thought he would do a public service if he were to start an agitation in towns in favour of the abolition of urban hypothec; but, in the meantime, he thought his hon. Friend (Mr. Blennerhassett) had acted wisely in confining his Motion to this particular branch of the question, on which the country electors had made up their mind. Landlords must be like other creditors. They must take into consideration the position of their customer, his solvency and character; and if they had a good tenant, they would give him credit to a certain extent, even although the Law of Distraint were abolished. The landlord could make his own agreement with his tenant, and, if he could not trust the farmer, ask his rent to be paid six months in advance, for there was nothing to prevent him doing so. In America, if a landlord had a doubt about a tenant he stipulated that his rent should be paid monthly in advance. Really, there was no difference between the landlord and the manure merchant, who gave three, six, or 12 months' credit. The manure merchant had more effectually parted with his goods than the landlord had parted with his farm. If hon. Members opposite who defended the law understood their business a little better, they would see that it was quite possible for them to make such terms as they pleased in regard to the payment of rent, in the same way as the manure merchant, or any other tradesman. If the Law of Distraint were abolished, he thought the landlord was perfectly entitled, if the tenant failed to complete his contract, to have some summary means of ejecting him from his holding. In Scotland, 14 days after the rent was due, a landlord might give notice that he required either security or payment. If the tenant could not comply, he might be summoned before the sheriff, and if the tenant could not then give security, the landlord was entitled to eject him within a short time, subject to certain conditions and arrangements with regard to the growing crops. There ought to be a corresponding law for England if distraint were abolished. It would be altogether wrong and unjust that the tenant should retain possession of his holding after he had declared himself unable to fulfil the contract he had entered into respecting it. There was an example of how the landlord could get on without the Law of Distraint in the case of the graziers alluded to by the hon. Member for South Leicestershire (Mr. Pell). In the case of graziers, landlords had no difficulty in securing themselves. They either demanded security from the grazier—because he could at any time drive his cattle to the market and sell them, so that they could not be distrained upon —or they satisfied themselves that the grazier was a solvent tenant, who could pay his rent. He had heard no complaint from landlords in regard to that particular kind of tenancy where there was nothing to distrain upon. He hoped hon. Members would take into consideration the state of agriculture at the present time, and agree to the wishes of, at all events, the majority, a growing majority, of tenant farmers in favour of the abolition of this law. They had heard for years that a Royal Commission had been appointed, which was going to consider what was to be done for the farmers; but, in the meantime, the farmers were getting largely into the Bankruptcy Court, and if things continued for another year, he was afraid the Report of the Commission, even if it were to prove the salvation of the tenant farmers, would come too late. Unless hon. Members were prepared to maintain that this law was for the benefit of tenant farmers and agriculture, he thought the House ought to give way; and by saying they were prepared to consider those grievances of which tenant farmers complained, they would give them a new stimulus to exertion, in the hope that when their case was fully brought before the House they would obtain justice and redress for their grievances, like other classes of Her Majesty's subjects.

Sir HENRY HOLLAND said, he had before the House a Bill, the object of which was to exempt from distress agricultural machines and live stock, being the property of third persons, and not of the tenant; and, though it was supported by Members on both sides of the House, and by the Chambers of Agriculture, it was, to his astonishment, blocked by the hon. Member who had just sat down, and who represented—

at least, so it had been stated—the Farmers' Alliance. The only reason given for their opposition was that the Bill did not go far enough. At all events, it was unfair to say that nothing was said or done on behalf of the farmers from that side of the House. It was not within the scope of his Bill; but he would otherwise have readily assented to the limitation of distress for rent to a year, or two years. He could not agree with the Resolution as now proposed, abolishing distress altogether; but he would suggest the withdrawal of the Amendment and the substitution of one limiting the power of distress to two years' rent. He demurred to the statement of the hon. Member for Forfarshire (Mr. J. W. Barclay) that the existing law was a conspiracy on the part of the tenant farmers and landlords to defraud other creditors. That was a misrepresentation of the case. He (Sir Henry Holland) had made many inquiries into the matter, and there could be no doubt that a great many farmers would be very sorry to see distress altogether abolished. They knew that in some cases it secured indulgence for them from their landlords against immediate proceedings for rent in arrear; and in the circumstances the power of distress was in no sense a conspiracy on the part of the landlords as against the other creditors, who were in very different relations to the tenant to that held by the landlord.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS regretted very much that this Motion had been brought forward at the present moment. He thought the proposal it contained was a very serious one for the tenant farmer. Hon. Members from Scotland must be aware that he, at all events, was anxious to do all he could for the tenant farmers, as he was concerned in abolishing the Law of Hypothec. But they had to take the state of each country as they found it; and to this question, as to many others, there were two sides. Now, in England it was the boast, and he thought a very just boast, that a man could rise from one position to a higher, and that the state of our laws was favourable to his doing so, if he was industrious and persevering. One of the great objects they had in discussing the Land Bill brought before them the other day was for the purpose of creating peasant proprietorships—that was to say, to give to these Irish people the chance of getting on, as had been said, by their own thews and sinews. In England that was happily the case. He knew many cases in which men had begun with little capital on small farms, and had gradually increased their holdings; and everyone desired that advancement in this way should always be possible for small capitalists with skill, energy, and character. The question was whether, with the Law of Distress, a tenant without capital had not a better chance of obtaining credit than he would have if that law were abolished. He maintained that such a tenant would much more easily procure seed, manure, and other things necessary to the working of his farm in the present state of things than if it were repealed. At all events, the law gave to the tenant without capital the raw material, without which he could not go on. If the law were abolished, great injury would be done to struggling tenants. He could not agree with many of the statements of the hon. Member for Forfarshire, who spoke of the relations between landlord and tenant as a purely commercial transaction. The hon. Member referred to the practice in America, where a substitute was found for the Law of Distress by demanding portions of the rent in advance. Such a practice would be quite inconsistent with all the ordinary processes of agriculture. How could the rent be paid by the small farmer before he received any portion of his crops? Then, said the hon. Member, there was another remedy in Scotland, by which the landlord, if he doubted the solvency of his tenant, might take him into court, and if he could not give the requisite security for rent the landlord might in 14 days recover possession of the farm. That would certainly be an extraordinary and absurd proceeding.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Why, that would take place under your own Bill for the abolition of hypothec.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS had not heard from the Home Secretary any proposal by which, if the Law of Distress were abolished, he would provide for the landlord's more speedy re-entry upon the land.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, the statement of the right hon. Gentleman was most unfair. If he had been in the House at the time, he would have heard him state most distinctly that if the Law of Distress were abolished it would be right and proper to make provision for the more rapid and effectual recovery of his land by the landlord in case of non-payment of the rent.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, his hon. Friends around him had informed him that the right hon. and learned Gentleman made no practical suggestion. He (Sir R. Assheton Cross) thought he had shown the House that if the Law of Distress was absolutely abolished it would work very grievous injury to small struggling tenants, who were not only responsible, but useful members of society. [Mr. J. W. BARCLAY: How about Scotland?] He was talking about England. Looking, however, at the relations existing between landlord and tenant in Scotland and England, he thought they were quite different. He had also shown, too, that the real question was as to whether the landlord was to be allowed to maintain his priority of claim, or whether the manure merchant, or the seed merchant, and the implement manufacturer were to rank with him? It was not a question of loss to the tenant, or of hardship so far as he was concerned. It was rather a creditor's than a tenant's question. This was one of those questions which, at the present moment, was being seriously considered by the Agricultural Commission now sitting. Before that Commission the whole body of the tenant farmers of England would be able to present their grievances; and, as the Report of the Commission would shortly be issued, he thought they should wait until it was in their hands before arriving at a premature decision. If the Previous Question were withdrawn, it was the intention of his hon. Friend the Member for South Leicestershire (Mr. Pell) to move an Amendment, limiting the time under the Law of Distress to one or two years; but he complained that the right hon. and learned Gentleman had said he would not allow the Previous Question to be withdrawn, but would insist on its being put, and so prevent the Amendment of his hon. Friend the Member for South Leicestershire being put. Such was the determination of the Secretary of State belonging to a Government who called themselves the farmer's friends. He (Sir R. Assheton Cross) declined to be a party to the action of the right hon. and learned Gentleman. The matter might well stand over until his hon. Friend brought forward a Bill giving expression to his views, and on which Bill the House would have to give an opinion.

MR. COURTNEY said, it was unfortunate that the right hon. Gentleman was not present during the whole of the debate, as he would then have been saved from some errors into which he had fallen in consequence of having been obliged to make inquiries from his Friends. The right hon. Gentleman had charged his right hon. and learned Friend the Home Secretary with not having made any suggestion if the present Law of Distress was abolished. But his right hon. and learned Friend said distinctly that if the Law of Distress were repealed it would be necessary to give the landlord the power of more speedy re-entry than he now possessed. His hon. Friend the Member for Forfarshire (Mr. J. W. Barclay) said that if the Law of Distress were repealed it might be necessary to give the landlord the power of re-entry within 14 days after rent fell into arrear. And then it was said—Could anything be more tyrannical or less applicable to the relations between landlord and tenant? But a similar proposition had been made last year by a Member of the right hon. Gentleman's own Party, and had been supported by the whole Party. It was exactly the provision contained in the Act abolishing hypothec, and carried by the late Government on the eve of the Dissolution. The only solid piece of argument in the right hon. Gentleman's speech was that the abolition of the Law of Distress would be very hard upon small tenants, who, in consequence of the credit given them by the landlords under the protection of the right of distress, were enabled to improve their position. But it was a very extraordinary fact that the most strenuous demand for the abolition of the Law of Hypothec came from the Scotch counties where small tenancies were the rule. And in the Eastern part of the county where his own constituency was situated, the holdings being small, the farmers formed an association before the late Dissolution, and passed a resolution that they would support no candidate who would not vote for the abolition of the Law of Distress, and a former Representative was rejected because he would not do so. Therefore, as a matter of fact, the small farmers of the country did not support this Law of Distress so generally as the right hon. Gentleman had attempted to make out. He (Mr. Courtney) hoped the landlords of England were much better than the right hon. Gentleman represented them to be. The right hon. Gentleman said that the landlords were ready to trust a man with the possession of a farm provided they were themselves guaranteed against loss. The landlords of England were so generous and trusting that they would put a man in possession of a farm knowing that the law gave them this security. They would not be thus generous and trustful if the law did not make them secure. If that was not the argument of the right hon. Gentleman his argument meant nothing. The right hon. Gentleman relied upon the law for enabling the landlords to do that which they would not do were it not for the law. By this language of the right hon. Gentleman great injustice was done to the landlords of England. He was sure, if the Law of Distress were abolished, small farmers, whose capital was not sufficient to stock their farms, would be trusted by the landlords in the future as they had been in the past. The only difference would be this—that if the Law of Distress were abolished, that trust would result from an examination into their character and a belief in their integrity, and not from the knowledge possessed by the landlord that the law would protect him. Did hon. Gentlemen opposite mean that landlords would never give credit to farmers whose character they knew? How many a small trader was able to stock his shop by the assistance of the wholesale merchant and warehouseman who knew him as a clerk without any question of a bill of sale. If there were a bill of sale in the case the man's character would be gone, and nobody would trust him. And in the same manner landowners, having known the man from a boy, how trustworthy and respectable he was, would in the future, as in the past, be ready to put him into a farm in reliance upon his character, and not upon the protection given by the law. The good relations existing at present between landlord and tenant did not exist in consequence of the law, but in spite of it. The law encouraged the landlord to be careless as to the character of his tenants. Let them abolish the law, and they made the landlord careful as to his tenant's character. It might at first diminish the number of competitors for farms. ["No, no!"] Why, it was the whole argument on the other side that the present law increased the quantity of competitors. It enabled men to compete for farms who would not otherwise be in a position to offer for them. Competition would be diminished, and rents would at first fall; but in consequence of the introduction of men of more capital the style of farming would rise, the produce increase, and rents would go up again. The change would ultimately be beneficial for all. He would only add that the Government would have no hesitation in supporting the Motion of his hon. Friend.

COLONEL MAKINS observed, that though many hon. Members were willing that the Law of Distress should be modified, the sweeping changes involved in the Resolution ought first to be considered. His chief objection to the abolition of the law was that it would greatly impair the security on which many persons, such as younger children and widows, were dependent for their allowances and jointures. As far as these persons who gave credit to tenants were concerned, the landlord's position was nearly parallel to that of the preferred secured creditors of a Railway Company that had issued preference shares or debenture stock. The total abolition of the law would either ruin those to whom the punctual payment of their rents was a necessity, or lead to the payment of rents in advance, both of which he held to be very undesirable results.

MR. H. T. DAVENPORT asked leave to withdraw his Amendment. ["No, no!"]

Previous Question, "That the Original Question be now put," put, and *agreed to.*

Original Question put.

Resolved, That, in the opinion of this House, it is desirable to abolish the power of levying Distress for the Rent of Agricultural Holdings in England, Wales, and Ireland.

PARLIAMENT—PUBLIC BUSINESS (HALF-PAST TWELVE RULE).

RESOLUTION.

Standing Order relative thereto [18th February, 1879] read.

MR. MONK, in rising to call attention to the state of the Order Book, and to the great public inconvenience caused by the operation of the Half-past Twelve o'clock Rule, in enabling a single Member to impede legislation by stopping the progress of any Bill during the entire Session; and to move—

> "That the Standing Order of the 18th February 1879, known as the Half-past Twelve o'clock Rule, be now read, and that the following proviso be thereto added, 'Provided always, That this Rule shall not apply to the Motion for leave to bring in a Bill, nor to any Bill which has passed through Committee of the whole House,'"

said, that the Rule to which he referred was adopted in 1872, and after having been varied in 1874, so as not to apply to Bills which had passed through a Committee of the Whole House, was restored to its original form in the following year, and was so continued till 1879, when it became a Standing Order instead of a Sessional one. The Rule now was that, except a Money Bill, no Order of the Day or Notice of Motion should be taken after half-past 12 o'clock if there was an Amendment placed on the Paper against it. The noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) in 1879 pointed out that in the opinion of the Speaker this Rule, so far from shortening the Sittings of the House, had had the effect of prolonging them, and that it put into the hands of any Member the power to obstruct the Business of the House; and he (Mr. Monk) quite agreed with the noble Lord that a more convenient engine for obstructing the Business of the House could not be placed in the hands of any individual Member. It had been found that the unnecessary stringency of the Rule had the effect of obstructing Public Business after a comparatively early hour. As opposed Business could not be taken after half-past 12 o'clock, it was becoming the practice for hon. Members to place on the Paper Notices of opposition to almost all the Bills in the Order Book. Taking the Order Book of that day, he found that one hon. Member had blocked four Notices of Motion and 13 Orders of the Day; and that another opposed one Notice and four Orders. That, he contended, was an abuse of the Rules of the House, and only had the effect of obstructing Business. He had also known instances of an hon. Member blocking the progress of a Bill of which he knew nothing. He (Mr. Monk) had proposed in his original Notice that the names of five Members should be required to block a Bill; but he had been advised to adhere to his Motion as it stood on the Paper. He had no objection to some of the Amendments of which Notice had been given. What he protested against was the possibility of one Member obstructing the progress of a Bill by putting down his name to oppose it. He would remind the House that, under the operation of the Rule, five distinct opportunities presented themselves to an hon. Member of obstructing a Bill in its passage through the House. This was in no sense a private Member's question; indeed, it affected the Business of the Government infinitely more than that of private Members. It was a monstrous thing that the introduction of important Bills by Members of the Government should be stopped night after night by one Member. He hoped the House would agree that, when a measure had been read a second time and the principle affirmed, and when it had been carefully considered in Committee, the Member in charge of it was entitled to some facilities for carrying it through the remaining stages. It was proposed by one Amendment to restrict the application of the Resolution to Government Bills; but the Money Bills of the Government were exempted from the operation of the Rule; and as to other Bills, he did not consider that the Government should have any facilities in this respect that were denied to the Bills of private Members. They were the pioneers of legislation, and, though they were not often successful in carrying their Bills, they paved the way for the Government to take up the question, when the subject had been fully discussed; and he did not, therefore, see why private Members should be obstructed any more than Members of the Government. More than one Member of the Government had expressed his approval of the Motion. This was in no sense a Party question; it was simply a question whether the Business of the House should be facilitated, or whether it should continue to be stopped by a Standing Order two years old. There was a growing feeling among Members that the Rule had not operated to shorten their Sittings or to facilitate legislation. Private Members had secured very little time in the last two Sessions, and he was afraid that they would have very little at the remainder of the present Session.

There were 142 Bills on the Order Book, and he asked the House to give the Members in charge of them such facilities as they were fairly entitled to.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK seconded the Resolution.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That this Rule shall not apply to the Motion for leave to bring in a Bill, nor to any Bill which has passed through Committee of the whole House."—(*Mr. Monk.*)

SIR JOHN MOWBRAY said, that the hon. Member seemed to think that he gave force to his Motion by describing the Rule as a new Standing Order; but it had been a Sessional Resolution for nine years; it had never been made a Party question; it had been moved by himself as Chairman of the Standing Order Committee, and it had always been warmly supported by the hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn), and the hon. Baronet the Member for Chelsea (Sir Charles W. Dilke). The Rule was designed to enable legislation to be done in a sensible and business-like way, and to promote the health and comfort of Members. It was originally adopted on the recommendation of a Select Committee, in which the only question was as between 12 o'clock and half-past; the original draft of the Resolution was in the handwriting of the present Prime Minister; it was taken up by Mr. Bouverie, and it was carried in the House by a large majority of Members, painfully convinced of the necessity for some such regulation by the manner in which Business had been carried on since the time when Mr. Brotherton used to move the adjournment of the House at midnight, and the House, with good humour, consented to adjourn on the withdrawal of the Motion after some urgent Business had been transacted. Unfortunately, the good humour was not continued after 1869; the state of things became uncomfortable and intolerable, and hence the adoption of the Rule with reference solely to the health and comfort of Members, and the dignity of their proceedings. He hoped the House would continue a Rule which the last two Parliaments had shown to be necessary. It was quite true—and he was sorry for it—that the Rule had been abused. Such abuse was not contemplated, and he trusted that this debate would induce Members to refrain from abusing it. It might be provided that, as there must be the names of two Members on the back of a Bill, so it should require the names of two Members to block a Bill.

MR. HINDE PALMER said, he did not understand that the Motion was aimed at the abolition of the Standing Order. The question was rather whether it should not be in some way qualified, in order that the attempts by private Members to effect legislation of a useful character should not be rendered abortive by the caprice of a single Member. It was anomalous that one Member should be able to paralyze legislation in the way it was done under this Rule. When a Bill had been read a second time its principle might be regarded as confirmed by the House; and it certainly seemed a stretch of power on the part of an individual Member to block its further progress. The same argument applied with, perhaps, greater force to Bills which had passed the ordeal of a Select Committee. He would therefore move to amend the Motion of the hon. Member for Gloucester by inserting the words "a Select Committee or" before the word "Committee," the effect of which would be that the Order should not apply to any Bill that had passed through either a Select Committee or a Committee of the Whole House. He acknowledged that the Rule possessed the advantage of enabling private Members to know when they might be certain that their own Bills, if opposed, could not come on.

MR. SPEAKER ruled that the hon. Member could not now move his Amendment, as the hon. Member for the City of London (Mr. R. N. Fowler) had precedence.

MR. R. N. FOWLER, in moving to amend the Motion by inserting the word "Government" before the word "Bill," said, the Rule had been introduced because of the constant Motions for adjournment by which minorities had worn out the House. Those who did not recollect the old system had had a specimen in the opposition raised to the Bill of the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope) on a recent occasion. He believed that the half-past 12 o'clock Rule had on the whole worked well, and that if the Sittings of the House had been late it was not owing to its operation. The cases in which it had not worked well, in his opinion, were those of Government Bills; and it would be well, he thought, that the Government of the day should have the opportuity of introducing their measures without being blocked; for all subjects requiring legislation ought to be dealt with by them. His contention was that all a private Member could expect in the way of facilities for any Motion he had to make was that he should have an opportunity of placing his views before the House, and if they commended themselves to it, that he should bring in a Bill to carry them out. He did not think they should give him further facilities. He should, however, be quite willing that facilities should be given to the Government to bring in a Bill on the question raised, as he believed that no Government would propose to bring in a Bill that was not worthy the attention of the House; but he should oppose any such attempt as that proposed in the Motion of his hon. Friend to give private Members increased facilities for the introduction of their Bills.

Amendment proposed, to insert before the first word "Bill," the word "Government."—(*Mr. Robert Fowler.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'Government' be there inserted."

Mr. W. H. JAMES thought it would be a good thing if the half-past 12 o'clock Rule were done away with altogether, for he was of opinion that nothing could be more unreasonable than the power which the Rule gave to any private Member to obstruct measures which might be approved of in principle by the House. The House of Commons was not merely a place in which hon. Members could let off superfluous steam, it being the duty of private Members to initiate Bills and to carry them to a successful issue whenever possible. The performance of this duty was rendered almost impossible by the Rule which the House had laid down, and which constituted a most terrible weapon of obstruction. One great evil caused by the Rule was that it originated "Lobby legislation," all sorts of arrangements being made between private Members. Instead of transacting their business as practical legislators, within the House, they were obliged to resort to outside bargaining in order to get their measures through. An opponent of a Bill had been known to remove a blocking Notice in consideration of receiving two orders for seats in the Ladies' Gallery. He had placed an Amendment on the Paper proposing that no Bill should be blocked unless 10 Members gave Notice of opposition. That proposal being thought slightly unreasonable by some of his hon. Friends, he suggested that the number 10 should be reduced to three. He also thought that a Member, after giving Notice of opposition, ought to be in his place to move it.

Colonel MAKINS maintained that the Rule with which some hon. Members were dissatisfied had acted well, both in the interests of the procedure of the House and in the interests of the health and comfort of the Members. The object of the Motion was to forward private Members' legislation; but he ventured to think that if it were carried the effect would be to keep Members who were opposed to the passing of particular Private Bills in their places until 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning, and that without in the least advancing private Members' legislation, as adjournments would always be moved. While on that ground he objected to the Motion, he equally objected to the Amendment, because he thought the Government of the day ought to be allowed to press on their legislation when there was a necessity to do so. He hoped, however, the House would not agree to the Resolution. They had not all the iron constitution of the hon. Member for Gloucester, to whom the small hours of the morning seemed to be the busiest of the 24.

Mr. RYLANDS observed, that if the Motion were carried, the only mode independent Members would have of defeating a Bill to which they objected would be at 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning moving the adjournment of the debate or of the House. In his judgment, it was undesirable to give undue facilities for legislation to private Members. His strong impression was that they were already over-legislated for. While he was quite willing that hon. Gentlemen should have every reasonable facility for bringing forward their views, he was opposed to the giving of extraordinary facilities for the promotion of amateur legislation, or for compelling hon. Members to sit up night after night to criticize Private Bills. At the same time, he did not say that the present Rule had not been abused. It had been, he thought, in the case of the hon. Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar), and the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton), who seemed to block Bills whether they objected to them or not. Still, the more he examined the proposal of his hon. Friend the less he liked it. He would, however, be prepared to support a modification of the Resolution to the effect that two or three Members should agree in giving Notice to block Bills.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK believed that, upon the whole, the half-past 12 o'clock Rule had worked well. At the same time, he was of opinion that private Members' Bills should be allowed to be introduced after that hour, and should not be blocked at that time after going through Committee. He thought the proposal of the hon. Member for Gloucester (Mr. Monk) was a reasonable one, for it seemed very undesirable that when the House had accepted the principle of a Bill, and considered all the clauses, it should be in the power of a single Member practically to veto the Bill.

MR. NEWDEGATE opposed the Motion, on the ground that it would not be possible for the senior Members of the House to continue their services to the House if they were compelled to remain in the House until 3 or 4 o'clock in the morning. He was diametrically opposed to the first part of the proposal of the hon. Member for Gloucester, that the introduction of Bills should not be opposed, and hoped that the House would not, without mature consideration, depart from a Rule which was framed in the interests of independent Members, and had been found to be consistent with efficiency in the conduct of Business. After the experience of last Session, he wished to know whether it was desirable or reasonable to ask the House to sit for more hours than it did under the present Rule?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Sir, as has been already stated, this question has never been treated hitherto as a Party one, neither is it one in which the Government are peculiarly interested; and it appears to me that we should do well to continue to treat it in the same spirit and in the same way as it has been treated on former occasions by both sides of the House. The subject is eminently one for the determination of the House, and to be decided by the House on a consideration of that which is best suited for its own convenience, and that which will conduce most to the proper conduct of its own Business. The Government, no doubt, are interested in the question; but they are interested in a different way from that in which private Members are interested in it. In some respects they are more interested than private Members, and in other respects they are less interested. They are more interested because they introduce a greater amount of legislation than that which is introduced by private Members; but, on the other hand, they are less interested, because they have a greater command of the time of the House, and it is more competent for them, from time to time, to avail themselves of the opportunity of placing their Bills in a position where they are not susceptible of being blocked by opposition and by the operation of the half-past 12 o'clock Rule, a power which private Members do not possess. Therefore, the Government, though interested, are interested in a different way from private Members. I propose, however, to treat the question as one affecting mainly private Members, and not the Government. There can be no doubt, as has already been pointed out, that a considerable abuse exists in the use which has been made of the Rule. It certainly was not intended that Bills which have the approval of the great majority of the House, or which, at all events, are supposed to receive the support of the great majority of the House, and which the House generally is anxious to discuss, should absolutely be prevented from being discussed at all, at the will of a small number of Members, or, perhaps, even of one Member only. No doubt, that has been a great abuse. On the other hand, I must point out that the Rule was introduced in the interests of the great body of hon. Members, for the purpose of protecting them against an evil of another kind. If no such Rule existed, it was possible for a persevering Member, by persistently putting down his Bill night after night, to exhaust the patience of those who were opposed to him, and, perhaps, at some advanced hour of the morning, when nobody was expecting it, he found himself able to slip it through. Or, if he did not do that, it was possible for him to put a considerable number of Members to great inconvenience by compelling them to sit up, night after night, for the purpose of opposing a Bill which, after all, might never be brought forward. On the whole, I believe the Rule has worked well, that it has been for the convenience of the House, and that the House would not be willing to part with it. Some very high authorities, who were examined before the Committee of 1878, expressed their opinion that the Rule had worked satisfactorily. I come, then, to the question of limitation proposed by my hon. Friend the Member for Gloucester (Mr. Monk). My hon. Friend is of opinion that it is expedient some limitation should be placed upon the operation of the Rule; and I must say that it does appear to me the limitations proposed by my hon. Friend are reasonable. As to the limitation with regard to Bills that have passed through Committee, I have referred to what took place in this House in 1874. I find that the limitation which my hon. Friend now suggests was introduced then, and that it was supported by the then Leader of the House (Mr. Disraeli). The Rule in that year was passed with this particular limitation; but in the next year it was passed without it. Mr. Disraeli, on that occasion, pointed out that it had never come into operation in regard to the Committee stage of a Bill, because no Bill against which a blocking Notice had been placed ever reached a Committee. I am afraid that that would be so now, and I cannot hold out to my hon. Friend any hope that if the House agrees to his proposal it will be of material assistance to private Members. But it does appear to me that both limitations are reasonable in themselves. In regard to the other limitation, I think it is somewhat invidious that one hon. Member should be able to refuse to another hon. Member the power of showing to the House what is the nature of the legislation he proposes. If that legislation is of such a character as to be obviously objectionable, he would be able to induce the House to reject it; but I do not see why it should be practically rejected without the House having even an opportunity of seeing in what way the hon. Member who proposes legislation intends to deal with the question he is desirous of legislating upon. It would be far better that an hon. Member who objects should be required to get up in his place and oppose the introduction of a measure, and that the Rule should not be allowed to operate in excluding a Member from bringing forward a Motion for leave to bring in a Bill. As I have said, the other limitation is also reasonable, because when a Bill stands for Committee it is obvious that, at all events, opportunities have been afforded for discussing it in all its previous stages, and it is only reasonable to suppose that such a Bill has met with a considerable amount of support. If, therefore, my hon. Friend goes to a division I shall be disposed to support him in the proposition he makes, although I cannot hold out any hope to him that it would tend very greatly to facilitate legislation by private Members. As to the Amendments which have been suggested, I will only say a word. The hon. Member for the City of London (Mr. R. N. Fowler) proposes that the limitation should be confined to Bills introduced by the Government. Although I ought to be grateful to my hon. Friend for that suggestion, it is one which I am not disposed to adopt, because I think it would make an invidious exception. As I have said before, although the Government undertake more legislation than private Members, yet, on the other hand, they have more time at their disposal; and I do not think the House would be inclined to give them further exceptional facilities over independent Members. The Amendment of my hon. Friend the Member for Gateshead (Mr. W. H. James) is, I have no doubt, aimed at the protection of the House against a very great abuse—that is to say, one Member blocking a Bill. I am not altogether disposed to support my hon. Friend in that Amendment; it would introduce an entirely new principle, for we have never yet recognized the principle of requiring any particular course of opposition in this House to have the sanction and support of two or three, or five, or 10 Members. And I doubt, further, whether, if adopted, the Amendment would have any practical effect. A Member desirous of blocking a Bill would generally find very little difficulty in getting two or three, or even 10 Members to support him. I therefore think that no substantial advantage would be gained by accepting the Amendment of my hon. Friend. If the House is inclined to adopt the limitations suggested by my hon. Friend the Member for Gloucester, I would recommend it to be satisfied with them at present, and ascertain what the effect of their operation will be before consenting to go further. For my own part, I shall certainly support what appears to me to be a reasonable limitation of a very popular Rule.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he was sorry that the noble Marquess had not followed up his very excellent opening observations to their legitimate conclusion. He (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) intended to vote against the original proposal and against all the Amendments which had been placed on the Paper in reference to it, because he was of opinion that the original proposition of the hon. Member for Gloucester (Mr. Monk) and all the Amendments proceeded altogether in a wrong direction. The reform of the House was a reform which should begin, not at midnight, but at a very much earlier hour. The whole difficulty of the position in which Parliament found itself placed was the creation of two circumstances, neither of which it suited the convenience of Parliament to face. The first cause of the block in Parliament was that Parliament had too much to do, and the second cause was that Parliament did not meet at the proper time of day. If any person with a turn for satirical description were to give a life-like chronicle of the daily proceedings of the House, such a description would almost annihilate the plea of the English people on behalf of the expediency of Parliamentary Government. What was usually the characteristic formula of the proceedings of the House? At 10 minutes to 4 o'clock Mr. Speaker took the Chair, and in order to secure a seat a fit of devotion seized hon. Members. But he always observed that while private Members were constant in their attendance at the hour of devotion, those upon whom the duty of managing the affairs of the country devolved were always absent at prayer time, their seats being secured by usage. Then, after prayers, occurred a dreary void, which was filled up in a manner that was utterly unknown to many Members of the House. He had a vague idea that some mumbling went on between some person who for the time being represented the Government on the Treasury Bench, and Mr. Speaker got up several times in the course of as many minutes, and he believed that a Railway Bill passed for some place, and a Gas Bill for some other place. That, however, was all imagination on his part, and must be imagination on the part of most other Members. In that way the first half-hour and 10 minutes were spent in prayers, at which Ministers did not attend, and in Private Business to which nobody listened. At half-past 4 there came a great rush of the hardy sons of legislative toil, who gathered in a mass to devote all their energies and enthusiasm to the discharge of the Business of the country. But by half-past 5 o'clock, when every hon. Member had asked a question about the affairs of his parish vestry, or about the interests of his constituents, who were rather pressing in their epistolatory demands upon his attention—when hon. Members had made that daily appearance which was necessary in order to keep their names before the public and before their constituents—half-past 5 o'clock was reached. Now, he did not think there was an hon. Member in that House who was not of opinion that someone daily asked a Question which need not have been asked. Of course, hon. Members were not so critical in regard to the Questions they asked themselves; but that was merely human nature. Then, from half-past 5 to 7 o'clock, the House was in full working order—that was to say, the earnest desire for work in that House was so great that they were willing to be amused by some rattling speaker for about an hour. And when it came to 7 o'clock the House was a perfect void; and, so far as the progress of legislation for the country was concerned, the House might to all intents be adjourned. This state of things lasted from 7 until 9 o'clock. [An hon. MEMBER: Or 10 o'clock.] Well, he was not intimately acquainted with the usages of London society, and accordingly he would accept the correction and say 10 o'clock. But he would ask of what possible use could it be for a Member to get up and address a House consisting of Mr. Speaker, who, he was afraid, could not always be an attentive listener, and some two or three other Members? The House of Commons was a deliberative Assembly. The theory was that the speeches of hon.

Members were addressed to the consideration of the House; but speeches could not be addressed to the consideration of a House which did not exist, and accordingly the speeches which were made between 7 and 10 o'clock were under the suspicion that they were meant, not for the hearing and deliberation of the House, but for the consideration of the outside public. He would put it to the House whether, if hon. Members were desirous of addressing their constituents, they could not do so just as well by writing letters to the newspapers, or by earning a few guineas by contributing to the magazines, instead of keeping up the farce of a deliberative Assembly when all the deliberators were dining? At 10 o'clock the House reassembled, and again it was most eager for work—as eager for work as gentlemen usually were who had just partaken of dinner and its accompaniments. But he would put it to any man who took a serious view of the Business of the House whether the interval between 7 and 10 spent in dining was the best preparation for the calm and mature, and grave and cool consideration of the momentous questions with which the House had to deal. He had ventured, when addressing the working classes on this question, to say that the deliberations of Parliament concerning the destinies and well-being of millions existing and to come, were conducted in a manner, and at a time, when no carpenter would be allowed to perform a job for which he was paid 30*s.* a-week. He ventured to think that all this pointed a moral, and the moral was this—that at present the people of England, the people of Scotland, and the people of Ireland were almost entirely unrepresented in that so-called representative Assembly. The House was representative of the aristocracy, of the squirarchy, and of the capitalists; but it was in no sense of the word representative of the toiling masses of the English, Scotch, and Irish people. [*Cries of* "Question!"] He believed that he was speaking to the Question.

Mr. SPEAKER: I must remind the hon. Member that the Question before the House is a Motion for the amendment of the Standing Order in regard to Public Business.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he had been endeavouring to show that the present hours of the House might be suited to the wealthy, but that they were not suited to the toiling classes of the country. By way of enforcing that argument, he was attempting to show how those hours suited the House, because it was really not a representative Assembly. The proposals of the hon. Member for Gloucester, of the hon. Member for Gateshead, and of the other hon. Members who had placed Amendments on the Paper, proceeded altogether in a wrong direction, because the reform of the House which was really necessary was to be sought not in facilitating legislation after midnight, but in the House meeting at 12 o'clock in the day, and transacting the Business of the country in the grave and sober manner in which it ought to be transacted.

Mr. DENIS O'CONOR desired to say a few words on the Motion which had been presented to the House. He had always been a strong supporter of the half-past 12 o'clock Rule; and if he thought that his hon. Friend the Member for Gloucester (Mr. Monk) in any way desired to do away with that Rule he would be the last man in that House to support him. But he did not consider that the proposition of his hon. Friend in any way affected the principle of the half-past 12 Rule. In the first place, when the half-past 12 Rule was introduced, there was not the slightest idea that it would ever be applied to the introduction of a Bill, or would operate in preventing a discussion from being taken on a first reading. Therefore, when it was passed, it was never contemplated that through its means Bills would be prevented from being even introduced into the House at all. But what had been the result? At first the introduction of a Bill was occasionally opposed, and the consequence of the existence of the half-past 12 Rule was that it was prevented from being brought in. But this year they had witnessed the establishment of an entirely new state of things. It had become almost the invariable rule to put down a blocking Notice against the introduction of Bills, and the consequence was that a great number of valuable measures had been prevented from being submitted to the House at all. There was another point to which he wished to call the attention of the House. As a general rule, the only chance a private Member had of getting a day for the discussion of a Bill was by introducing it in the early part of the Session. It generally happened that, after the first day of the Session, every Wednesday until the end of the Session was filled up. According to the ordinary practice of the House, hon. Members balloted on the first day of the Session for the opportunity of bringing forward their Bills. The Bills themselves were usually introduced on the second day of the Session. It generally happened that the debate on the Address lasted until 12 or half-past; and if any hon. Member chose to place a blocking Notice on the Paper no Bill could be introduced on that second day. What had happened in this very Session? The hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) blocked an important Bill relating to Irish Business, which the Irish Members generally supported—namely, the Bill of the hon. and learned Member for Kildare (Mr. Meldon) dealing with the question of the Irish franchise. It was blocked on the first day of the Session. The Irish Members were most anxious to have it discussed; but the blocking Notice of the hon. and learned Member for Bridport stood in the way, and it could not be introduced, while other Bills of far less importance obtained precedence over it. What would be the result? Hon. Members who had Bills down for introduction on the second day of the Session, if they found their measures were going to be blocked, would in self-defence block other Bills, so as to put themselves on a level with other Members. The introduction of all Bills would, consequently, be postponed from day to day, and hon. Members who had placed their names on the back of Bills would be obliged to wait in the House from day to day, in order to get a chance of introducing them. That was the result which would inevitably follow if the proposal of the hon. Member for Gloucester was not adopted. He therefore thought it would be to the advantage of all private Members that they should pass the Resolution of his hon. Friend, excluding the stage of the introduction of a Bill from the operation of the half-past 12 o'clock Rule. The second part of the Resolution related to Bills which had passed through a Committee of the House. That Rule, as had already been stated by the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington), was quite familiar to the House, because it had already been in force for one Session. The hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn), whom he was glad to see in his place, had been quoted by the Chairman of the Standing Order Committee as a great supporter of the half-past 12 Rule; but, if he were not mistaken, it was on the Motion of that hon. Member that the original Resolution relating to Bills which had passed through Committee was adopted. Nobody, therefore, could say that the adoption of the second part of the Resolution of the hon. Member for Gloucester would be in any way hostile to the working of the half-past 12 o'clock Rule. Under these circumstances, he (Mr. D. O'Conor) was prepared to vote for both of the proposals of the hon. Member for Gloucester.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he did not rise to speak to the question at issue, but in a few words to do all he could to remove a misunderstanding which, owing to pure accident, had occurred in connection with this Motion, and which had acted, to a certain extent, upon a number of hon. Gentlemen. It was this—that they on that side of the House had been given to understand that the Government intended to support the Rule as it stood. He would not, of course, state that fact if he had not the authority of the noble Lord opposite (Lord Richard Grosvenor) for so doing; but the result had been that many hon. Members and right hon. Gentlemen were absent, who would have been present had the accidental misunderstanding in question not arisen. It now appeared that the Government were inclined to support the proposition of his hon. Friend the Member for Gloucester (Mr. Monk); he thought that the most proper course would be to adjourn the debate. He threw out this suggestion in perfect good faith, because it was quite clear that, whatever conclusion might be arrived at, it would hardly be satisfactory to the House, and the matter would have to be argued again.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Sir R. Assheton Cross.*)

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Sir, on the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire that a number of his Friends had left the House in consequence of the communication made to them, it is, of course, impossible for Her Majesty's

Government to oppose the Motion for adjournment. I regret extremely that there should have been any misunderstanding of the nature alluded to by the right hon. Gentleman. Until a short time before the House met, I was not aware that my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister would not be able to be present. I have indicated my opinion generally that the Rule ought to be supported; but I certainly have no intention of precluding the consideration of the Amendment proposed by my hon. Friend the Member for Gloucester. Under the circumstances, I feel we cannot do otherwise than assent to the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. ANDERSON said, that he and several hon. Members on that side of the House were rather astonished at the turn which the debate had taken. Had this been a Government Motion one could have understood the position; but as it was the Motion of a private Member, surely the right way would have been to consult with the hon. Member in charge of it, and then there could have been no misunderstanding whatever. The misunderstanding which had arisen was certainly owing to no fault on the part of his hon. Friend the Member for Gloucester, but to something that had occurred on the Front Bench. Surely, as the noble Marquess had admitted there was some mistake, hon. Members were entitled to ask for an assurance that the debate should be resumed during the Session, because if an adjournment took place, or if the Motion had to be balloted for over and over again, it was clear that it would be shelved altogether. He trusted, therefore, that Her Majesty's Government would promise some facilities for the resumption of the debate.

MR. MONK thought it right to remind the House that this Motion had been upon the Notice Paper for four weeks. The noble Lord described by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire as the "Whip" had not consulted him, nor had he (Mr. Monk) consulted the Government upon this matter. He had seen the noble Lord at 10 o'clock that evening, who informed him that he thought the Government would oppose the Motion. The question, however, was the course to be pursued under the circumstances. If he assented to the adjournment of the debate, he supposed the Motion would become an Order of the Day; but it would be very low on the list, and there would be little probability of his being able to bring it forward again during the Session. After the speeches made on both sides of the House, and the remarks contributed by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross), he felt there must be a desire on the part of the House that the question should be put to the vote at no distant day. For that reason he appealed to the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India to give facilities for the question to be brought to an issue at an early period. If the noble Lord would accede to this proposal, he would at once assent to the Motion for the adjournment.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, the proceedings appeared to him, on the whole, to be somewhat novel. It would seem that there was a system by which the Business of the House was, to a certain extent, conducted and settled by private communications behind the Chair of Mr. Speaker. On the present occasion, when a matter concerning the whole House was brought forward, the noble Lord the Secretary to the Treasury (Lord Richard Grosvenor), without consulting the hon. Member whose Motion was before the House, had put himself in communication with hon. Members sitting on the Front Opposition Bench, and informed them that the Government intended to oppose the Motion. That information was disseminated amongst Gentlemen sitting on and behind the Front Opposition Bench; but those occupying seats below the Gangway were not honoured with any communication upon the subject. In his opinion, nothing was more calculated to detract from the dignity of Parliamentary proceedings than the system to which he called attention. He appealed to the noble Lord the Secretary to the Treasury that, in future, he would be good enough to communicate to hon. Members below the Gangway, who did not belong to either the Conservative or Liberal Party, as well as to other hon. Members, the course which the Government intended to pursue with regard to any question in which the whole House was concerned. He would also ask the noble Lord to ascertain that the communications which, in future, he might make to hon. Members sitting on that side of the House were a little more reliable than that which had been made in the course of the evening.

Mr. DILLWYN understood that the Government had some difficulty in continuing the debate, but failed to see why they should compromise the rest of the House. Unless some satisfactory arrangement could be arrived at by which the hon. Member for Gloucester should have an opportunity of proceeding with his Motion, which was one of great importance to all sections of the House, he thought they ought to proceed to a division.

Mr. BRIGGS observed, that the principal culprit was the hon. and learned Member who represented Bridport (Mr. Warton), a borough which, according to the last Return of the Registrar General, had, he believed, receded to the position of a village. That hon. and learned Member had blocking Notices upon the Paper against 13 Orders of the Day and four Motions. If he understood the Motion of the hon. Member for Gloucester aright, it did not seek the abolition, but the modification, of the Standing Order, and the result of its rejection appeared to him would be that those hon. Members who were refused the power of introducing Bills would be obliged to put down Motions on going into Committee of Supply. The Business of the House would certainly not be facilitated by forbidding hon. Members to have their Bills printed. He trusted the discussion would be allowed to proceed without any further complications.

Sir JOHN LUBBOCK said, on a former occasion he had given way on a Motion for the second reading of a Bill, which, at the time,.there was no doubt would have been carried, in deference to the wish of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire. He was afterwards astonished to find that the hon. and learned Member for Bridport had availed himself of the opportunity for blocking the Bill, and he (Sir John Lubbock) had not since been able to bring it again before the House. He trusted, therefore, that if the hon. Member for Gloucester now gave way he would not be prevented from bringing forward the question on a future evening. Even under those circumstances the result of the adjournment would be most unsatisfactory. They had had an interesting discussion, and it appeared to him that the majority of hon. Members present were distinctly in favour of the Motion of his hon. Friend; when, however, the question was again brought forward, it would have to be decided by hon. Members who had not heard the arguments which had been advanced.

Mr. CALLAN pointed out that out of seven Notices which he had placed upon the Paper four had been blocked by the hon. and learned Member for Bridport. He could not complain of the hon. and learned Member exercising his discretion in a matter of the kind, because he was aware that had he not given Notice of opposition in two cases it would have been given by the junior Government Whip. The fact, also, that the hon. Member had removed those blocking Notices at the request of the Government Whip indicated a peculiar mixing up of parties. The hon. and learned Member for Bridport having simply performed his office at the suggestion of others, he did not think the whole blame should be accumulated upon him.

Mr. HEALY pointed out that no Member of the Irish Party had blocked any Bill by means of the half-past 12 o'clock Rule. He suggested that the hon. and learned Member for Bridport should be "named" by Mr. Speaker on the ground that by putting down blocking Motions he had been guilty of obstruction.

Sir JOHN MOWBRAY said, it was to be regretted that a mistake had arisen. It had, however, been pointed out by the right hon. Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross), and dealt with in an honourable way. Everyone on that side of the House recognized the manner in which the noble Marquess opposite always met them in matters of the kind. The Motion was one which, if an adjournment were assented to by the hon. Member for Gloucester (Mr. Monk), should, undoubtedly, be brought again before the House at an early date.

Mr. HINDE PALMER said, it did not rest alone with the Government to guarantee that an opportunity should be afforded for the consideration of this Resolution. It appeared to him some assurance should be given by hon. Gentlemen opposite that nothing like a block or obstruction should proceed from their quarter of the House. It was very proper and reasonable to ask that facilities should be afforded for the bringing forward of this Resolution on an early occasion.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER said, the blocking Notice which stood in his name was favourable to Her Majesty's Government, and while that Notice stood he did not apprehend there could be a new Notice.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Debate *adjourned* till *Thursday.*

CUSTOMS (OUTPORT OFFICERS).

RESOLUTION.

Mr. NORWOOD, in rising to move—

> "That the disadvantageous position in which Customs Out-door Officers at the outports are placed, in respect of salary, as compared with Customs Officers of the same rank, and performing the same duties, at London and Liverpool, is unjust to those officers and prejudicial to the public service,"

said, the question was a very simple one, and on that account he need not detain the House more than a few minutes. The grievance under which the Customs outport officers — a very meritorious class of public servants—laboured was simply this, that whereas they had to undergo the same competitive examination and the same conditions with regard to age, and had to perform identically the same duties as those officers of the same rank stationed at London and Liverpool, it so happened that, in pursuance of an old and anomalous rule, they received salaries amounting to 20 or 30 per cent less than those officers at London and Liverpool. To show the absurdity and injustice of the rule, he might state that in every port of the United Kingdom, save London and Liverpool, the men of the second class commenced duties at a salary of £55 a-year, and increased to £65. In London and Liverpool, however, the men of the same rank commenced at £75 a-year and increased to £85. The disproportion existed in the other classes. He did not know what reason could be adduced for this anomaly; and he was anxious to hear what the Secretary to the Treasury would have to say on the subject. Some 50 years ago there might have been a reason for the difference; but the facility of communication had now equalized prices of necessaries of life, and now the men stationed at Glasgow, Belfast, Hull, or Bristol, were at the same expense as the officers living in London and Liverpool. Before he undertook to bring this question before the House he made inquiry on this point, and he had found that the men really found that London was the cheapest place to live in. Though house rent was high in London, the necessaries of life might be obtained more cheaply than in almost any of our large towns. But there was another anomaly to which the outport officers at the smaller ports were exposed, and that was in reference to promotion. When a man once entered this service as a second-class man, he was very likely to die a second-class man. There was no such distinction in any other branch of Her Majesty's Service. He would be met, no doubt, with the taunt from the Treasury Bench that it was extremely improper for a private Menber to bring forward such a Motion as the present. He could not agree with this view. It was only within the last few years that the Revenue officers had obtained the franchise; they had a fair case for the consideration of Government and Parliament; and it was very right that a Member particularly concerned in their well-being should bring forward their case. The number of outport officers in Great Britain and Ireland was about 2,100. Those men stationed in London and Liverpool were properly remunerated; but it was absurd to suppose that the men in charge of Her Majesty's Revenue at Glasgow, Bristol, Hull, Belfast, and other places, could maintain a decent position upon the magnificent salary of £55, with an increment at the rate of £1 per annum. The total amount of revenue which passed through the hands of these officials was £23,500,000 a-year. The cost of the Customs Establishment was £800,000; and the concession he sought might, he believed, be made at an expense to the country of not more than £15,000 a-year. He put it to the Government and to his noble Friend who would answer him, why the men stationed at Glasgow, at Bristol, at Hull, at Belfast, at Newcastle, at Leith, or at Greenock, and performing precisely the same duties as those officers in London and Liverpool, should be remunerated in this paltry and unequal manner? He called upon the Government to give an assurance that the case of these poor men should be considered. He had no doubt that the old argument would be repeated that, notwithstanding the wretched pittance given to the outport officers, they had plenty of candidates for the position, and why should the salary be increased? That was scarcely a business-like view to take of the matter. A man should be fairly remunerated for his labour; and he (Mr. Norwood) ventured once more to say that it did appear a monstrous anomaly that there should be a difference, amounting to between 20 and 30 per cent, in the pay of men simply because the poorer paid men happened to be stationed at other ports than London or Liverpool.

MR. HENEAGE seconded the Motion. The figures and facts of the case could not be denied, and the only reason why the anomaly complained of was allowed to exist was that there was an old rule bearing on the point. It might be argued that if persons could be found to perform the duties of Customs officers at the outports for the salaries now prevailing, so could men be found to do the same work in London and Liverpool on the same terms; and, therefore, it was the duty of the Government, in the interest of the public purse, to cut down the salaries of the officers stationed at London and Liverpool rather than increase the remuneration of the officers at the outports. He was sure no one in the House would wish to see the salaries cut down, when they were cut down enough already. In his opinion, the same class of men, wherever stationed, should be paid at one uniform ratio.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the disadvantageous position in which Customs Out-door Officers at the Outports are placed, in respect of salary, as compared with Customs Officers of the same rank, and performing the same duties, at London and Liverpool, is unjust to those officers, and prejudicial to the public service."—(*Mr. Norwood.*)

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, as one who had been in the Civil Service, he wished, on behalf of the servants in every branch of that Service, to express their sense of the position of these unfortunate men. He was personally acquainted with men in almost every branch of the Civil Service, and from all he had heard the expression of the one sentiment that the condition of the outport Customs officers was simply infamous. Not only with regard to pay and promotion were they unfairly dealt with—he could assure the House that all questions of Departmental re-organization were pretty certain to be settled in favour of the men at head-quarters and opposed to the interests of the outport officers. Having been at head-quarters himself, and having witnessed several re-organizations of Departments, he was perfectly convinced that on each occasion such re-organization was carried out—first of all, in the interest of the men at head-quarters; secondly, in the interest of the Public Service; and never in the interest of the men at the out-stations. If the House wanted to see justice done, he would urge upon them to take the matter in hand themselves, because it was needless to rely upon the heads of Departments in London.

DR. LYONS said, it must be remembered that the officers in question held very responsible positions, and were exposed to great temptations. It was, therefore, of the greatest consequence that they should be men of high moral character. At present they were most inadequately remunerated, and there was no reason why they should continue to be so invidiously treated as they were now. The total number of officers to be considered was, in round figures, close on 1,100, located at 130 different outports in the United Kingdom, the principal of which were Dublin, Glasgow, Bristol, Hull, &c. The average salary of all these officers was only £65. In the first class, about three-fifths of the officers had served for periods varying from 25 to 47 years, and with that number the prospects of promotion were virtually nothing more than the attainment of the maximum salary of £85 per annum. In the second, two-thirds of the officers had not yet attained to even the average salary of their class; whilst the field open for their promotion was so very limited—the proportion of vacancies to be competed for in the superior grades to the number of officers eligible being about one to eight—that their prospects in the Service were perfectly deplorable. By contrasting the scale of remuneration of governing officers of the same grade at London and Liverpool—equalization with which was sought as the main element of redress at present—they would be enabled to estimate approximately the aggregate additional public expenditure which would be entailed by according to outport out-door officers the boon they sought. The London and Liverpool officers, 1,000 in number, had an average of £84; the outport officers, 1,100 in number, an average of only £65—difference, £19. It might be mentioned that about 60 of the outport officers received £10 per annum additional for the performance of duties pertaining to the superior officers, while 240 were called upon for the occasional performance of similar superior duties without receiving any remuneration whatever therefor. For all these reasons, he begged most strongly to recommend the case of these officers to the consideration of the House. The contention that a higher salary was called for by the greater expense and exigencies of London life, could not, he was informed, be sustained for one moment, as it was believed that for persons of a certain grade of life, the scale of living in London was more varied, more abundant, and very much cheaper than at the outports; while the facilities for the education of children were infinitely greater. He would not add anything to what had been so well said as to the vast revenue to the State of which these officers were the collectors, and on whose zeal, energy, and integrity the country had to place such large dependence.

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH hoped the House would carefully consider what would be the effect of the adoption of this Resolution. On general grounds there were serious objections to a Motion of this character. When the House took upon itself the responsibility of proposing additional expenditure, and of dealing with a great Public Service, it undertook the functions of the Executive, and relieved the Government from responsibility for the expenditure so incurred. He would venture, also, respectfully to put before the House another consideration which should have some weight. The discipline of the Public Service was an important consideration, and he could not disguise from himself the fact that the constant appeals which had been made to this House by members of the Civil Service since they had been enfranchised had largely interfered with that discipline. ["No, no!"] Well, he was speaking about that of which he knew something, and he dealt with the question with a due sense of responsibity. The men in the Civil Service no longer felt that it was to the heads of their Departments that they must mainly look for the redress of any grievance they supposed to exist—they felt, instead, that they must look to their Representatives in Parliament. As he had said, the question was not one which he considered was desirable, with the imperfect knowledge at its command, that the House should deal with; but if it were decided otherwise, it should be referred to a Select Committee, which would have the power of taking evidence and going fully into detail. Parliament had deliberately decided that Civil Service officials should be enfranchised; and it was said that, such being the case, there was nothing more natural than that they should press their claims upon the attention of their Representatives, and, through those Gentlemen, upon the attention of Parliament. If the House had known how the Civil Service servants would use their votes, and had known what would take place, they would have thought twice ere they conferred the enfranchisement. The members of the Civil Service were enfranchised that they might discharge their ordinary duties as citizens, and not to enable them to promote their own special and private interests. If this was the case as a general principle, there were other reasons why, in this particular instance, the House should hesitate before passing this Resolution. It was most undesirable that there should be constant re-arrangement and re-organization of the Civil Service Establishments. The whole Customs Establishment had been most carefully re-organized, not by the present, but by the late, Government; and in the year 1876, these very men who were now complaining had their position improved. Instead of a quinquennial increase of salary, the increments were made annual, which was a decided and important improvement of their position.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: What advance was made?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH: Before, they had to wait five years for an increase; but, by the new arrangement, they received an increase at the end of the first year, and at the end of every succeeding year.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: What was the amount?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH replied, that the increase was £1 annually. In addition to this boon, they were also given their uniform free of charge, instead of having to provide it for themselves as they had hitherto done. Well, although, no doubt, these men were of high character, and were very useful, the duties they had to perform were not of a very highly intellectual order.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: They have to pass Civil Service examinations. ["Order!"]

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, the position they held was such as required character and honesty, but no unusual amount of intelligence, and, from the statement which had been made to the House, it was clear that these engagements were very much sought after. He would read the statistics for three last examinations, which would give some idea of the number of candidates who offered themselves for the vacancies as they occurred. In August, 1880, there were 35 vacancies and 401 candidates; in November of the same year there were 50 vacancies and 532 candidates; and in February, 1881, there were 50 vacancies and 533 candidates. And he was told that not only were there these large number of candidates, but that the men who applied for the situations were perfectly well fitted for the position, and did their duty well and ably. It had been said that the rule under which the men were paid was an old one, and had not been considered by him. At any rate, it had been most carefully considered by his Predecessors; and in 1879 a question was put to the hon. Member then in Office by an hon. Friend behind him very similar to that which had been put this evening, and the reply was given that so far from it being the fact that these men had exactly the same duties to perform in the outports as in Liverpool and London, the duties in those large places were more arduous and responsible than in the outports. It was stated, at the same time, as an undoubted fact, that the cost of living at the outports was less than in Liverpool and London. The men who competed for the situations were all of the same class, so that if the salaries were made quite uniform what state of things should we have? Why, as the men who were most successful in the competition would, naturally, have a choice of places, they—the best men—would select the places where the work was the lightest and the cost of living the lowest. The most capable men would go to the outports, where the duties were least onerous and responsible. It, therefore, appeared to him that there was abundant reason why the salaries of the officers at the outports should be lower than those of the officers in London and Liverpool. For the reasons he had given, he trusted the House would not accept the Resolution.

Colonel MAKINS would not detain the House many minutes; but, as he knew there was a very strong feeling amongt these officers at the Essex ports on this question, he trusted he might be allowed to say a word or two. He quite admitted that at one time there was a difference in the cost of living in London and in the country; but this had very much altered during late years, owing to the increase of means of communication and other causes, and at the present time the position of the outport officers was really much worse, in a pecuniary point of view, than that of the officers residing in London or Liverpool. Though the former might not have to pay so much for their lodgings, yet their living —food, coal, and other items—cost them quite as much, probably more; and they were at this disadvantage, that their duties carried them over a much larger area of ground, the consequence being that they were more often from home, and were put to greater expense. He was quite sure there was no just reason why the present invidious distinction amongst the officers should be maintained, and he, therefore, hoped the Government would think better of it and accept the Resolution.

Mr. BARRAN would not, at this very late hour (1.10 a.m.), occupy the time of the House for any length of time; but he could not refrain from rising to say that the remarks which had fallen from the noble Lord were such as ought to carry considerable weight with the House—he referred to what had fallen from the noble Lord with reference to the extension of the franchise to the Custom House officials. But, whilst he admitted that there was some little danger in the exercise of the privilege of appealing to this House on the part of Government officers when they wished to have their grievances redressed, there was also the other side of the question; and the question might be asked, "Where are they to appeal to, and to whom, if they are not to appeal to this House?" The noble Lord had stated that the claims of these men had been considered within the last few years; but everyone knew that the claims of all working men had been considered in this country within the last few years, and that there were very few working men in the Kingdom who had had so little remuneration for so responsible a duty as these men whose claims the House were now considering. Why, the men who entered this Service entered it at a lower wage than was paid to the common bricklayer's labourer! The common bricklayer's labourer was now receiving 23*s.*; but these men in Her Majesty's Service, who had to undergo an educational examination before they obtained employment, who were tested as to their general fitness, and not only whose intelligence but whose characters were examined into to the fullest extent, entered into the Service at even a lower wage than the lowest labourers we had in connection with the building trade. He should like to suggest to his noble Friend the propriety of looking at this question from a commercial point of view. He was quite sure that whilst we paid men occupying important positions of this kind a low wage, such as they were now receiving, we should never secure a rendering of service such as we ought to have in connection with this important Department of the Government. So long as we paid the men such a very low wage we should have very inadequate service. And there was just another feature in connection with this question which the noble Lord would do well to take notice of, and that was that men placed in a position, not only of responsibility, but of great temptation, ought to be rewarded for their labour, at any rate, equal to the men of the same class of intelligence and of general aptitude for business occupied in other walks of life. He hoped the noble Lord would re-consider the question, and would support the Motion of his hon. Friend.

Mr. CARBUTT (who was received with *cries of* "Divide!") said, he claimed the indulgence of the House. He did not often trouble it, and if it would give him a few minutes he should be obliged. Though he belonged to the Party whose watchword was "retrenchment," he should certainly support the hon. Member for Hull (Mr. Norwood); and he did so on this ground—that whenever the Government re-organized any Department, they began by raising the salaries of all those near the heads. They began by raising the salaries of the head men, and the salaries of the under men were very often never raised at all. This was done in the case of the Army which was now undergoing re-organization. Some of the officers were to be placed in a better position; but the unfortunate private soldier was to get no increase of pay. The wages of working men in the various branches of industry in the country had been raised; but the out-door Customs officials had not received that increase to which they would have been entitled had they been in any other service but that of Her Majesty. He had been an employer of labour himself; consequently, he knew how necessary a fair increase of wages was to make the men contented. The duties of these Customs officers at the outports were somewhat similar to the duties of policemen. As to the policemen in our towns, one-half of whose wages was paid by the country and the other by the local authorities, they were not required to have such high educational acquirements as the Customs officers, yet they received a larger amount of pay. The out-door Customs officers began with £55 a-year; whereas the lowest paid policeman in a Provincial town received £62 8*s.*, in addition to which he was provided with clothes and 6*d.* a-week boot-money. So that the policeman, who had to do a similar kind of work to the out-door Customs officer, received from £10 to £15 a-year more pay. He hoped the Government would see their way to give these poor men the increase of wages they were asking for.

Mr. C. WILSON would call on the noble Lord who had opposed the Resolution to observe that the feeling of the House was against him. He trusted the Government would not make the mistake—which there seemed to be some danger of their falling into—of resisting this most reasonable and just Motion.

He believed these were the only officials in Her Majesty's Service who were paid different rates according to the places at which they were stationed. If the men were employed in Ireland, or in Scotland, or at an outport, they were to be paid at a lower rate of wages than if employed in a large centre. He would draw the attention of the Government to the fact that throughout the length and breadth of the land all other classes of working men were paid the same standard of wages. He did not know any single class of working men who had all the same kind of work to perform who would submit to different rates of wages in different towns. It would, he was sure, be utterly impossible for them to satisfy these men, who were doing a very important work for Her Majesty's Government, unless they granted this most just demand which they had put before the House through his hon. Friend the Member for Hull. The agitation was one of three years' standing; but this was the first time these men had had an opportunity of bringing their claim under the notice of the House, and, now that it had been brought forward, he trusted it would receive more favourable consideration at the hands of the Government than, according to the statement of the noble Lord, it would appear they were at present prepared to give it.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he felt very strongly upon this question. He felt that these officers had, to a certain extent, a great grievance; and he felt, also, that they in that House had a duty to perform. To his mind, it would be a most unwise thing for the House to take the responsibility of dealing with officers of this kind out of the hands of the Executive Government. He would venture, therefore, to propose that a Select Committee should be appointed to consider the question. If the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington), at the present moment the Leader of the House, would agree to this suggestion, no doubt the grievance of these officials would be most fairly considered. It would relieve the Members of the Government from a very difficult position, many hon. Members feeling most strongly on the subject. He was absolutely certain that there were many anxious to vote for the Resolution before the House who would be satisfied, for the moment, if the matter were referred to the investigation of a Select Committee; and, of course, there were others who thought that the matter ought not to be considered by the House, who would be equally satisfied. Therefore, looking at the case presented to the House in a spirit of fairness, and believing that the hon. Member for Hull would obtain all he required if the question were referred to a Select Committee, he would venture to suggest that it should be so referred.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD mentioned that there were several men of this class engaged in Manchester and Salford, and expressed a hope that the noble Lord would agree to the suggestion of the hon. and gallant Baronet. He hoped so the more because the noble Lord had made a statement in the course of his speech which was not quite accurate. He had stated that the cost of living in the case of some of these men was less in places where they received lower salaries than it was in London and Liverpool. He, however, ventured to say that was not the case in Manchester or Salford, where the cost of living was as high as it was in London or Liverpool. That was a point which a Committee could investigate.

MR. BROADHURST wished to say a word or two on the subject, for he considered that the wages of the outport men were a disgrace to the Government. A dustman in London had a larger income per week than these Government officers, who were entrusted with large and important duties. He had a suggestion also to offer to the noble Lord. He sincerely trusted the noble Lord would agree to the appointment of a Committee, and if the noble Lord was jealous of any increased expenditure, he thought he could point out to him a means of rectifying this evil without any increased public expense. He should not care to mention the details in public; but if the noble Lord would honour him with a consultation, he could point to offices in the Public Service that could suffer a reduction without any public disadvantage whatever, and which might properly be employed in advancing the wages of this terribly low-paid body of men.

MR. LYON PLAYFAIR said, this question had come before him at considerable length, on a former occasion, when he acted as Chairman of the Civil Service Inquiry Commission; and at that time it was obvious to him that the subject ought to be fully inquired into. The differences in pay were considerable; but the differences in duty were also marked, and therefore a general Resolution, without an inquiry into the case, would scarcely have met the justice of the case. The officials who gave evidence before that Commission showed markedly that their case ought to be inquired into and considered by a Public Inquiry. The Commission were unable to go into the matter as fully as they would have desired; but they felt that a Departmental Inquiry should take place. He thought the proposition of the hon. Baronet, if accepted by the Government, would be a satisfactory way of meeting the justice of the case.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: It is quite impossible to pretend ignorance of the prevailing opinion of the House on this subject at the present time. I think it is much to be regretted that a subject involving, as I think this does, a large question of public policy, should be discussed in so small a House at so late an hour, and that so small a number of Members, comparatively, are present, except those who are directly interested in the subject. ["Oh, oh!"] I am only expressing my own opinion; and whatever opinion other Members may hold, even if mine is erroneous, I think a Member who is addressing the House might be allowed to conclude his observations. I think it would be a great misfortune if the House were to pass a Resolution of the character now before us at the present moment; and I cannot say I think it desirable that the responsibility should be removed from the shoulders of the Government by an Inquiry by a Select Committee. Of the two evils, I must say I consider that the appointment of a Select Committee would be a less evil than the passing of this Resolution; and if the Resolution were withdrawn, the Government would be willing to consider the terms upon which the subject should be inquired into. If that suggestion meets with the approval of the House, the Government will be prepared to sanction it; but, of course, if the House prefers to pass the Resolution, that will take the matter out of the hands of the Government.

MR. NORWOOD thought there could be no doubt as to the feeling of the House on this question. He should be very sorry to cause the slightest embarrassment to the Government, and, with the permission of the House, he would accept the offer of the noble Marquess that the Government would, at an early hour, cause a Committee of the House to be appointed to inquire into the subject, with the understanding that the Government would loyally accept the decision of that Committee, whatever it might be. He thought that was the course which, under all the circumstances, he ought to pursue, and, with the permission of the House, he would withdraw his Motion.

MR. HEALY stated that he should oppose the withdrawal of the Motion. The noble Marquess had said it appeared that only those Members who through their constituents were interested in the subject had remained, and he seemed to look in the direction of the Irish Benches. For his part, he could say that the only gentlemen connected with the outports in his constituency were his political opponents; but he was interested in the question because of a deputation he had received upon it. The two gentlemen whom he saw had informed him that they were obliged to live in a respectable way, but only received between £50 and £60 a-year; while gentlemen who performed only the same services as they did received something like £300 a-year. It was on that ground that Members like himself were opposed to any compromise; and he warned the hon. Member for Hull, that if he agreed to the suggestion of the hon. and gallant Baronet (Sir Walter B. Barttelot), the outport officers would be treated as the telegraph clerks were treated—they would be civilly treated before the Committee, and promised illimitable opportunities of stating their case; but eventually they would find that they had been deceived. ["Order, order!"] The noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) had complained of being interrupted; but what in a Member of the Treasury Bench was but a choleric word, seemed to be in an Irish Member flat blasphemy, and he was at once reminded of the august position of the occupant of the Treasury Bench. He was only giving his opinion of what would happen to the outport officers; and what he expected was, that although gentlemen from Liverpool or

Dublin or other parts of the country might give their evidence before the Select Committee, the noble Lord the Secretary to the Treasury would be able to make much more complete statements than they could, and the balance of evidence would remain on his side and nothing would be done. For that reason he, and some who agreed with him, intended to go a division.

Mr. OTWAY observed, that the course which the hon. Member had taken was unusual and inconvenient. The hon. Member for Hull (Mr. Norwood) had proposed a Resolution, which was somewhat extreme in character, as to the taking of a step involving a considerable payment of money. He was entirely in sympathy with the hon. Member, and had intended to vote with him; but the hon. Member had been met by a proposal from the noble Marquess, which seemed to be a practical one, and had consented to the nomination of a Select Committee before which the wrongs of the outport men would be examined. He presumed that that Committee would report, and what he hoped was that that Report would be favourable, and that his hon. Friend would meet with more attention than had been paid to the Committee which had been alluded to, whose recommendations had not, in some respects, been given effect to. But if the House acted as the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Healy) proposed, they would be acting with scant courtesy towards the noble Marquess. He saw no advantage in being rude to the noble Marquess, and a proposal, which seemed to be exceeding liberal, having been made—or, rather, the suggestion of the hon. and gallant Baronet (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) having been acceded to—he thought those who were really interested in the matter would be doing best for their cause by accepting the proposal of the noble Lord. At any rate, he was satisfied that that course would be of advantage; and practical men, and men of good sense, would see the wisdom of the course recommended.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR felt constrained to repeat the words of the hon. Member.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member has already addressed the House.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: I think you have put a Question since I addressed the House.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have put no other Question.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON: Do I understand that the Motion is withdrawn?

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

CORONERS (IRELAND) BILL.

NOMINATION OF SELECT COMMITTEE.

Select Committee on Coroners (Ireland) Bill *nominated* of Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Mr. Daly, Mr. Ewart, Mr. Healy, Mr. Robert Fowler, Mr. Litton, Mr. Richardson, and Mr. Tottenham:—Three to be the quorum.

Mr. HEALY said, he should move, after the word "quorum," to insert the words "with power to send for persons, papers, and records." It was an unusual thing that a Committee on a Bill should be appointed without having that Reference; and he thought the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite would agree with him that the Committee could not be supposed to have any very complete knowledge of the subject, and that it would be most desirable that they should receive some evidence. He himself should only propose to call one or two witnesses; but if the Government were allowed to proceed without any witnesses, they would have the matter entirely in their own hands. His proposal was this. There were 82 or 83 coroners in Ireland; most of whom were old men, and the Bill proposed that they should receive £100 a-year; but he thought 20 or 30 of the number might be abolished, and their salaries be applied to superannuation purposes, without any extra expense being thrown on the Exchequer.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is speaking on the Main Question.

Mr. HEALY repeated, that he would like to have some evidence given before the Committee, otherwise the Committee would be in blank ignorance, and could not be expected to adjudicate on the subject.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records."—(*Mr. Healy.*)

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Law) regretted that he could not accept the proposal of the hon. Member, and he explained that it was by no means unusual to omit the words proposed in regard to a Bill such as this, which was of a purely legal character.

Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 15; Noes 75: Majority 60.—(Div. List, No. 192.)

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee on Coroners (Ireland) Bill, that they have power to consider the operation of the Law relating to Coroners in Ireland, and, if they shall so think fit, to amend the Bill accordingly.

WATER PROVISIONAL ORDERS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. ASHLEY, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under "The Gas and Water Works Facilities Act, 1870," relating to Dyserth, Meliden, and Prestatyn Water, Harwich Water, Henley-on-Thames Water, Newport and Pillgwenlly Water, Newhaven and Seaford Water, and Poole Water, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. ASHLEY and Mr. CHAMBERLAIN.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 146.]

GAS PROVISIONAL ORDERS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. ASHLEY, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under "The Gas and Water Works Facilities Act, 1870," relating to Brentford Gas, Chichester Gas, Ely Gas, Grays Thurrock Gas, Ilford Gas, Kirkham Gas, Northfleet and Greenhithe Gas, Pinner Gas, Staines and Egham Gas, Stone Gas, and Waltham Abbey and Cheshunt Gas; and to amend "The Gas and Water Works Facilities Act, 1870," in so far as relates to places within the Metropolis, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. ASHLEY and Mr. CHAMBERLAIN.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 147.]

House adjourned at a quarter before Two o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 4th May, 1881.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*Ordered—First Reading*—Thames River (No. 2) * [148].

Second Reading—Local Government Provisional Orders (Berwick-upon-Tweed, &c.) * [138]; Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Wales) [3].

Select Committee—Coroners (Ireland) * [73], Mr. Blennerhassett *added.*

Withdrawn—Banking Laws Amendment [46].

The Attorney General for Ireland

JOHN DILLON, ESQUIRE.

MR. SPEAKER acquainted the House that he had this day received the following Letter from the Right Honourable the Earl Cowper, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland:—

Vice Regal Lodge,
May 3rd, 1881.

Sir,

It is my duty to inform you that Mr. John Dillon, a Member of the House of Commons, was arrested yesterday evening at Portarlington on a Warrant issued by me under the Act for the better protection of Person and Property in Ireland, and is now in the Gaol of Kilmainham in Dublin.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your obedient Servant,
COWPER.

The Rt. Honble.
The Speaker House of Commons.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he would not anticipate the discussion which would, no doubt, take place on the subject of the very important announcement just made to the House, on the Motion of which his hon. Friend the Member for Longford (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) had given Notice, and which amounted to a Vote of Censure on the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, in reference to this latest use or abuse of the Coercion Act by himself and his Colleagues. He hoped he was right in anticipating that the right hon. Gentleman would not be anxious to allow that Vote of Censure to hang over him longer than was necessary. He wished meanwhile to give the right hon. Gentleman fair warning that on behalf of the hon. Member for Longford and his hon. Friends around him they intended to press, and that by all such means as the Forms of the House would permit, for an immediate and full discussion of that very important matter. He did not wish to anticipate the discussion; but he would point out to the Chief Secretary the points which they should urge, and upon which they should expect a satisfactory reply. In the first place, he must refer to the fact that so far as he could see his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant did not put himself much about in order to accelerate the announcement to that House of the fact of the arrest of one of its most prominent Members, and he must also say that he perceived a contrast between the terms of the letter just read and the terms of the letter with regard to a similar event which was laid before the House by one of the Speaker's Predecessors on the arrest of Mr. Smith O'Brien in August, 1848. The letter addressed by the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland to the Speaker of the House of Commons was in the following terms:—

> "Sir,—It is my painful duty to inform you that Mr. Smith O'Brien was yesterday arrested on a charge of treason, and is now in the gaol at Kilmainham."

There was no expression of pain on the part of the Lord Lieutenant in respect to the arbitrary and extreme use he had made of the powers conferred on him by the Coercion Act, probably because he thought that Liberal principles had not sufficiently advanced since the dark days of 1848 to enable him to follow the example of his Predecessor. The points on which the right hon. Gentleman would be asked for explanations were—How he could justify to the House the arrest, pending the discussion of the Land Law (Ireland) Bill, of an hon. Member of the House who notoriously represented almost more than any other Member of the House of Commons the opinions of a very important section of Irish farmers with respect to the legislative proposals of the Government? Why the right hon. Gentleman had thought it necessary to select the present moment for the arrest, when it was known that his hon. Friend was on his way to London to take part in the discussion of the Land Bill. And how the right hon. Gentleman could justify the arrest of his hon. Friend because he had made a statement with respect to the state of Ireland which had been in the fullest manner corroborated by the right hon. Gentleman himself? The right hon. Gentleman would be invited to state whether it was or was not the case, as asserted by his hon. Friend the Member for Tipperary, that ejectment processes were hanging over the heads of between 5,000 and 10,000 persons at the present moment, and if that statement was not in exact accordance with his own statement, made yesterday, that 2,273 processes of ejectment had been decreed at the recent Quarter Sessions, which meant the impending doom of between 10,000 and 12,000 Irish farmers. The right hon. Gentleman would be asked, therefore, whether the statement of the hon. Member for Tipperary in regard to the tenant farmers of Ireland, and the action of the landlords thereto, was not, if anything, an understatement of that of the right hon. Gentleman in regard to the present condition of Ireland? They should ask the right hon. Gentleman to convince the House, if he was able to do it, that the hon. Member was not justified in bringing to the notice of the House, or bringing to the notice of the Government and the public, the calamities which were necessarily threatened by this monstrous and wholesale exercise of power in the present miserable condition of the people. He thought that those considerations would show to the right hon. Gentleman the expediency of meeting them in a prompt and frank spirit, and of giving them facilities for a fair and full and early discussion of the arrest of the hon. Member for Tipperary. He (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) was bound to exercise self-restraint and self-repression in regard to that arrest, and accordingly abstained from expressing his own feeling on the question; but he should have the opportunity of doing so, and of showing that this latest act of the right hon. Gentleman was one of the worst blunders he had ever made.

MR. BIGGAR said, he did not intend to speak with regard to this question; but seeing that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland did not make any reply to what was said by his hon. Friend the Member for Galway, he would suggest to the right hon. Gentleman the propriety of withdrawing from a position for which he was notoriously unfit. He warned the right hon. Gentleman that he and his Friends would be under the necessity of speaking very plainly, and of saying some truths which would not be at all palatable to the right hon. Gentleman, and which might rather clash, more or less, with the prejudices of some hon. Members of that House.

MR. HEALY gave Notice, on the nomination of the Committee on the Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention Bill, that he would move that the name of Mr. John Dillon be added to the Committee.

QUESTIONS.

—∞0∞—

NAVY—DESTRUCTION OF H.M.S. "DOTEREL."

MR. GORST asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether he can give to the House any further particulars respecting the unhappy accident which had happened to the "Doterel?" Many of his constituents were interested in ascertaining, as soon as possible, the names of the unhappy victims of this calamity; and he wished, therefore, to know whether any list of the crew would be published in the daily papers?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, a telegram was received this morning, about 8 o'clock, to this effect:—

> "Telegram from Commander Evans, late
> Her Majesty's ship 'Doterel.'
>
> "Montevideo, May 3, 12 55 p.m.
>
> "'Doterel' totally destroyed and sunk by explosion of fore magazine at Sandy Point, 10 a.m., April 26. Cause unknown, supposed boiler burst and exploded magazine. Twelve survivors, all well, proceeding in Britannia for Liverpool. Stokes (lieutenant) remains Sandy Point, awaiting orders. Have telegraphed (to) Pacific, and Jones (senior officer South-East Coast of America). Survivors.—Commander Evans, Lieutenant Stokes, Paymaster Colborne, Engineer Walker (of Garnet), Carpenter Baird, Gunner's Mate Pengelly, Quartermaster Trout, Caulker's Mate Ford, Shipwright Walkers, Ordinary Seaman James Smith, Stoker Turner, Marine Summers. Discharged.—Inlis (clerk), Miggeridge (sick bay man), Hayes (private), Motton (A.B.). John Ellery (A.B.) deserted. Dead.—Eight officers, 135 men."

I shall go back to the Admiralty at once and make arrangements for sending the list of the crew to the papers, as suggested by the hon. and learned Member. The Admiralty has telegraphed to Montevideo, ordering Captain Loftus Jones, the senior officer on the South-East Coast of America, to proceed to Sandy Point, in order to ascertain the cause of the disaster. It may be said that Sandy Point, where Lieutenant Stokes has remained to set on foot the investigation, is a Chilian settlement in the Straits of Magellan, beginning to be much frequented for coaling and provisioning of vessels. It would be improper to make in public any premature conjecture as to the cause of this deplorable and heart-rending catastrophe. It would be, perhaps, as well not even to take for certain the conjecture mentioned in the telegram I have just read.

MR. CARBUTT: Can the hon. Gentleman give any information as to the boilers—whether they were new or old?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, the boilers, made by Messrs. Humphreys, were new within a year. Indeed, the ship was finished within a year from the present time, and had given satisfaction in every respect. It was looked upon as an extremely well-found vessel. If the boilers exploded, the lighted coal would naturally have been blown aft. The magazine was forward. There was a wall of coal, and the tanks, containing the entire water supply of the vessel, between the magazine and the boilers; but, as I have said, it is as well to make no conjecture as to the cause of the disaster.

Afterwards,

MR. TREVELYAN: I beg to take the present opportunity of making a short explanation with regard to something which passed at this Morning's Sitting in the course of some conversation that arose as to the terrible accident to H.M.S. *Doterel.* The hon. Member for Monmouth (Mr. Carbutt) asked me who it was that made the engines and boilers of the unhappy vessel. I was unable to answer; but an hon. Gentleman near me informed me that they were made by Messrs. Humphreys. On returning to the Admiralty, I found that they were made by that admirable and trustworthy firm the Messrs. Maudslay; but I must ask the House to remember that in the present state of our knowledge as to the cause of this accident, it is not right to consider the question of the makers of the engines as having any bearing at all upon the matter. The survivors, including the captain, will arrive in England well within a month, and by that time we certainly ought to have our first report from the officer who is examining into the causes of the disaster on the spot. It would be the most patriotic thing, under these circumstances, that we should reserve our opinion.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY (WALES) BILL.—[BILL 3.]

(*Mr. Roberts, Mr. Richard, Mr. Samuel Holland, Mr. Hussey Vivian, Mr. Rathbone.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. ROBERTS: Sir, in moving the second reading of this Bill, I must remind the House that a similar measure passed a second reading last Session;

but its further progress was blocked by the application of the half-past 12 o'clock Rule. I do not think it necessary to enter upon the general question of the propriety of Sunday closing, because this House has already declared in favour of that question upon the Resolution of the hon. Member for South Shields (Mr. Stevenson), and the preceding Parliament to this acted in a similar manner with respect to Ireland. Beyond that, an earnest and almost universal desire has been manifested for Sunday closing in Wales. I do not propose to enter into any details on the present occasion; but I will merely summarize the position in which the supporters of the present Bill stand. First of all, with regard to the Petitions. Petitions in favour of the Bill were presented last year signed by more than 250,000 people. The exact number was 267,000, or rather more than one-third of the entire adult population of Wales, being a larger proportion of the inhabitants of any considerable district than ever before petitioned this Assembly in favour of any measure. It has not been thought necessary by the friends of the movement to repeat these Petitions this year; but in response to Circulars issued from North and South Wales, addressed to the representative bodies of the Principality —the Town Councils, Local Boards, School Boards, Boards of Guardians, and religious associations — Petitions have come in very freely. About 250 have already been recorded upon the Books of the House; and I may say, with regard to the views of public bodies, that there were very few instances in which the persons addressed did not respond to the appeal made to them. Even those public bodies which did not send a favourable Petition, explained that it was not from any feeling of hostility to the measure itself, but because it was considered undesirable to introduce at the Board meetings matters that were foreign to its functions. In 1879-80 there was a complete canvass of the whole of North Wales, and though no Returns were obtained from 44 parishes, about four-fifths of the whole number of ratepayers of North Wales voted. Out of 78,435 votes, 75,510 were in favour of Sunday closing, 989 were against it, and 1,936 remained neutral; or, in other words, 76 to 1 were in favour of closing. These Returns have been tabulated, printed, and circulated, giving the respective numbers in the several Unions, towns, and villages, and I do not know that their accuracy has been challenged. I notice amongst the towns that there were in Llanrwst 661 against 1 in favour of Sunday closing; and in Wrexham, a town which is supposed to be very much in the interests of the brewers, the number was 1,161 against 119. In Llanrwst the dissentient was a publican; but I may add that there are 14 publicans in Llanrwst, and of these 12 were in favour of Sunday closing, 1 was neutral, and only 1 against. The opinion of the entire body of publicans in Wales is strongly in favour of the Bill. It appears that out of 1,173 who voted, 792 were in favour, and only 152 against, while 229 declared themselves neutral; so that five-sixths of the publicans of Wales are themselves in favour of this measure. In some districts, the feeling among the publicans was very general. In the Union of Pwllheli, 96 were in favour of Sunday closing and only 1 against. I have presented a Petition signed by 23 publicans of the town of Carnarvon in favour of the Bill; and the resolution of the Local Board of Holyhead in its favour was moved by Mr. Riva, and seconded by Mr. Roberts, both of whom are licensed victuallers. In all these instances there was no attempt to manufacture Petitions. The motive for manufacturing Petitions was absolutely wanting, because all the work of canvassing was carried on by the expenditure of very little money—there being no elaborate organization—and without the employment even of one paid official. And what is the opinion of the Members for Wales on the subject? To that test I can appeal with the greatest confidence. The Welsh Members are 30; and of the 28 who sit on this side of the House, all, without a single exception, are in favour of this Bill. Of the Conservatives, we have the support of at least one-half of them. I could wish that for this purpose, and this only, that half had been a greater number; but I am glad to know that the Bill is supported by the hon. Baronet who represents the Conservatives of North Wales (Sir Watkin Williams-Wynn). I should have been glad also if it received the support of the noble Viscount who represents the Conservatives of South Wales (Viscount

Emlyn), to whom we are much indebted in regard to the question of education. I do not know the ground of the noble Viscount's objection to this Bill. I see, however, that he has not repeated his Notice of opposition on the present occasion; and I hope either that he has changed his mind, or, if not, that he may feel it consistent with his duty to support the feelings and wishes of his constituents. And now I come to another point. The late Government afforded facilities to the Irish Members for the passing of the Irish Bill into law. In that case, the proportion of hon. Members who supported the Bill was something like 3 to 1; but in this instance it is 29 to 1. Then, let me appeal to the House, and especially to the Government, to help the Welsh Members in passing this Bill into law during the present Session. In the debate of last year my hon. Friend the Member for Warwick (Mr. A. Peel), who spoke on behalf of the Government, said he could not resist the strong feeling shown by the Welsh Members on the subject. And the noble Marquess who then led the House (the Marquess of Hartington), in the absence of the Prime Minister, and who has been himself a Welsh Member, stated that although he could not give us facilities then, it was nevertheless the hope and desire of the Government to give to the Welsh Members this Session the same facilities for carrying their Bill that the late Government afforded to the Irish Members. I can assure the Government that we shall lose no opportunity in pressing forward the measure ourselves; but if we are unable to do so, we shall with confidence ask the Government to redeem their pledge. Legislation for England upon the subject must take place sooner or later; and whenever it does take place, it must be of advantage to the Government to have the experience of the working of this measure in Wales. In the case of Ireland, certain large towns were exempted from the operation of the Bill. In Wales there are populous places also, such as Cardiff, Swansea, Merthyr Tydvil, and Aberdare; but, instead of wanting to be exempted from the operation of the Bill, they demand to be included within it. I have received a communication from the Mayor of Swansea, stating that at a meeting recently held in that town, resolutions in favour of the Bill were unanimously adopted. The same course has been pursued in Cardiff and in other large towns. I would venture to suggest that upon such a question as this we, the Welsh Members, have some claim to be heard, and to have our wishes attended to. We are not in the habit of taking up much of the time of the House. We do not bore the House with long and frequent speeches on any question. We do not want much from Parliament. We only ask the House to give us a little help towards higher education in Wales, and to pass this little Bill. I use the word "little," because it is of small importance compared with many of the subjects that have occupied the attention of the House; but I can assure the House that it is very near and dear to the people of Wales, and that they consider it of the utmost importance to their country. The passing of the Bill, I may repeat, will give great satisfaction to the people of Wales; it will secure a much-needed day's rest to the publicans and those whom they employ, and will tend to check drunkenness and promote peace and order on the Sabbath Day. I beg now to move the second reading of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Roberts.*)

MR. WARTON, who had on the Notice Paper an Amendment to the effect that the Bill be read a second time that day six months, but which he did not move, said, they had heard few arguments that day in favour of the Bill which were not brought forward last Session. There might be pointed out one exception—namely, that the Prime Minister had been a Welsh Member. [*Cries of* "No, no!" *and a* "Welshman!"] He certainly understood the hon. Member (Mr. Roberts) to allude to Mr. Gladstone as a Welsh Member. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] Well, the Prime Minister had been an English Member, a Scotch Member, a Borough Member, a University Member, and a County Member; but he had to quit every county constituency he ever represented. [*Loud cries of* "Question!"] The question was this, Why were they to have this Departmental legislation? Why should they have one Sunday Closing Bill for Ireland, and another

Sunday Closing Bill for Wales, whose population, after all, only formed a small section of the community, but who, following the example of the Irish, fancied themselves a nation, and quite as famous as Ireland, while in point of fact, the Principality was only a small part of England? Wales, certainly, had not produced great men like Ireland, if, indeed, he excepted the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite, the Judge Advocate General. Why, then, were the Welsh people to have separate legislation? Who were the Welsh Members? The hon. Gentleman who introduced the Bill had quoted statistics to show that the people of Wales wanted the Bill to be passed. That hon. Gentleman proved too much. If the overwhelming feeling of the people of Wales and the publicans of Wales were favourable to Sunday closing—if the Welsh people would not drink, and the Welsh publicans would not sell—how was it that the public-houses stood prosperous as they were at present? How came it to pass that these drinking-places existed in the Principality? If these Welsh publicans were so much in favour of Sunday closing, why did they not take out six-day licences? But there was another consideration to be remembered. They all knew that Wales possessed most beautiful scenery, which attracted large numbers of tourists, for whose sakes he (Mr. Warton) asked that the public-houses should be open on Sundays. By closing them, they would be cheating the tourist; whilst if they remained open for the tourist, the Welsh people need not drink. The whole thing was supremely ridiculous, and the attempt to legislate separately for a section of the country was a dangerous principle. He loved Wales too well to allow it to be separated from England; but the Welsh people, unfortunately, did not seem to be conscious of the dignity of their union with this country.

MR. RATHBONE: The hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton), who has just addressed the House, has converted the entire opposition to the Bill into a joke; and, if I may be allowed to say so, a mistake. The hon. and learned Member began by asserting that my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister is a Welsh Member—[*Laughter.*]——

MR. WARTON: I beg pardon; I said I understood the hon. Member for Flint (Mr. Roberts) to say so.

MR. RATHBONE: The hon. and learned Member has also alluded to my connection with Liverpool; but he does not seem to be aware that Liverpool contains a very large and important Welsh population. The hon. and learned Member, having made a number of jokes, and perpetrated a series of mistakes, ended by telling the House that he opposes the Bill because he "loves the people of Wales too well;" but he certainly should have said, "Not wisely, if too well." But, although the hon. and learned Member for Bridport may be inclined to treat the question as a joke, I can assure him that it is not regarded in the same light by the Welsh people. It will only be necessary for me to detain the House for a very few minutes, particularly after the able speech of my hon. Friend (Mr. Roberts), who moved the second reading, which has left the question perfectly unanswerable. In such a case as the present, when we find the country so entirely unanimous in support of the measure as Wales has been ascertained to be; when we have the experience of two other large parts of Her Majesty's Dominions—Scotland and Ireland—that legislation in favour of Sunday closing has been eminently successful; and when we see that every argument which led the House to adopt the measures for Scotland and Ireland applies with still greater force and is still more unanswerable in the case of Wales, and that there are fewer difficulties and dangers to encounter, surely we have made out an unassailable case for granting to Wales the boon we now ask for. The hon. and learned Member for Bridport speaks of "departmental legislation." That matter has been answered conclusively by what has been done in the case of Scotland and Ireland; and I defy the hon. and learned Member to find a single Scotch Member, after the long experience they have had of the working of the Forbes Mackenzie Act, who would vote for reversing that legislation. As my hon. Friend (Mr. Roberts) told the House last year, 99½ per cent of the householders of the county I represent (Carnarvon) petitioned in favour of this measure; and in Carnarvon 23 licensed victuallers supported it, whilst only three were against it. The hon. and learned Member for Bridport asks why, if all the people are in favour of Sunday closing, they cannot carry it out without a Bill? The hon. and learned Member is a lawyer—[Mr. WARTON: No, no!]—I certainly understood that he was. I can only add that I do not look upon him as a man of business; because if he were, he would know that these 23 licensed victuallers who support the Bill are compelled to keep their houses open on a Sunday from the fear that they would otherwise drive their customers away to other places. If all the houses were compulsorily closed, there would be no difficulty of that kind. Last year, we had an overwhelming number of Petitions from different individuals in Wales, who came forward spontaneously from all parts of the Principality. But this year, Welshmen have shown their usual wisdom in asking their Representatives to speak for them from the Boards of Guardians, Town Councils, Local Boards, School Boards, and Petitions have accordingly been presented from persons representing every form of local government, and confirming the views of the general body of the people. It is evident, then, that those to whom the people of Wales look as their leaders and best advisers quite agree with the bulk of the inhabitants that the measure should be passed. Well then, Sir, what we ask is, why should the boon which has been granted to Scotland and Ireland, and which has been successful in both of those countries, be denied to Wales? Hon. Members have mentioned the long experience which Scotland has had in favour of Sunday closing. In Ireland the experience of Sunday closing has been of shorter duration; but it is even more strongly conclusive in the matter. We have the evidence of the Lord Chief Justice that in Ireland the Act has had a most beneficial effect, and he has repeatedly pointed out that drunkenness has been considerably diminished throughout the country. This testimony has been confirmed by that of the Lord Chief Baron, Mr. Justice Dowse, the Crown Solicitor, the County Court Judges, by the clergy, Catholic as well as Protestant, and, in one sense more conclusively than all, by the head constables of the police throughout the country. The statistical Returns are most curious, because they not only show a great diminution in the consumption of spirits, and an enormous reduction in the number of offences committed under the influence of intoxication, but that this state of things is more marked in the districts which have suffered least from the recent distress, and where it cannot be said that the people have not had money to spend on drink. The only argument that has ever been used which has been conclusive with me is this—I required to be satisfied, before I ever voted for a Bill for Sunday closing, that the opinion of the country was so conclusive upon the matter that there was no danger of a law being made only to be broken. But we have now the evidence both of Scotland and of Ireland. There has been no difficulty whatever in enforcing the law; and it has been much less broken under the new law than it was under the old. I have said that in Wales there have been fewer difficulties on this subject and more advantages. The House knows very well there is no part of Her Majesty's Dominions—I believe there is no part of the world—in which religion has such an abiding and powerful influence over the habits and life of the people as in Wales. That being so, it is clear that you will have the whole force of the feeling, as well as of the opinion, of the Welsh people in support of the law. Independently of the religious sanction which the feeling of the Welsh people gives to the law, there is no part of the Kingdom where the law is more unhesitatingly obeyed than in Wales, or, at any rate, where there is less evidence against it. If any hon. Member doubts that assertion, he has only to read the seventh of the admirable letters of my hon. Friend the Member for Merthyr Tydvil (Mr. Richard) on the social and political condition of the Principality. He will there find it plainly stated. What I now ask the House is this. The case is so clear and so unanswerable, that I feel I should be trespassing unfairly on the time of the House if I were to attempt to argue it further. All I ask is that you should give to Wales what you have already given to Scotland and Ireland. It has been shown that in both of those countries the law has been entirely successful and satisfactory to the people. We know, still further, that every argument that was urged when the Scotch and Irish Bills were before the House may be urged even more strongly in the case of Wales, and that it is impossible to have a more conclusive case than that which has been made out on behalf of Wales.

MR. CARBUTT, in supporting the second reading, expressed a wish that it might at no remote date be extended to England. In Monmouthshire, part of which he represented, and which was divided only by a scientific frontier from Wales, of which it ought, in reality, to form part, the feeling in favour of Sunday closing was very strong—so strong, in fact, that he might say in some respects his election mainly turned upon it. He had been requested to try to get their county included in the operations of the Bill; and, if it were possible, he would certainly try to effect that object for the county which was so largely Welsh.

MR. DALY said, it was undeniable that the great preponderance of opinion in Wales was in favour of the Bill, and that a great number of public bodies were in favour of it; but, if the principle be admitted for Wales, it was clearly right that it should be admitted for Ireland. As large a preponderance of Irish bodies and institutions, in the shape of Poor Law Boards and others, and as large a proportion of the population, were in favour of Home Rule for Ireland; but yet the Welsh Members invariably, when the topic came up for discussion, continually voted against it. He (Mr. Daly) adduced that argument simply to show that if the Welsh Members disregarded the opinions and feelings of the people of Ireland, when the Welsh Members brought forward an exactly similar argument, it was right that they should be so disregarded by the Irish Members. He considered that the principle of such a Bill was dangerous; and it was a fatal and dangerous principle to allow the wishes of the majority to exercise a tyrannical influence over the minority. There was a great difference between getting drunk, and the reasonable and rational use of drink. And if there were publicans who desired to close on Sunday, why did they not take out six-day licences; while, even if the public-houses were opened, if the people did not wish to use them, they could keep away? Neither the publicans, nor the customers, however great the preponderance of their opinion, had a right to override the feelings and wishes of the minority. During the last eight or ten days they had had serious and angry debates in the House about the abnegation of the Oath. Now, if the Welsh Members logically followed out their opinions, they could not vote for the abnegation here. He believed the majority of the people of the country were against it. He had no doubt that the Bill would pass; but he could not let it pass without recording his protest against such a dangerous precedent.

MR. MORGAN LLOYD supported the Bill, and reminded the previous speaker that Parliament had already yielded to the wish of Ireland to carry out the very alterations in the law which was now asked for by the Welsh people, and supported by every Welsh Member. That the feeling in favour of the closing of public-houses was universal in Wales was beyond all doubt. It was universal not only amongst the people of Welsh origin, but universal amongst people of English and Irish origin who were now inhabitants of Wales. The feeling was as strong at Cardiff as it was at Holyhead; it was as strong in the county of Monmouth as it was on the Welsh side of the border. Even the great majority of the publicans in Wales were favourable to the Bill, and the only opposition to the measure came from the English publicans, under the leadership of his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton). That hon. and learned Member said they could not have separate legislation for Wales distinct from England on this question. But had he forgotten that they had separate legislation already, not only for London and the Provinces, but between large towns and small towns, and towns and rural districts? The principle was, therefore, admitted all over the Kingdom, and to apply it to Wales, so far as Sunday was concerned, was simply an application of the principle upon which present Acts were founded. It was further objected by the hon. and learned Member that if the Welsh publicans were in favour of the Bill they could take out six-day licences—and keep their houses closed without fresh legislation. But did not the hon. and learned Member know that one dissentient could make that impossible? The only other objection raised was that it was not to the advantage of tourists who went into Wales to enjoy the scenery to find the public-houses closed on Sundays.

His answer to that was, in the first place, that when tourists went to Wales, they went there, not only to enjoy the scenery, but also in order to recruit their health; and he thought it would be a good thing for them if they were forced to abstain, at all events on one day out of seven, from all intoxicating drinks in the healthy and pure atmosphere of the mountains of Wales. Another answer was this, that tourists in Wales might enjoy themselves very much in the same way as those who went to the grouse moors in Scotland. If they could not abstain for one day, they might take a flask in their pocket, and they could further enjoy it with the fresh water from the brook. But there was still another answer. In the framing of the present Bill *bonâ fide* travellers were excluded, not in so many words, but in substance, because the principles of the Act now in operation were to apply to the Bill, and one of those principles was that during the time public-houses were now obliged to be closed on Sundays *bonâ fide* travellers were allowed refreshments. It would be the same if this Bill passed as it was framed at present, because that limitation would be introduced out of the Acts that were already in force. All the objections, therefore, that were made to this Bill came to nothing at all. One objection which had been made was that the Welsh Members had refused to support Home Rule. When it came to the question of Home Rule, then came the further question whether they should go with Ireland or with England. They would consider that question when it came. At present they were not in favour of Home Rule; but if it was shown that they would be so much better off for Home Rule in Wales, they were open to conviction. At present they remained unconvinced. In Wales they were content with their union with England, and at present were unwilling to let Ireland go. He thought they were entitled, as Welshmen, to have this Bill passed, because the Welsh Members were unanimous in their support of it, there not being a single Welsh Member present to object to it.

Mr. ONSLOW said, that having taken a great interest in the drink question for many years past, and having opposed Bills similar to that now before the House on former occasions, he desired to say a few words in reference to this measure. He thought that the Welsh were entitled to great credit for their general temperance. He could not agree with the hon. Member for Carnarvonshire (Mr. Rathbone) that the arguments for the Bill were the same as those for the Irish Sunday Closing Bill. In that case, a strong argument in favour of closing was that there was an immense amount of drinking and drunkenness on the Sunday; but, in the case of Wales, it was agreed that there was little or no drunkenness whatever on the Sunday. It amounted, therefore, to this—that the Bill must be regarded as a Sabbatarian and religious one; and, looking on the question from that point of view, he failed to see what argument there was, however religious a man might be, for precluding him from having a glass of beer on the Sunday. If the Bill were read a second time, Amendments would have to be introduced excepting the *bonâ fide* traveller and railway-station refreshment-rooms from its operation. It had been said that the Irish and Scotch Bills had done a great deal to diminish drinking; but his (Mr. Onslow's) experience was, that if the Scotch people were not allowed to drink on Sundays, they made up for it on other days; and he was quite sure that it was a greater inducement to people to drink more on other days when they were refused anything to drink on a particular day. He failed to see any necessity for a Bill of that kind, and he believed it to be a Bill merely on the lines of sentimental legislation; and if he could get anyone to join him he should certainly divide the House against the Bill.

Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN: I am anxious to say a few words on this Bill before the discussion closes, not as representing the Government, but simply because my name was originally on the back of the measure, and because the constituency I represent feels a deep and keen interest in the matter. Now, the rejection of the measure has been moved by the hon. and learned Member for Bridport—[Mr. Warton: No, no!]—at any rate, the hon. and learned Member opposed the measure in a speech in which it seemed to me that the chaff very largely preponderated over the wheat. But the hon. and learned Member is not a Welsh Representative, neither is the hon. Member for Guildford (Mr. Onslow); nor do I know that either of them is specially charged with the duty of looking after the interests of the Welsh people. I see that the hon. and learned Member for Bridport, however, is perfectly impartial in his opposition to the principle of this measure, because, on looking down the Paper, I find that he has visited with the same condemnation the English Sunday Closing Bill of the hon. Member for South Durham (Mr. J. W. Pease). I therefore attribute his opposition to the Bill, not to any particular prejudice against the subject of this particular measure, but to the possession of that bump of destructiveness which induces him to oppose any measure promoted from this side of the House which has escaped the attention of more pacifically disposed Members. What is the main argument of the hon. and learned Member? It is that Wales is so completely merged in England, that it has no right to any political identity of its own; he says—"You have no right to legislate departmentally on any Imperial subject." But, as the hon. and learned Member for Beaumaris (Mr. Morgan Lloyd) pointed out, the hon. and learned Member forgets that we do legislate departmentally on this very subject; because, on this question of the hours of closing public-houses, we have made one law for London, another for large towns in the Provinces, and another for rural districts. The argument of the hon. and learned Member, therefore, breaks down at the very threshold; but I am quite prepared to meet him on a broader ground. I think it is time that people should understand that in dealing with Wales you are really dealing with an entirely distinct nationality; a nationality more distinct than that of the Scotch or Irish, because Wales is separated from England not merely by race and by geographical boundaries, but by a barrier which interposes at every turn of life, and than which there is no more dividing barrier which can separate one people from another—I mean the barrier of language. Knowing, as I do, how distinct Welsh opinion is on this subject from English opinion, I say you cannot legislate for the one in all respects as you do for the other, and to assume that you can seems like a piece of Constitutional pedantry. Public opinion on this subject in Wales is far more advanced than it is in England—at least, I should call it so. The whole social and moral and religious atmosphere of the country is quite different from that of England, and I am only repeating the language of every Judge who has ever been on the Welsh Circuit when I say that crime is almost unknown; if hon. Members opposite will forgive me for the expression, I will say it is almost as unknown there as Conservatism. An hon. Member said the other day that the Welsh were a set of ignorant barbarians compared with the English; and in reply to that, all I can say is that I wish Her Majesty had a few more of such "ignorant, barbarian" subjects, for I would sooner have a sober barbarian than a civilized sot. The people of Wales are practically unanimous on this question. The argument against the adoption of Sunday closing in England, of which I have always felt the force, is that it does not do to legislate on these matters touching the licensing question ahead of public opinion. As the hon. Member behind me (Mr. Rathbone) has observed, it is no use passing a law which is sure to be broken. I have always felt great force in that argument. It was admitted, when the Irish Sunday Closing Bill was brought forward, that the strongest argument in favour of it was that a preponderating majority of the people of Ireland wanted it. Well, what was the majority of the people of Ireland that desired it? I think it was something like three or four to one. But in the case of this Welsh Bill, the people of the country in favour of it are in the proportion of 30 to 1, so that you have not only a preponderating majority, but an absolutely overwhelming one. The hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. Warton) turns this fact against us, and says—"If you can show that the whole of Wales is in favour of Sunday closing, it follows that no one will want to go to the public-house on Sunday. And he asks, why should you pass legislation to prevent the Welsh people from doing that which they do not want?" I grant that that is a specious argument; but it will not hold water. The hon. and learned Member knows that the competition of the publicans is so keen that if 1 out of 10 keeps open on Sunday, all the others will be obliged do the same. As a matter of fact, the thing was tried in one of the principal towns in my constituency. All the publicans, with the exception of one or two, agreed to take out a six-day licence. On account of the action of the publicans who refused to close on the Sunday, the majority found themselves unable to carry out their own wishes. They really wished to be protected against themselves, and perhaps this accounts for the peculiar fact that in Wales a considerable support of this measure comes from the publicans themselves; they are the persons who are urging you, as far as you can, to pass this Bill. The appeal which has been made by the hon. Member for Guildford (Mr. Onslow), I will not say on behalf of England, against this Bill, is entirely unsupported from Wales. It is well known what the result of the Irish Bill has been; Judges, magistrates, police constables, ministers of all denominations—Protestants, Catholics, and Presbyterians—all unite in saying that the passing of that Act has been of great benefit to Ireland. At any rate, I think if there were not a good deal of reason for the passing of this measure, you would not find such a universal consensus of public opinion in favour of it. People, as a general rule, are not so unanimous in favour of a Bill that is not wanted. Welshmen see the good that will ensue if the present Bill is passed; they say you have passed a similar Bill for Ireland and Scotland, why not mete out the same measure of justice to us? And I must say, before sitting down, that it seems to me this Sunday question is in a very abnormal and strange position. You do not allow by your laws any place of recreation or instruction, however harmless, to be opened for one single hour on Sunday, and yet you will allow, at the corner of every street, a gin-palace to open its door and invite people to enter; you will not allow the fountain of knowledge to play for one moment on Sunday; but you allow the fountains of beer to play from noon until night. A French humourist has said that in England the only two places of public resort open on the Sunday are the church and the gin-palace; and he added, somewhat cynically, that he thought the devil drove the better trade of the two. In conclusion, I ask the House not to be influenced in coming to a decision on this subject by hon. Gentlemen who can know nothing and do know nothing of the merits of the case. I ask you to give the people of Wales a boon which is demanded by nearly the whole of the inhabitants, and which is supported by almost every single Welsh Member in the House.

Mr. C. H. JAMES said, the feelings of the constituencies in North Wales had so far been spoken to by Representatives from that part of the Principality; but, as representing a large borough in South Wales, he wished to say the feeling in favour of the Bill was unanimous in Wales, and the proper observance of Sunday was a thing which ought to be fostered and not discouraged. The Welsh people filled the chapels, and, in many instances, the churches, on Sundays, whilst their gaols were half empty. Of that they had reason to be proud, and it was because they desired to extend the general observance of the day that they wished the Bill to become law. As to the refreshment-room question, the local railways were not used on Sundays, and the feeling was decidedly against Sunday travelling. That being so, the refreshment-rooms need not trouble any hon. Member. He should not say much more, for the subject seemed thrashed out. Nine-tenths of his constituents were, so to speak, hot that the Bill should pass; and he hoped hon. Gentlemen opposite would not stand in the way of the Welsh people getting what they wanted. They wanted to take away the temptation from the working people on Sunday; and as to the *bonâ fide* traveller, he was carefully provided for by a special clause in the Bill.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said, he felt bound to oppose the Bill, not because it was a Welsh Bill, but because it was class legislation of the worst kind. The hon. Member who moved the second reading (Mr. Roberts) spoke of the Petitions which had been presented in favour of it; but he (Mr. O'Sullivan) wished to remind the House that little reliance could be placed on Petitions. In the case of the Irish Sunday Closing Act many Petitions were presented; but, on examining them, it was found they were signed by persons who never used the public-houses, and who would not suffer any inconvenience if public-houses were closed on every day in the week. He had the suspicion that this would be found to be the case in the present instance. If the hon. Gentlemen who were promoting the Bill would consent to the opening of the public-houses in Wales for two hours on the Sunday—say from 2 o'clock to 4—he would withdraw his opposition to the Bill. It was unfair that even for one day of the week the only refreshment houses for the working classes should be closed. It was stated that all the people were in favour of the measure; but they must not forget that this was a working man's question. It was not a publican's question or a Member's question; and it was well known that the working classes in Wales, having no votes, had no influence in that House. ["Oh, oh!"] Well, the interest of hon. Members was sentimental and not practical. This was a Bill which affected the working classes, and it was very wrong that public-houses should be closed altogether one day in the week. He doubted whether, when the franchise was extended to the working classes in the country, a Sunday Closing Bill would pass in a hurry for either England, Wales, Ireland, or Scotland. It was absurd to say the publicans were anxious for the Bill, because if they did not wish to open on Sunday they could get a six-day licence. He should vote againt the Bill.

MR. BLAKE said, that as one who took an active part in passing the Sunday Closing Bill in Ireland, and who made every effort to enlist public opinion outside the House in favour of the movement, he hoped he might be permitted to say a few words in support of the measure, and to point out what he considered the very great advantages which had resulted from Sunday closing in Ireland. His hon. Friends the Members for Cork City (Mr. Daly) and Limerick County (Mr. O'Sullivan) had spoken against the measure. He believed that both those hon. Gentlemen were thoroughly candid, and, if appealed to in that House, he expected, notwithstanding their opposition to interference with the liquor traffic, would say that Sunday closing in Ireland had been productive of the most beneficial results. He was glad that the hon. Gentlemen did not dissent. [Mr. DALY dissented.] No; he was mistaken. He saw the hon. Member for Cork City dissented; he trusted before he had done to make a convert of the hon. Gentleman, for he would state some figures which he was sure his hon. Friend would candidly accept as accurate, and, if he did so, he could not deny the benefits of Sunday closing. His hon. Friend represented a city that was the most distinguished in Ireland for the manufacture and consumption of whisky; and it was only just to say that Cork whisky was the best in Ireland. Some time ago, he (Mr. Blake) visited the Island of Innisthraul, off the coast of Donegal, in an official capacity. On inquiring from a policeman as to how they occupied themselves in so sterile a spot, he informed him that the people there spent half their time in making whisky and the other half in drinking it. He did not know whether that could be said of Cork; but it was a fact that the most extensive manufacture in Cork was that of whisky; and, by the Return he had in his hand, it seemed to be increasing largely in consumption in that city also, and so the increase of drunkenness was, too, judging by the police Returns of arrests, which were tremendous. Those Returns showed that in 1878 in Cork City the number of arrests for drunkenness was 3,740, and in 1879, 4,508, showing an increase of 768. Drinking appeared to be increasing in the city of Cork from a date previous to 1878. It seemed difficult to account for that unless the Report of the Association for the Prevention of Intemperance truly stated—"From being the Mecca of temperance, Cork has passed to be one of the strongholds of the drink party." That was, indeed, a sad change for a city which was the scene of the first and greatest efforts of the Apostle of Temperance (Father Mathew). No voice was raised in this House to sustain a cause in which Cork, in better days, took the foremost place. The reduction in the amount realized by the sale of drink since the Sunday Closing Bill was passed, comparing 1878 with 1879, was £1,576,634, the latter being the first entire year after the passing of the Act. The spirits for home consumption were less in the first three months of 1880, as compared with the first three months of 1879, by 500,000 gallons, and the consumption of beer was less by a much greater amount. The arrests for drunkenness in Ireland were nearly 9,000 less in 1879, as compared with 1878; the arrests for drunkenness on Sundays in 1878 numbered 107,723, and in 1879 they were only 99,021, which represented a reduction of as much as 8,702 as compared with the previous year. The late hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. Redmond), who took a deep interest in the temperance cause in Ireland, and whose son, he (Mr. Blake) was glad to say, was following in his father's footsteps, moved for a Return showing the effect of the seven and the five hours' sale in the exempted cities in Ireland. In 1877 and 1878, in the five cities exempted from the Act, there were 2,820 arrests, and then the seven hours' sale on the Sunday was in operation; but in the same cities, when the five hours' sale was in operation, the arrests numbered 2,132, showing a reduction of 25 per cent. When the Sunday Closing Bill was introduced, the most evil effects were prognosticated. It was said there would be riots and disorder all over Ireland the moment the key was turned on the publican's lock. Everyone knew what attempts were made to frighten Parliament in this way. This prediction proved to be utterly groundless. Sunday closing had not been responsible for a single breach of the peace. On the contrary, Judge after Judge at the Assizes, and in the minor Courts in Ireland, referred to its beneficial effects, and attributed the decrease in assaults and other descriptions of offences to Sunday closing. Five cities in Ireland were exempted from the Act. One of these cities—Waterford—he (Mr. Blake) formerly represented, and it was one of the proudest circumstances of his life that he fought the public-house interest in that city and defeated it, taking his stand on Sunday closing and the Permissive Bill. For the *bonâ fide* travellers' clause he could speak from experience, because he happened to be the head landlord of two public-houses which, he was sorry to say, were doing what was called a roaring trade with *bonâ fide* travellers. The houses were situated six miles from Waterford, and, under the law, they were able to give drink to *bonâ fide* travellers. *Bonâ fide* travelling consisted in travelling from Waterford to the place where they could get drink if they pleased and returning. He was like some other landlords in Ireland, unable to get any rent, although they were doing a good business. He hoped, however, to get possession of the houses by law, and to convert them into coffee palaces. Drink was the greatest curse of Ireland, and it was a blessing to his country to close the public-houses for even one day in the week. He hoped they would eventually be closed for seven days in the week, and then the advantages arising from closing would be seven-fold. His hon. Friend the Member for Limerick (Mr. O'Sullivan) had spoken of this as class legislation, and had characterized the closing of the only resort of the majority of the population as a coercive measure. It was, so far as a class required it. He (Mr. Blake) was lately in America, where there were as many as 16,000,000 of Irish blood. He was sorry to say that many of his countrymen in America were just as distinguished for drinking as many of the Irish were at home; and more than one Bishop in America told him that drinking was one of the leading causes against the progress of the Irish in America. Some of them had said that if the Irish could only be temperate they could rule America. In the several districts of America where local option was in operation, the Irish formed a very important portion of the inhabitants. He had had opportunities of speaking to hundreds of them; and after prohibition took place they became amongst the most thriving and respectable citizens in America. What occurred in the North-West Territory of British Canada? It was about the coldest place in the world, for it was 55 degrees below zero; at certain times actually 5 degrees below the Arctic Regions. Drunkenness was predominant there at one time—the settlers drank, the Hudson's Bay hunters and agents drank, and the half-castes and Red Indians drank. In order to protect themselves against themselves, they passed a Prohibitory Bill, and the consequence was that drink was entirely precluded from the whole of the North-West Territory. Some medical men argued that, in so cold a region in winter, some drink was necessary. Local option had been some years in operation, and physicians told him that on no account would they recommend a re-introduction of drink; and that, save in very rare instances, had they ordered even wine for their patients. The people of Manitoba had petitioned to be joined to the North-West Territory; but the latter would not consent, unless Manitoba also gave up drink, which it was about to do. So much for the necessity of drink in cold countries. What occurred when drink was used under damp circumstances? Sir John Coode, when making the breakwater at Portland, had to employ some hundreds of men, and a great portion of the skilled artizans had to work under water. One-half of them were moderate drinkers. He induced some hundreds of them to become teetotallers; and his experience, which extended over several years, was that total abstainers, in point of endurance and health, far excelled even the moderate drinkers. He cordially congratulated the Members for Wales upon their unanimity in this matter, and especially on their having no exemption in the Bill as regarded particular towns. No matter what might be said to the contrary, if the figures which had been given to the House were true, he challenged his hon. Friends to say that the passing of the Bill for Ireland had not been productive of enormous advantages. When Ireland was temperate in other years it was the brightest period of her history; and with a return of drunkenness the greatest misfortunes had followed. It had been urged before, and probably would be urged again, that one of the reasons why drunkenness had so considerably decreased in Ireland within the last two years was on account of the distress — that the people were not placed in as favourable circumstances for getting drink as they were formerly. But the facts of the case did not bear out that view. Great distress existed in 1879; but in the most distressed districts the decrease of drunkenness was least. Where there was little distress the people were the most temperate. Where the greatest distress occurred in Ireland, there had not only been the greatest amount of drunkenness, but also the largest number of outrages, and his theory upon the matter was that the unfortunate people who perpetrated them before they did so often got drunk. In 1848, when the distress was greater in Ireland than had ever been the case either before or since, the same thing occurred; the consumption of drink increased where the distress was heaviest, and in the districts where drunkenness increased the largest number of outrages were committed. He was happy to see that there was every prospect of the passing of the present Bill. If it did not, it would certainly be a very great reproach to the House. He could not understand why they should hesitate to pass for Wales what had proved to be so highly beneficial for Scotland and Ireland. Seeing that there was such an amount of unanimity among the Welsh Members, and that they were supported by the strong feeling of their constituents, he trusted that the present measure would prove to be only the forerunner of total closing in Wales, and which he hoped, for the sake of the morality, happiness, and progress of the people, would soon be the case in the whole of the Three Kingdoms.

DR. KINNEAR, in supporting the Bill, said, that the tabulated results showed that during the past two years there had been a marked reduction in the consumption of intoxicating liquor in Ireland amounting to close upon £2,000,000. During that time there had been a decrease in the drunken arrests amounting to close upon 20,000. There had also been a reduction in the number of Sunday arrests for drunkenness amounting to 70 per cent. The value of this result was enhanced by the fact that the past two years had been a period of exceptional excitement.

MR. GLADSTONE: I will not detain the House many minutes with what observations I have to bring forward. The debate on this Bill has now proceeded for some time. Only a few hon. Members have expressed their views adverse to the Bill, and I have one or two remarks to make upon the question. In the first place, I have to remark that not one of the speeches in opposition to the Bill has proceeded from hon. Members representing Wales; and, in the second place, those who dissent from it have not said much that could influence the House in the rejection of the Bill, nor have they made any Motion for its rejection. They have, apparently, not thought it worth while or prudent to focus or place on record whatever adverse feeling there may be to be obtained against it. Undoubtedly, those two circumstances are a matter of great encouragement to those who have brought on, and are now pressing forward, the Bill. I apprehend that there is no single Welsh Member who would wish, or if there be any single Welsh Member who would wish, there is, I suspect, no Welsh Member who would venture to give his opposition to the Bill in a practical shape. I am not a Welsh Member; but I am a resident within the borders of Wales, and the question, therefore, addresses itself to me as one of particular interest. Now, I am not at all disposed, in a matter of this kind, to give too great scope to my own personal leanings or preferences. When I am asked to say whether public-houses should be closed upon Sunday in one or another part of the country, my reply would be, in the first place, that I do not think the question ought to be decided according to any individual preferences. It appears to me that this is eminently a question on which the feeling of one of the great sections of the country may be well ascertained; and when tested by an experience of some length of time, when placed entirely beyond doubt by sufficient evidence, it ought to command the greatest attention, and, I would even say, a willing assent in this House. That was so, many years ago, in the case of Scotland; and no one, I think, ventured in the case of Scotland seriously to oppose what influence or inspirations could be drawn from any other portion of the country to the granting of the boon Scotland asked for. We then were engaged for a length of time in a controversy on the case of Ireland; and then the same considerations were urged by those who supported the measure for closing public-houses on Sunday in Ireland, that the sentiment of the country was perfectly ascertained and established, and that, being established, it ought to be assented to by Parliament. In the case of Ireland, however, there was this great difference from the present case—that there were a certain number of the Irish Representatives who had maintained stoutly and persistently in their places that the true feeling of the Irish people had not been expressed, and that it was, to a considerable extent, adverse to the Bill. On that ground, and, undoubtedly, in consequence of their exertions, assisted by influence borrowed to a great extent from England, a very obstinate or resolute—I do not wish to use a word with an invidious meaning—resistance was offered to the Bill; but still, upon the whole, Parliament assented to the Bill, and Parliament, I think, assented to it under the influence of a general genuine pressure of Irish opinion, and not in deference to any merely theoretical view, or sectional movement apart from the public opinion of Ireland. Well, we have just heard from my hon. Friend behind me (Dr. Kinnear), and we have heard on various occasions and in various forms, accounts which, I must say, have been eminently consolatory and satisfactory to its promoters, with regard to the working of that measure in Ireland. Encouraged by what has happened in that case, the people of Wales have brought forward their Bill. The case of Wales is somewhat peculiar. Undoubtedly, it has not in the past been the habit of Parliament to look to Welsh opinion or to Welsh interests as a distinct, independent factor in the Constitution of this country, as it has been in regard to England and Ireland. Wales has been regarded as in a closer relation to ourselves than either Scotland or Ireland. But I am bound to say that it appears to me that we have pushed these considerations too far. On many subjects, in my opinion, there has been a great deal of occasion for complaint; on one subject, in particular, the treatment of Wales was almost a barbarous treatment, and that subject was the mode in which the patronage of the Welsh Church Establishment was administered. In that matter, English ideas and English views were allowed completely to override the wishes and the interests of the whole people of Wales. The Services of the Church in Wales were administered, for the most part, in a foreign tongue; the Bishops who superintended the action of the Church, in most instances, could not speak in Welsh even the words of the Confirmation Service which they had to administer to the people of the country; and that was an example of the length to which English ideas were pushed and forced upon the people. I am not going to set up an extravagant theory of nationality with regard to either Wales, Ireland, or Scotland; but this I will say—that where there is a distinctly formed Welsh opinion, as in the present case, upon a given subject which affects Wales alone, and the acceptance of which does not entail any public danger or public inconvenience to the rest of the Empire, I know no reason why a respectful regard should not be paid to that opinion. Now, this is a question with regard to which it appears to me to be eminently right and fit that the desire of the Welsh should be kindly entertained by Parliament. For this, after all, is not a question of

Constitutional, of political, or of Parliamentary control; it is not a question of Home Rule and the disintegration of the Empire which some hon. Gentlemen see as treading in the steps of Home Rule; it is a question of police; and being a question of police, it is also a question in which, on grounds of policy, Parliament itself has seen fit to distinguish between different portions of the country, not only at first between Scotland and the rest of the United Kingdom, and afterwards between England and Ireland, but also between different parts of England, according as the population is aggregated together in large towns, or as it is dispersed over rural districts. And, moreover, I must point out that the argument may be even carried a little further. There is an energetic Party in this House who are disposed to carry over, bodily, in the most unlimited manner, the whole discretion as to the having houses for the sale of spirituous and strong liquors at all into the hands of the local community. Even a very great number of those who do not go the whole length of my hon. Friend the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson), yet are of opinion that the local principle ought to be admitted to a very considerable extent; so that when, for example, my right hon. Friend, now President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain), made a proposal, really on the part of the town of Birmingham, to grant to Municipal Corporations great powers with respect to the consumption of or traffic in spirituous liquors, there were very many, although not a majority, in this House thought that a principle of that kind might be justly introduced into our law. I mention all this simply in illustration of the general proposition that this is a question in which, within due limits, local opinion may safely be allowed to have a very considerable weight; and, if so, I may join with that the modest claim on the part of Wales. Wales is, after all, a country with a people of its own, with a language of its own, with traditions of its own, with feelings of its own, and with especially religious feelings and associations of its own. And undoubtedly it is the religion of Wales which must be admitted to be prevailing in nineteen-twentieths of the parishes of Wales; and it is the religious associations of the people of Wales which very considerably enter into the general frame of opinion which has called forth this Bill. I I do not think, therefore, that in a question of this kind it is too much to say that the House would do well to give kindly attention to the wish which is almost unanimously entertained by the people of Wales in this matter. Do not let it be thought by those who are alarmed at the idea of the introduction of this question into England that the question for England will ever be decided one way or the other, or sensibly influenced by the fact of what we may do in Wales. The question, when it comes to be decided for England under the Bill which is already on the Table of the House, will have to be decided in reference to the state of public opinion in England. The essential condition, in my opinion, for the passage of any such Bill is that public opinion should have attained a very decided state as to its wisdom or propriety. It would not be fair, for example, in a case of this kind, to override the wishes of a very sensible minority. If a change of this kind is introduced into the law, that ought only to be done upon the recognition of something which approaches to a unanimity of feeling in the community to which it is to be applied. It ought not to be done, at any rate, by the mere triumph of a majority over a minority. I give no opinion, therefore, upon the question with respect to England, except this—that I am sure my hon. Friend (Mr. Stevenson) will not succeed in inducing the House to adopt the Bill which he has introduced, unless he is able to prove such a state of public opinion as constitutes a demand. The state of public opinion in Wales undeniably, I think, has reached such a state of maturity as to leave no doubt at all about the matter. I cannot conceive any assertion of any kind that can be made safely with regard to Wales, if we may not make the assertion that it is the earnest desire of the people of Wales, in the interest of the country, in the interest of the population, in the interest of the fathers of families in Wales, that this Bill should be passed. The Welsh, as far as I have ever had the means of judging, are upon the whole, and especially as you come among the poor Welsh, a very sober people. You may say that if they are a very sober people they are the less in need of this Bill; yes, that may be true. But is that a reason why the Bill should not be passed? Is there no such thing as the temptation to drunkenness? If the condition of the people with regard to the use of spirituous liquors has been improved up to such a point that the people, almost without exception, are desirous to set aside this temptation, would it not be a cruel thing on the part of Parliament if we, on the invitation of hon. Members who do not represent Wales, and have no title to speak on its behalf, were to refuse to set that temptation aside? I hope that this Bill may proceed to its second reading without division. If there were a division, I feel confident it would be accepted by an overwhelming majority of the House; and I further hope that after it has passed the second reading, if it be found that there is no material change in its scope, there will be no disposition on the part of any hon. Members who may object to the Bill to seek opportunities of obstructing its progress through the Forms of the House in the present state of Public Business, and that they will honourably and kindly allow it to pass forward to take its place in the Statute Book.

Mr. HUSSEY VIVIAN: I will not detain the House; but, after what has fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, I feel I must say that now that this Bill has been introduced, Her Majesty's Government should give us assistance in passing it through this Session. The right hon. Gentleman has recommended the House to receive the measure with kind consideration. I trust that it will do so; but in the event of any obstruction being offered—and we know how difficult it is, under the present Rules of the House, for private Members to carry Bills through—I hope we shall in this case receive the support and assistance of the Government. Nothing could be stronger than that which has fallen from the right hon. Gentleman. He has said that to deny this Bill to the people of Wales would be an act of great cruelty. That is precisely what I would venture to suggest to the House and to hon. Members who, on principle, oppose measures of this kind. The people of Wales are practically unanimous, therefore I hope no opposition may be offered to it on its future stages; and I think we shall have just and strong grounds for calling on Her Majesty's Government, in the event of such obstruction, to give such facilities as will enable us to pass the measure this Session.

Mr. P. A. TAYLOR: Sir, I have no intention of challenging a division on this question. [*Cries of* "Divide!"] I will not detain the House more than a minute or two, and I trust hon. Members will allow me to make an humble but emphatic protest against the conclusion the Prime Minister has come to. The right hon. Gentleman says this is a question of police; but it appears to me to be rather a question of principle. The duty of the police, I understand, is to protect the public from wrong-doers; but the object of this Bill is to enable a majority to trample on a minority. This is one of a class of measures of which we have seen too many of late—a class allowing the invasion of the rights of individuals at the bidding of a majority. The tyranny of the individual has been replaced by the tyranny of the majority. We have now come to a condition of things in which we are told what a man shall drink and what he shall not drink, and on what day or days, and I do not know why we should not equally allow the majority to decide what he shall eat and wherewithal he shall be clothed. My idea of a State under a democracy is the individual liberty of every unit in that democracy, and not the idea that a mere numerical majority shall subject individuals to control in matters on which the State has no right to interfere with them. We have our Contagious Diseases Acts and other measures all interfering with the rights of individuals. If all Wales is in favour of this Bill, my objection is intensified, for there is no need of it. If there is only a small majority, there is no strong case for it, and the number who wish to tyrannize are few; but if there is a large majority the tyranny is the more crushing. The right hon. Gentleman says this is a local question; but I cannot agree with him. The question is a national one—a question of individual freedom—therefore, I offer my humble protest against this and all similar Bills.

Colonel MAKINS said, he agreed with the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. P. A. Taylor) in his condemnation of the principle which underlay the present Bill and all similar measures; and he wished it to be clearly understood, with reference to the appeal just made by the Prime Minister, that if the Conservatives abstained from taking a division on the Bill, they were not to be understood as admitting the principle as applicable to England. He had abstained from interfering with the progress of the Irish Sunday Closing Bill, because it had appeared to him that it was really wished for in Ireland, and because the circumstances there were entirely different from those of this country.

MR. SHAW said, he would not have interposed in the debate if he had not thought it necessary to say a word or two in defence of county Cork. The inhabitants of that county had been represented by the hon. Member for Waterford (Mr. Blake) as spending one-half of their time in making whisky, and the other half in drinking it; but he (Mr. Shaw) believed they were as sober a people as any in the world. As Irishmen had not the habit of eating as well as Englishmen, a little drink affected them, and the moment an Irishman began to stagger a policeman took him up. Until recently they had nothing better to do; but just now, perhaps, they were better employed, and so there were fewer arrests for drunkenness. He would not oppose the present Bill, because they were told it was the wish of the people of Wales that it should be passed; but he asked whether it was really desired by the whole of the people of Wales, or only by the religious people of the Principality? He had great sympathy with the irreligious, and he feared that the irreligious might be sat upon by the religious, in these times, in all directions. It was possible that in Wales there might be poor people who had no means of keeping beer over from Saturday for their Sunday dinner; and he would suggest that a clause should be inserted in the Bill allowing public-houses to keep open for an hour or two on Sunday. Would the hon. Gentlemen who were so anxious to support morality propose such a clause? The philanthropists, in his opinion, were overdoing these things. There appeared to be no doubt that Sunday closing had produced a good effect in Ireland, because so much drunkenness was not seen as formerly; but he (Mr. Shaw) had to drive six miles to church on Sundays, and he had never seen many drunken people in the country as since the passing of the Irish Bill. It was a curious thing that both the religious people and the publicans should be quite at one as to the good effect of Sunday closing. They did not see so many drunken people as hitherto—that was to say, the religious people did not see so many drunken people; but the publicans sold more than ever. Since the passing of the Bill he had travelled a good deal about the country, and had come to the conclusion that, although whisky drinking was less common than it used to be among the middle classes, it was not among the working classes—in fact, there was more drinking among the working classes. The philanthropists might go on in this line; but they were not doing the people a bit of good. The remedy for drinking habits was to be found in other channels. He was not surprised at the Irish people turning into the public-houses from their wretched cabins. If, instead of political agitation and the keeping up of "shams," the philanthropists used their money in endeavouring to raise the moral and social position of the people, it would be much better occupied, and they would begin to find their objects realized. He did not think those objects were to be gained by measures of this kind.

SIR EDWARD REED said, that as the Representative of one of the largest seaport towns in South Wales (Cardiff), where the population was very mixed, he was perfectly astonished at the enormous preponderance of public sentiment there in favour of this measure; and he felt it his duty to say that that was not by any means a religious movement, or a religious movement only, but one which was sympathized in by the people as a whole. Not less than 82 per cent of the population of Cardiff were in favour of that measure, and when the ratepayers were impartially canvassed it was found that only 4 per cent were prepared to declare against it. He hoped that the Bill would be allowed to pass through all its stages without opposition.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 163; Noes 17: Majority 146.—(Div. List, No. 193.)

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Friday*.

BANKING LAWS AMENDMENT BILL.

(*Mr. Anderson, Mr. Ramsay, Mr. Charles M'Laren.*)

[BILL 46.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. ANDERSON, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said: The object of this Bill is to get rid of a monopoly which applies more or less to the whole country; but which applies in a pre-eminent degree to Scotland. When Sir Robert Peel passed his Banking Acts of 1844-5, the effect of which was to give a monopoly of note issue to a certain number of existing banks, he allowed no banks afterwards established to have any right of issuing notes. It is, however, incredible that it was the intention of those Acts to give a perpetuity of that monopoly, either of the note issue of the country, or of the trade in banking; and I have no doubt had Sir Robert Peel lived he would, shortly after the passing of them, have passed other Acts to get quit of that monopoly, and prevent it being crystallized as it has now been, until the banks believe they have a right to it, and that it would be an interference with their rights to take it from them. In England the monopoly has not been so completely established as in Scotland, for the simple reason there have been no £1 notes in England; and, therefore, the issue of bank notes is not of the same value to the English banker as it is in Scotland. But in Ireland, if not quite so great, the monopoly is nearly as great as in Scotland. There has been little done in Ireland since 1845 in the establishment of new banks, and the Act of Sir Robert Peel has been the cause of that. The object of the present Bill is to do away with that monopoly, by enabling any bank, whether an existing or a new bank, to have a note issue based on Government securities, in order that the notes might have a security, which the bank notes now existing do not have. The notes I propose to be based on Consols are to be payable on demand in gold; therefore, it would be absolutely necessary for all banks that take advantage of this Bill, and adopt an issue of their own—it would be necessary for them to keep such a reserve of gold in hand as would redeem the notes to any extent they might be asked for. The total amount I propose to issue, and which may be issued in this way, is £70,000,000 sterling. Now, £70,000,000 to be added to the note circulation of the country may, in one point of view, be considered a large sum; but it is not so when it is properly considered. The present gold circulation is probably not less than from £100,000,000 to £120,000,000. That circulation of gold is simply rubbing about in the pockets of the people, getting worn away and deteriorated, and every now and then we have to make up a loss of £500,000 or so, that arises simply because of this rubbing and the processes of artificial sweating that go on. The paper circulation will be redeemable in gold, and would not be subject to such deterioration. It would be a great improvement upon the present system; and I do not doubt if the people in England had the opportunity of taking £1 notes, if they wanted to have them, to any large extent, that the £120,000,000 now circulating amongst the people would be greatly reduced. That gold is now circulated entirely unprofitably, and the idea that it is a good thing to keep gold in circulation, and that if you have a paper circulation you will drive the gold out of the country is perfect nonsense; because if it is needed for your circulation, you cannot use it for any other purpose, and I want to free it from that circulation in order that it may be used for some other purpose, and that the country may have the profit of its own currency by charging the bankers an interest of 2 per cent on the notes they are allowed to issue. These are the principal objects of the Bill. It is a national Bill, and applies to Scotland, England, and Ireland. Its principal use would be adding from out of that £70,000,000 a considerable sum to the note circulation of England; but it would add nothing to the note circulation of Scotland, as we have all that we require. That circulation, however, has the disadvantage that the notes are only being circulated by certain banks, and that this monopoly of issue gives a monopoly in the trade of banking also. If it were open to new banks to start in Scotland, those banks would step in for a share of the circulation, but would not add £1 to the amount of note circulation already in use in Scotland, because it is not needed, being at present, as I have said, sufficient to meet every requirement. It would not make much difference to Ireland. As regards England, the effect would be to take a great quantity of gold out of circulation and substitute for it £1 notes. There would be no kind of forcing the circulation; it would only give the people the opportunity of taking the notes if they wanted to have them, and the Bill would not force them upon any unwilling district in England. I myself have not the slightest doubt, if they had that opportunity, they would avail themselves of it largely; and for that reason I have named the maximum at £70,000,000, and no further privileges could be given without further application to Parliament. The first operative clause is to institute an administrative officer to be appointed by the Treasury. The object of that is that there shall be someone directly connected with the Government, and under the control of the Government, who shall be responsible for the acts and doings of all the banks of issue in this country. Even if this Bill were not to pass at all, I hold it is absolutely necessary such an officer should be appointed. When the City of Glasgow Bank failed, not long ago, it was found that the managers of that bank had tampered with the gold reserve. They had made Returns for years to Government of the amount of gold they had in reserve against their notes, and those Returns were proved to have been fraudulent. Returns of this kind have been systematically made to the Commissioners of Stamps and Taxes since 1844-5, and during all those years nothing has been done to check them or to examine them; they have simply taken them for granted as they came to hand. If there had been an officer such as a treasurer to the banks, commissioned as I propose, to come in between the banks and the Executive, such a fraud as that which was committed by the City of Glasgow Bank would have been impossible; therefore, quite apart from the other provisions of this Bill, I consider the appointment of such an officer highly desirable. Having appointed him, his purpose should be to take charge of such Government securities, Consols, and others as are deposited by the banks for the amount of the note issue they propose to use, and which they are not bound to take advantage of to any larger extent than they please, but when they take it they must pay 2 per cent for it. I propose, as some concession to the existing banks of issue, to allow them to keep the issue they now have for 10 years free, without any charge, then for a second term of 10 years on payment of only 1 per cent for the note issue, and after that period of 20 years has expired, all existing banks, both the old ones and the new ones, would come on the same footing, all would pay the 2 per cent to Government for the privilege of issuing notes to the country. This is not exactly the same as a State issue; but it has a great many of the advantages of a State issue, and it would be much more easy to adapt it to existing conditions than it would be to cancel all existing notes, and for the Government to establish a new system of Government issue. This proposal would have the advantage of giving the country a large part of the profit of the currency of the country, which, at present, is either lost altogether by people using gold uselessly, or monopolized by the banks of issue. It may, perhaps, be said that the banks of issue, if they had to pay 2 per cent, would have to make their charges to the public so much higher to cover that; but that, I maintain, is not a correct argument. The public and the customers of the bank are not identical. I would have no objection to the banks charging their customers higher, if they found it necessary to do so. I do not believe they would find any necessity for such a thing, because at present the banks pay very much too high dividends; but supposing they did, that would not be charging it upon the whole; whereas the benefit of charging the 2 per cent on the circulation would be a benefit to the whole nation, because the 2 per cent would go into the Revenue of the whole country, and if there be any profit on the note issue it ought to be held by the country. Well, Sir, there are many clauses providing for safety of issue and for redemption. I believe one of the objections made to the Bill will be that I am proposing to add £70,000,000 to the note circulation of the country without being dependent in any way on the flux or efflux of gold. That is quite true; and I will explain why I propose that. One reason why I do not think it necessary to make a new currency depend on the flux or efflux of gold is that the currency of the country is a matter affecting home trade; whereas efflux and influx of gold should affect only foreign trade—the domestic transactions of the country ought not to be so hampered, merely because £1,000,000 or so of gold may leave the Bank of England—and that all we want is a currency in the country to enable us to carry on the daily transactions. Another reason is, I do not look upon it in the light of new circulation, because the £1 notes which I propose to issue would not go out without displacing something else. I mean by it to displace gold that is at present uselessly and perniciously employed, losing interest, and wasting away in the pockets of the people. I do not know what other objection may be raised to the Bill. It applies to the three countries; and the two largest benefits will be these—one giving to England the choice of £1 notes, if it desires to have them; the other, and the principal one, to the benefit of Scotland—the breaking of the bank monopoly that has existed there since 1845. Since the Bank Act was passed by Sir Robert Peel in 1845 not one single new bank has been established in Scotland. Though the population has increased, though the wealth and trade of the country have enormously increased, not one bank has been added, but several banks have ceased to exist; and, consequently, our banking is absolutely a greater monopoly than what Sir Robert Peel made it by his Act. I might go on to explain it is a pernicious monopoly; but it is almost unnecessary to do that to a Free Trade House of Commons, as every monopoly is pernicious. But this monopoly is specially so. It is pernicious to our local trade in every way, because, in order to keep up their large dividends, they charge much larger rates for discounting and banking facilities in Scotland than the London bankers do for their customers in London, and the Scotch banks are able to do that entirely in consequence of this monopoly. They have a meeting in Edinburgh once a week or once a fortnight at which they fix the future rates that are to be charged, and in consequence no one can say anything to them. They can do what they like, and, as a matter of fact, they do, because they know that no new bank can be started to oppose them. The consequence is that they systematically charge the high rates to which I have alluded. Well, Sir, another great objection to the system that I may specially mention is that the banks in Scotland are not sufficient for the amount of accumulated deposits in the country. Those banks have something like £80,000,000 of deposits in their hands, and they are unable at the high rates they charge to employ the whole of those deposits in Scotland, and in order to keep up their charges, they send large sums of money to compete with the London bankers in the London markets. They discount to London merchants in London at a lower rate of discount than they do to their own merchants in Glasgow and Edinburgh; therefore, the money they have in their hands, which is essentially Scotch capital, is sent to London, and used to compete with the London bankers. Under this Bill, if it be fortunate enough to pass even in a limited form, and only apply to Scotland, that monopoly and pernicious system would be broken down, new banks would be able to be started and get some share in the business, and merchants would not be systematically oppressed as they are now. I have heard of many cases of the greatest oppression on the part of those bankers. A man is not able to speak out his real opinion on this question in Scotland. There is the most complete slavery of opinion there on the question of banking. They can do what they like with the Scotch merchants, and the merchants cannot say a word about it. I was told the other day that a merchant had been so grievously wronged that he went to a lawyer to know what he was to do, and the lawyer, a prudent man, said—"Just pocket it, and do nothing; because if you do anything you will be 'Boycotted' by all the other banks, and need never expect to do any profitable business in this town again so long as the monopoly exists." I shall propose, if this is objected to now as a general Act, to re-introduce it next Session in a limited form, applying to Scotland alone. In its general form, it undoubtedly interferes with some of the exclusive privileges of the Bank of England; and as, in all probability, the Bank of England would refuse to consent to the Bill, it was necessary to put in a clause enabling the Treasury to go to the Bank of England and give them notice of an intention to terminate their contract, and no doubt that would bring them to reason within the year that you, Sir, have the right to give them notice for the termination of the contract, and then matters might go on as before. But if the Bill is limited to Scotland, it would be unnecessary to mention the Bank of England at all in the Bill, as the Bank of England has not for its notes even "legal tender" in Scotland. I do not wish to take up the time of the House by going into a long discussion on other currency questions, and I will conclude by moving the second reading.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Anderson.*)

MR. R. N. FOWLER said, he had given Notice of his intention to oppose the Bill, because it struck him as a strange thing that a Bill affecting the whole of the United Kingdom should be brought in by three Scotch Members. [MR. ANDERSON: Two Scotch Members.] He was aware that one of the three was the Representative of an English constituency; but, if he was not much mistaken, that hon. Gentleman was the son of the late senior Member for Edinburgh, who was much respected in the House, and he therefore took it that all his ideas of banking matters had been obtained in Scotland. Be that, however, as it might, he thought that, in a Bill of the present description, at least the names of one English and one Irish Member ought to have appeared on its back. He was, however, opposed to the Bill on other grounds. The hon. Member for Glasgow (Mr. Anderson) had complained of the banking system as a monopoly; but he (Mr. R. N. Fowler) believed it was perfectly open to the hon. Gentleman to start a bank in Scotland as soon as he chose. One would, indeed, have thought that the hon. Member, holding the position he did as senior Member for the largest constituency in Scotland, would have been a very suitable person to act as Chairman of a Joint Stock Bank, or he might, as a private individual, start a bank of his own. If, therefore, the state of matters in Scotland was as he had described, then he could not but think that the hon. Gentleman had his remedy as a private individual, rather than as a Member of the House. It might be perfectly true that the note circulation was a monopoly; but there might be a great deal of good banking business done apart from that note circulation. In the City of London there was no bank that had a note circulation. They carried on their business quite independent of any such circulation, and that fact seemed, he thought, to point out that at least one bank might be established in the city of Glasgow without a circulation. His principal objection, however, to the Bill was this—that the subject was too large to be dealt with by a private Member. No doubt, the hon. Gentleman had, to a certain extent, achieved his object. He had made his speech, and had an opportunity of pressing his views upon the attention of the Government. He could not expect the Bill to pass that Session, seeing that it was of so sweeping a character. It was 50 years since £1 notes were abolished in England, and there had been no wish expressed in England for the revival of those notes. If those notes were to be revived, it was a question of so much importance that it could only be dealt with satisfactorily by Government; and there were, he thought, certain advantages in the present Government taking this matter in hand, because the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister was, he believed, the only survivor of Sir Robert Peel's Cabinet, and was, therefore, in a particularly good position to consider the whole question when he had a little more leisure than he was likely to have that Session, and make any alterations that he considered desirable in the Acts of 1844 and 1845. Personally, however, he (Mr. R. N. Fowler) thought that the present system of notes was perfectly satisfactory; and, in these circumstances, he was opposed to the circulation that the Bill proposed, of 70,000,000 of £1 notes. He begged to move its rejection.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. Robert Fowler.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

MR. W. FOWLER said, he entirely agreed with the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. R. N. Fowler) in thinking that the measure was of such a sweeping character that it ought not to be put forward on the responsibility of a private Member. It was a matter that should be dealt with by the Government if taken up at all. But that was not his only objection. The hon. Member for Glasgow (Mr. Anderson) had attached great importance to the issue of notes; but it seemed to him that this was a mistake. The fact was that merchants could carry on a very large business, day after day, and never see a bank note. That was, in fact, done by many people in London. The business of the country depended upon the capital which there was engaged in business, and on the intelligence of those who used it. If they had abundance of security to offer, they would have no difficulty in carrying on transactions. It was the people who had no securities to offer that made the complaints. He looked with great suspicion upon that disposition to increase the circulation of notes. It would, he thought, be a most curious point if they could ascertain what number of notes were actually circulated for the purpose of business day after day in this great city. He believed the House would be perfectly astonished by the remarkably small number of notes so used. Then there was another point. The hon. Member for Glasgow had talked about the internal circulation as having no connection with gold. He differed from him in the view entirely. The English of it seemed, indeed, to be to drag them back to the old unscientific system of currency which was in operation 70 or 80 years ago. The principle which Sir Robert Peel had given effect to was that the circulation of the country should fluctuate with the gold that was in the country, and this was the true principle on which the circulation should be conducted. He should be very sorry to go back to an uncertain circulation of notes, and he hoped they would keep to their present scientific system, with one exception, on which, indeed, he agreed with the hon. Member for Glasgow—namely, in regard to the £1 note. He was one of those curious persons who thought there was no reason why the £1 note should not be a good thing for England as well as for Scotland and Ireland, and he hoped the Government would take into consideration before long the question of £1 notes; because, if these were brought into use, he believed they would liberate £30,000,000 in the shape of bullion which was now really useless. They would also be found very useful for the transmission of small sums through the Post Office. So far he agreed with the hon. Member for Glasgow; but he could not go beyond it. All the other parts of the Bill were objectionable, especially that part taking away the privileges of existing banks. He was very much surprised at what the hon. Member had said about the people of Scotland being oppressed by the banks. He never knew a more independent people than the Scotch, and it struck him as strange that matters should be represented in this way. No doubt there might be people with large overdrafts who thought they had cause of complaint; but people with a large balance at their credit were not likely to be oppressed. He believed, indeed, that the banks of Scotland had done enormous benefit to the country. He recollected very well that a friend of his had told him that he had been taken to see a well-cultivated valley in Sutherland, which, he was informed by the agent of the owner, had been brought under cultivation by the banks—that was to say, the banks had advanced the money to the farmers, who otherwise could not have effected the improvements. And yet they were told that the banks oppressed the people. They might, perhaps, be the oppressors of an impecunious few who could not pay their debts; but he did not think they were oppressors of the general community. He regarded the Bill as one which was absolutely uncalled-for, and should therefore support the hon. Gentleman opposite in his opposition to it.

Mr. WILLIAMSON said, he was utterly opposed to the scope of the Bill, whether it was sought to apply it to Scotland or England separately, or together, and hoped the House would emphatically reject it. The hon. Member for Glasgow (Mr. Anderson) had spoken of the Bill as affecting only their domestic currency; but he had lost sight of the connection between that currency and their foreign indebtedness. If it were not that their business was managed with great skill, their present metallic reserves would be decidedly insufficient. It was only because of a skilful arrangement of banking and finance transactions that they were able to do with so small a metallic reserve as they had. If they were a country living on their own resources, having no foreign indebtedness, then there might be some argument brought forward in support of the Bill; but, seeing that they lived almost entirely on their foreign trade, it was quite different. When, it might be, a calamity occurred through a bad harvest or otherwise, and they became largely indebted to foreign countries, and had to export £2,000,000, or £3,000,000, or more of gold from the Bank of England, there was an immediate contraction in the circulation of the country leading to disastrous consequences often. There was, he thought, no force whatever in what had been said about the City of Glasgow Bank. Because the Directors of that bank had tampered with their gold reserve, it was argued that there should be no gold in the vaults of the bank. But if men wanted to commit fraud with gold, they might tamper with securities as well. The men in question were in collusion to commit fraud in any shape that offered, and so the argument of the hon. Member fell to the ground. The Bill was monstrous in its conception, and he was perfectly sure that the hon. Member for Glasgow had not the sympathy of Scotch business men in bringing it forward. He trusted the hon. Member would not press it.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK said, he felt bound to join in the appeal just made that the Bill should not be pressed upon the House, though he sympathized very much with the circumstances which had induced the hon. Member for Glasgow (Mr. Anderson) to introduce it. He certainly objected to the extension of such a measure to England, and thought it would have been better if the Bill had been confined to Scotland. The fact that there were only about half as many banks in that country now as at the time of the passing of the Bank Acts was, no doubt, due to the monopoly of circulation which those banks possessed. There could be no doubt, therefore, thatt hat monopoly demanded the serious consideration of Government; but in England there was no such monopoly. The existing Scotch banks, he would admit, had been most honourably managed; but it was none the less important that there should be the power of starting new banks. Thus far he agreed with the hon. Member for Glasgow; but he was unable to accept the Bill, because he thought the remedy provided by it was worse than the evil. This Bill raised very grave questions, and proposed to place our currency on an entirely new basis. In the first place, it proposed the re-issue of £1 notes. He thought that before taking any such step as that the matter should be carefully looked into by the House, for it must be remembered that, notwithstanding their undoubted convenience, these notes were deliberately abandoned after long trial. Their experience of the use of such notes had not been of an assuring nature, for they found when they were in use in this country they led to an enormous amount of forgery. It was often said that £1 notes were not forged in Scotland; but if he were not afraid of wearying the House with details, he thought it would be possible to explain the reason of this. He did not say, indeed, that with the improved methods of the present day as regarded engraving forgery might not be prevented; but they ought surely to have evidence on the point, and it seemed to him that the diminution of forgery was much more due to facility in tracing the notes than to the improvement in manufacture. Without, then, sharing the late Member for Waterford (Mr. Delahunty's) opinion, that all the troubles of Ireland were due to £1 notes, he was not prepared to see them re-issued in England without very careful consideration. If a Committee were proposed to be appointed to re-consider the whole question raised in the Bill, he should certainly have to consider the matter before he could see his way to opposing its appointment. Again, the Bill would replace sovereigns by paper money. He would not enter into the difficult and intricate, though interesting, question whether a metallic circulation was desirable or not. The House would, however, remember that the highest authorities had been of opinion that it was very desirable to maintain our gold circulation. They had considered that it was a security to commerce, that it enabled them more easily to meet adverse exchanges, and to tide over periods of depression or of bad harvests, and that these advantages far outweighed the loss of interest which it involved. Considering the enormous magnitude of our transactions, it was obviously most desirable to retain a large stock of gold. He must admit in passing that it was anomalous and not just to England that the undeniable burden of maintaining a stock of gold for the advantage of the whole United Kingdom should fall on England alone. He submitted to the hon. Member for Glasgow that even if these authorities were mistaken, if the advantages of a gold circulation were chimerical, still, they ought surely not to reverse their policy on so vital a question without careful inquiry and ample time for discussion and consideration. Again, there were financial authorities who considered that such a Bill as that would tend materially to create panics. When the rate was low, there would be a loss, or, at least, an infinitesimal profit on the issue of such notes. At present, for instance, money lent from day to day was worth less than the 2 per cent named in the Bill. But, as the rate of discount rose, it would become more and more profitable to issue notes under the provisions of the Bill. Such notes would, therefore, be created, and, of course, would drive sovereigns out of circulation and out of the country just at a time when it was desirable that their stock of gold should be increased rather than diminished. The process would continue, and gold would gradually go abroad, until, at last, distrust would arise, the notes would be discredited and brought in for payment, creating a panic, and, finally, a crash, very injurious to the interests of the commerce of the country. He did not say that this would necessarily be the effect of such a Bill; but, certainly, many high authorities were of opinion that it would work in the manner mentioned. There were many other points raised by the Bill; but he trusted that the hon. Member for Glasgow would be satisfied with having had a discussion on this important question, and he hoped that House would not, without further consideration or inquiry, hastily tamper with the laws regulating the currency, the security and stability of which were so essential to the prosperity of the great mercantile interests of the country.

Mr. SHAW said, the hon. Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) had spoken of our currency system as a scientific system; but, if it was so, he (Mr. Shaw) could not say he had much admiration for science as concerned in the subject, for he was of opinion that nothing could be more unscientific than that system. Let them note, as an instance, the note circulation as it now existed. The hon. Member stated that the note circulation was based on gold; but was it based on gold? Nothing of the kind. The Bank of England was empowered to issue a certain amount—£11,000,000 in Consols—but beyond that it was bound to issue in gold. The Bank of Ireland also issued on Consols, and very seldom went beyond its authorization powers; but the issue of none of the other banks in Ireland was based on gold. With regard to Scotland, none of its banking issues were based on gold. The same might also be said of the country banks in England; but he believed that, as a general rule, the banks both in England and Scotland were safe enough; but he believed, at the same time, that our system of common currency was perfectly absurd, and ought not to be left in its present state for a single year. He hoped most sincerely that some of the suggestions of his hon. Friend the Member for Glasgow (Mr. Anderson) would be adopted. He disagreed with the suggestion that a Committee should be appointed to consider the question, for there could be no greater authority on the matter than the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who understood the subject thoroughly; but when the right hon. Gentleman brought in a Bill some years ago, alike in some respects to the Bill of his hon. Friend, the Bank of England was up at once, and he had to drop the Bill. He hoped the Government would take up the Bill, because it was too much for a private Member to undertake. This was a subject in which all the great interests of the country were materially concerned, and a measure of this kind ought to proceed from the Government. At the same time, he did not feel the slightest jealousy because there were no Irish Members' names on the back of the Bill. As a matter of pure economy, there could be nothing more uneconomical than the present system, which involved a large amount of wear and tear, the cost of which was borne by the public. His hon. Friend the Member for the University of London said, if a certain proportion of notes were issued, that gold would go out of the country. He (Mr. Shaw) was at a loss to understand how that could be. Gold could only go out of the country if somebody wanted to buy something somewhere else; but, on the other hand, the effect of an improved and secured paper currency would be to bring into the Metropolis £30,000,000 in gold, which would stimulate greatly and regulate the trade of the country. At present, when more than a certain quantity of gold was sent away a panic ensued. There should be no such feeling as that in such a place as London. In his opinion, the reserve of gold ought to be double the amount at which it stood at present. The gold could only be got out of the places where it was now lying idle simply by keeping the reserve at a uniform amount, instead of allowing it to fluctuate as was the case at present. He considered the Scotch banks enjoyed a great monopoly; but he did not believe they were great tyrants. His own experience of banks was that, instead of combining, they did all they could to do business irrespective of each other. If one did anything unhandsome in one street, its neighbour in the next street was on the look-out for the customer. Some banks had been established in Ireland; but they had a loss of about 2 per cent in the note issue on their capital, and he thought they ought not to be weighted by legislation in that respect. The poorer a country was the more need it had of capital; but in a country like England, which was so rich and prosperous, it was possible to do anything without injuring it; but that was not the case as regards Ireland. In that country, where every pound and every shilling was wanted, to simplify the currency of the country was to do a good and useful thing. He believed the principle of the Bill was sound, and he hoped the Government would consent to carry out some such reforms as were indicated in the measure, as he believed they would be doing a wise thing in trying in some way to meet the existing evils.

LORD FREDERICK CAVENDISH: I hope that the hon. Member in charge of the Bill (Mr. Anderson) will be contented with the discussion that has taken place, because I do not think that anyone who may be here present can doubt that this is a question far too wide and too important to be entered upon in the latter half of a Wednesday Afternoon Sitting. There is no question but that the Bill of my hon. Friend opens up all the principles of our banking legislation and of the Bank Acts of 1844-5, and in many respects it is based upon diametrically opposite principles from those incorporated in those Acts. In some of the provisions of the Bill, and in some of the arguments of my hon. Friend, I recognize principles which the Act authorized. My hon. Friend stated that, in his opinion, the profits of note issue should belong to the State. I think that is an opinion which Sir Robert Peel and his Colleagues would have frankly endorsed, and, as far as circumstances allowed, have acted upon. Secondly, he stated that there was no right of perpetuity of a monopoly of note issue. There, again, Sir Robert Peel would have agreed with my hon. Friend. They recognized for the time existing rights; but they most carefully guarded themselves against any assumption whatever that these privileges of note issue should be held in perpetuity. It is perfectly true that nothing has been done since the time of this Act to put an end to these exclusive privileges; but it must be remembered that these privileges were accompanied by various restrictions, and that Parliament has been very jealous, and I think I may say has always refused to allow the removal of those restrictions upon banking, unless it was accompanied with a review of those privileges of note issue. In the course of this discussion we have had some most interesting remarks made upon the results of this monopoly of note issue. I think that when we consider, that, in spite of the expanding trade and increase of the population of Scotland, the number of banks now in Scotland is very little more than half what it was in 1845, it is a most remarkable fact, and it is difficult to doubt that the possession of this monopoly of note issue, if it is the cause of this diminution in the number of Scotch banks, acts in some degree prejudicially to the interests of Scotland. So far I am able to go along with my hon. Friend; but there I am afraid our agreement must cease. His Bill is based upon principles in many respects diametrically opposed to the great Bank Acts of 1844 and 1845. The principle upon which note issue was regulated by those Acts was not, as the hon. Member for Cork County (Mr. Shaw) said, that note issue should rest solely upon bullion; but it was, as I understand it, that the issue of notes should, under the system of those Acts, vary exactly, according to the same laws, as it would have done if it had rested solely upon bullion. That object has been fully attained. All those alarms which were so constant as to the convertibility of a note have ceased for ever; and I think it is a most emphatic testimony to the success of those Acts, that whereas in the early years after those Acts had been passed it was found necessary in times of difficulty to suspend their action, that has not been the result during the last 15 years. On the other hand, three suspensions of the Acts took place in little more than the first 20 years after the passing of the Acts. Another object of the Bank Acts was to maintain an ample supply of bullion in times of commercial difficulty. That object has likewise been attained; but that, I venture to say, would be entirely lost if the measure of my hon. Friend was accepted. He proposes to enlarge the currency by some £40,000,000 sterling. As I understand it, he would have £70,000,000, in notes, to be issued, in addition to what I may term the present authorized note issues; but would put an end to the amount now issued against bullion. That amount we may, for the purposes of argument, put at £30,000,000 for England and Scotland; and, therefore, my hon. Friend would propose that the banks should issue about £40,000,000 more than the present note circulation. I do not think there can be any doubt that this £40,000,000 of notes would displace, in process of time, £40,000,000 in coin, which would be exported abroad. The result would be that our amount of bullion would be diminished to that extent, and our amount is now narrow enough in this country. I will ask the House what is the loss of interest that is incurred upon this £40,000,000 of gold, compared with the loss by a money panic in this country? My hon. Friend threw out some hints that he would be prepared to limit the Bill to Scotland. Some of the arguments I have given would equally apply to that case; but I admit the whole question of Scotch banking is thoroughly one for consideration in this House, and if my hon. Friend should, in the succeeding Session, bring in a measure on this subject alone, I have no doubt the House would give it very careful consideration. I hope, however, my hon. Friend will rest satisfied with the discussion which he has raised, and will withdraw the Bill.

Mr. ANDERSON said, that if the bringing in of the Bill had had no other result than the speech of the hon. Member for Cork County (Mr. Shaw), he (Mr. Anderson) would have been justified in introducing it. That speech was a valuable contribution to the knowledge of the House on the subject of banking and currency. He was also pleased with the speech of the hon. Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock), because it showed a considerable advance on the banking ideas of a few years ago. He had admitted the desirability of replacing with something else at least £30,000,000 of the £70,000,000 he had put in the Bill. On the other hand, the speech of the hon. Member connected with banking on the other side of the House (Mr. R. N. Fowler) was decidedly consistent with Toryism in banking; but the hon. Member for Cambridge (Mr. W. Fowler) had, he (Mr. Anderson) was glad to see, arrived at an appreciation of the £1 note. That was a great gain also. He was glad to see that the feeling of the House was not so strong as it used to be against £1 notes. As to the speech of the noble Lord (Lord Frederick Cavendish), he (Mr. Anderson) wished to point out the utter fallacy he laboured under that gold in the pockets of the people was of any earthly value in supporting the bullion reserve of this country. It must be used either as a reserve, or as a circulating medium; but it could not be both. When there was any drain on the bullion, how were the pockets of the people to support the reserve of the country? How were we to get it out of them? We could not get it except by issuing inconvertible notes. It was only by that means we could force it; and the more we tried to force it, the more the people would be driven to hoarding; and, therefore, the argument was a very great fallacy. However, he quite admitted that a question of the kind ought to be dealt with by the Government. But every great reform was a private Member's question for years and years before it was taken up by the Government. That was the reason he had brought it forward, and he yet hoped they would be privileged to see it become a Government question. In that case, the discussion which had taken place would be beneficial, and he would not trouble the House with a division on the Bill, but would ask leave to withdraw it.

MR. BOLTON said, he wished to correct a statement that had been made as to the number of the Scotch banks. The noble Lord on the Treasury Bench (Lord Frederick Cavendish) had represented the reduction of Scotch banks under the operation of Sir Robert Peel's Act as about one-half. The actual numbers, he thought, were from 13 to 10. [Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH: 19.] In point of fact, the reduction might be from 19 to 10, because a number of amalgamations had taken place; but the banks themselves, under other names, still remained in business. Three banks had failed after the passing of the Act. The hon. Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) had pointed out what he (Mr. Bolton) took to be an admitted fact—that the existing 10 banks in Scotland possessed a complete monopoly of the banking of that country; but he was wrong when he drew as a consequence of that monopoly the conclusion that charges were imposed upon the Scotch people which the English people did not bear. The only question was, whether a charge was made upon the collection of cheques in Scotland which was not made in England? It was true that the banks in Scotland did make a charge for the collection of cheques when they were sent to out-districts. But in England also, as far as his experience went, the banks did something of the kind. He had not yet heard that the Scotch people had made any complaint about the matter. The complaint that the Scotch people did make was that they could not, in consequence of the restrictions imposed on the right of issue, have that competition in banking which they desired. Whether it would be for the advantage of the Scotch people to withdraw that restriction which now existed as to the right of issue or not was another question; but the Scotch people did not desire to move in the direction of which the hon. Baronet the Member for the London University approved. What they desired was an unlimited right of issue, which would be opposed by the hon. Baronet. The hon. Member for Glasgow (Mr. Anderson) had told the House that the Scotch bankers were tyrants, and the people of Scotland the slaves of those tyrants. There were some Scotch bankers in the House who might be the so-called tyrants, and there were some Scotch Members in the House Representatives of those slaves. It would be difficult to get any number of Scotch Representatives to announce themselves as slaves of the Scotch tyrants of banking. For himself, he (Mr. Bolton) believed that there was no tyranny and no slavery. It had also been said that the Scotch bankers charged a much higher rate of discount in Scotland than they did in London. Although not a banker, but one of those slaves described by the hon. Member for Glasgow, he begged to explain that for the same class of bill the Scotch bankers charged the same rate exactly in Scotland as was charged in London. This statement he made on his own personal knowledge. The hon. Gentleman was right in saying that a higher rate of discount was charged in Scotland on some classes of bills than was charged in London probably on the same class of bills; but he would have given more correct information to the House had he added also that had he compared Glasgow or Edinburgh, or any other large town in Scotland, with Liverpool, Manchester, or Birmingham, the charges on the same class of paper occupied the same position. As the hon. Member had given Notice of his intention to drop the Bill, he did not wish to detain the House with further observations; but he had desired to make those remarks as a justification of absent men—the great majority of the bankers of Scotland.

SIR ANDREW LUSK said, he did not want the public to suppose that they knew nothing about banking in London, and that everything was known in the country. He was opposed to any restriction on free competition in banking. He did not see why banking should not be conducted on the same principles as were applicable to other businesses, without State intervention. He did not think £1 notes or extended currency was wanted. He thought Scotland required the same straightforward system as existed in London.

MR. BUXTON desired to thank the noble Lord (Lord Frederick Cavendish) for his interesting speech, and sincerely hoped that the intention of the Treasury of taking up the question of note issue, as hinted by the noble Lord in his speech to-night, and in his Treasury

Minute on Scotch Banks of March 24th, 1881, might before long bear practical fruit in some Bill which they would bring in. The subject could not be dealt with properly by a private Member. The proposal of the hon. Member for Glasgow (Mr. Anderson) would add £11,000,000 to the National Debt now kept afloat by the Bank of England.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL expressed extreme regret that there should have been any objection expressed by a Scotchman to £1 notes. Scotchmen appreciated them, and thought that when a good £1 note could be got to do duty for bullion, it should be encouraged to do so. Scotland was quite satisfied on that point. The hon. Baronet who had spoken last but one, though a thorough Scotchman, must have been corrupted by residence in London.

Amendment and Motion, by leave, *withdrawn;* Bill *withdrawn.*

RIVERS CONSERVANCY AND FLOODS PREVENTION BILL.

APPOINTMENT OF SELECT COMMITTEE.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Select Committee on Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention Bill do consist of Nineteen Members."—(*Mr. Dodson.*)

Mr. NORWOOD protested against the omission of hon. Members with special mercantile knowledge from the Committee to watch the interests of navigation. The great estuary of the Humber, with its affluents, the Trent and Ouse, formed the drainage outlet of one-third of the area of England; and the Humber Conservancy were desirous that the trading interests of Hull, Grimsby, Goole, and Gainsborough should be directly represented on the Committee; and he ventured to name the hon. Member for Great Grimsby (Mr. Heneage), who was a large landed proprietor in Lincolnshire, as acceptable to the Humber interests. He would not go to the length of opposing the appointment of the Committee; but would only express a hope that the Government would give the question some consideration, as he was of opinion that some hon. Members connected with the trade of the great estuaries should be nominated.

Mr. COURTNEY said, that in the absence of his right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board, he could not give an answer to the observations of the hon. Gentleman. He was sure, however, that if the hon. Gentleman would not oppose the appointment of the Committee, his suggestions would receive every consideration at the hands of his right hon. Friend. He would also remind him that the commercial and practical element could not be said to have been omitted in a Committee of which the hon. Members for Lincolnshire (Mr. Stanhope and Mr. J. C. Lawrance) and the hon. Member for Bedford (Mr. Magniac) were proposed as Members.

Mr. A. H. BROWN complained that there was no hon. Member to be proposed on the Committee representing the upland proprietors. He moved the adjournment of the debate.

Mr. HENEAGE, in seconding the Motion, said, he objected to so large a number as five official Members being placed on the Committee.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned." —(*Mr. A. H. Brown.*)

Mr. CALLAN regretted that there was not an Irish Member to be proposed.

Sir ANDREW LUSK said, he also wished to point out that there was no shipowner mentioned for it.

Mr. HINDE PALMER hoped the Committee would be so constituted as to give thorough satisfaction to the persons and classes interested more particularly in the Bill. He trusted that the nomination of the Committee would be deferred.

Mr. COURTNEY said, he would agree, on behalf of the Government, to the adjournment of the debate.

Colonel MAKINS hoped that hon. Members representing the uplands would find a place on the Committee.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

THAMES RIVER (NO. 2) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Chamberlain, Bill to provide for the abolition of Compulsory Pilotage on, and for the Free Navigation of, the River Thames above Gravesend, and for the repeal of Acts inconsistent therewith; and to confer further powers on the Conservators of the River Thames, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Evelyn Ashley.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 148.]

House adjourned at a quarter after Five o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 5th May, 1881.

MINUTES.]—*Sat First in Parliament*—The Earl of Saint Germans, after the death of his brother.

Public Bills—*First Reading*—Inland Revenue Buildings* (73); Tramways (Ireland) Acts Amendment* (74); Married Women's Property (Scotland)* (75); Inclosure Provisional Order (Thurstaston Common)* (76); Local Government Provisional Orders (Bath, &c.)* (77); Local Government (Highways) Provisional Order (York)*(78); Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law)* (79).

Third Reading—Sea Fisheries (Clam and Bait Beds)* (53), and *passed.*

THE LATE EARL OF BEACONSFIELD, K.G.—OBSERVATIONS.

Earl GRANVILLE: My Lords, since your Lordships last adjourned a notable and most conspicuous figure in this Assembly has passed away. That eminent and remarkable man, Lord Beaconsfield, has passed away, and the close of his brilliant and, if I may be allowed to use the expression, dramatic career has caused an extraordinary sensation in the country. No one can doubt the sympathy of this House with that feeling. I do not merely allude to the great majority of this House who have been accustomed to be led by Lord Beaconsfield and to be influenced by his counsels; but I also feel and know that those of the minority who were the most opposed to him in politics are desirous of doing respect to his memory. I have considered carefully with my Colleagues in this House whether I should move a formal mark of respect by an adjournment of the House to-day. With regard to the great statesmen who have died while the House has been sitting, the general rule has been that such an adjournment should not take place; but there have been exceptions. I, perhaps, may name two instances somewhat typical within my own experience. The late Lord Clarendon, my great personal political Friend, suddenly died, and it fell to my lot to state to the House the reasons and the precedents why the House should not adjourn, though on a former occasion I had also, when Lord Campbell, with equal suddenness, died, to move the adjournment of the House on the special ground that on the preceding day he had occupied the post of Speaker of this Assembly. I find that in the case of death when the House is not sitting there is absolutely no precedent for such adjournment at its meeting. Neither in the case of the Duke of Wellington, of Lord Aberdeen, of Lord Derby, nor of Lord Russell was such a step taken, and it appears to me that at such a time, when feelings are excited, it is desirable to proceed according to usage and precedent. I may state that I have now the honour of giving Notice that I shall ask your Lordships on Monday next to agree to an Address to Her Majesty in favour of a Monument to Lord Beaconsfield. That day has been fixed in the other House of Parliament also for a similar Address, in order that both Houses may concur at the same time in the expression of their wishes to Her Majesty with regard to the late Earl. My Lords, there are things in this matter which I should like to say at once; but I feel it more respectful to this House to postpone till Monday the expression of my personal regret and my sense of the loss which this Assembly as a body has sustained in the death of the illustrious man who has gone.

The Duke of RICHMOND and GORDON: My Lords, after the intimation given by my noble Friend opposite (Earl Granville) that he intends to again bring this melancholy subject under the notice of your Lordships on Monday next, I do not on this occasion propose to offer any lengthened remarks. But I cannot refrain from stating in a very few words, on a topic so sad to all in this House, and especially to those whom I have the honour of sitting amongst, that having served the whole of my political life, now numbering some 40 years, with my late Friend, your Lordships may imagine I deeply feel the loss we have all sustained. There is no man, I think, in this country who has displayed more chivalrous loyalty to his Sovereign and greater jealousy of the honour of his country than was displayed by my late lamented Friend during his lifetime. It is only those associated most intimately with him in his political life who can appreciate his marvellous courage in adverse circumstances, his wonderful moderation in prosperity, and the extraordinary serenity of his temper on every occasion. My Lords, to those who, like myself, feel the irreparable loss we have sustained in the death of one with whom we had been so long associated, it is some small consolation that his death has brought out the feeling of the country in his regard, its admiration for his great talents, and that in various ways we have had manifested to us that foreign countries ratified the opinion of his own. I will not further trespass on the time of your Lordships; but I should be doing an injury to my own feelings, and, I am sure, not acting in accordance with the wishes of my noble Friends, if, after the remarks of my noble Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, I had remained entirely silent.

AFGHAN WAR—VOTE OF THANKS FOR THE MILITARY OPERATIONS IN AFGHANISTAN.—RESOLUTIONS.

Earl GRANVILLE: My Lords, most of your Lordships will remember that the noble Viscount opposite (Viscount Cranbrook), when Secretary of State for India, moved a Vote of Thanks in August, 1879, at the close of one phase of the late Afghan War. The noble Viscount carefully avoided on that occasion any allusion to topics which might lead to any political discussion, while, at the same time, doing honour to the troops. I shall certainly carefully endeavour to follow that example while I am asking your Lordships to perform that which I believe to be the most pleasing Parliamentary duty—namely, to recognize the services of those gallant men who, as in this case, have been so successfully employed in sustaining the honour of the British Army. At the close of the campaign, the occasion of the thanks to which I have just referred, the troops employed on the Khyber and Kuram lines had been withdrawn within the Frontier laid down in the Treaty of Gandamak, a considerable proportion of the troops in Southern Afghanistan were returning to India, and the transport was for the most part dismissed. One month after the Vote of Thanks had been given the sad news of the Cabul massacre became known. A large force was rapidly collected and moved forward. Candahar was retained, and its communication with India made safe. After the battles of Char-Asiab and of Asmai, the British Standard was erected on the Bala Hissar at Cabul. Under the pressure, however, of some 60,000 soldiers of the Tribes, our troops had to concentrate themselves at Sherpur, and when they were attacked the defence of the citadel was successfully carried out, and the vast Afghan Army was entirely broken up. During this time the communications with Cabul were maintained by the Khyber division, occupying 13 posts along 132 miles, and keeping the hostile Tribes in check. In March, a force of between 4,000 and 5,000 men left Candahar to march on Ghazni and Cabul. Within 25 miles of Ghazni a brilliant victory was gained over a force greatly superior in numbers, aided by many thousand fanatical swordsmen—a victory which completely opened the road to Cabul. But on the receipt of news of a victory gained by Ayoob Khan over General Primrose near Candahar, a corps of 10,000 men were sent from Cabul to relieve Candahar, and they performed that famous march about which your Lordships have heard so much, traversing a distance of 316 miles, or 29 marches in 23 days. They spent one day in reconnoitring, and on the next they stormed Ayoob's position, took 34 (all) his guns, scattered his forces, sent him flying to Herat, and substantially brought the second phase of the campaign to a successful issue. Absolutely without that knowledge of military details which would enable me to give your Lordships a full account of operations which, though not without a check, have been so brilliantly and successfully carried out, I have purposely confined myself to reminding your Lordships of the principal features of a campaign which your Lordships, in common with the whole country, studied with a never-failing interest at the time—interest in the fortunes of our brave soldiers. I will, with equal brevity, allude to the share which those distinguished officers whom I ask you to thank had in obtaining the great results. Sir Frederick Haines, who had formerly served in the Sikh Wars, in the Crimea, and done good work at home, was Commander-in-Chief in India during the whole period of the late war. During that war in no instance has failure been attributed to arrangements made by him. A tribute was paid at the close of the war to the state of the Army, to which I will later allude, which reflects the highest credit on Sir Frederick Haines. It was his strong wish to take the personal command of the troops in the field, which was only refused on political and administrative grounds. The next officer I shall mention is Sir Donald Stewart. It is no new honour for him to receive the thanks of Parliament. It was he who, at Candahar, consolidated and arranged with so much judgment the disposition of the forces, and established the safety of our communications with India. I believe it is also universally acknowledged that Sir Donald Stewart displayed singular political ability in dealing with the Chiefs with whom he had to communicate. It was Sir Donald Stewart who commanded the force to which I just now alluded in the march from Candahar to Cabul, achieving the brilliant victory of Ghuzni on the way. I would also mention, to the credit of that distinguished General, the self-denying, soldier-like spirit with which he abandoned to another capable man the command of a force with which great military glory was to be obtained; while he himself undertook, certainly not a less difficult task, but one not apparently of the same glorious character, in withdrawing a small force in a difficult country in the face of adverse circumstances—and this he did with a success hardly before known in that description of warfare. There is an error in the Notice which has been given of these Resolutions. The rank which Sir Frederick Roberts held at that time gave him the command over other officers in India; and you will, therefore, allow me to amend the precedence of the officers mentioned in the Resolution. Sir Frederick Roberts, like Sir Donald Stewart, has already received the thanks of Parliament for previous services. It was he who at Simla received the command of the troops who were to march back to Cabul, and who so brilliantly won the battles of Char-Asiab, Asmai, and Sherpur, to which I have already alluded. It was he who finally at Sherpur established the position of the British Army; and it was he who later, entrusted by Sir Donald Stewart, made that march which has become famous in the history of this war. The next officer to whom I shall allude is General Bright, who commanded the Khyber Pass, and to whom was entrusted the difficult duty of maintaining those communications. That he did most thoroughly. He had to arrange for the organization, protection, and movement of daily convoys for the whole force in Northern Afghanistan, in a country of extraordinary difficulties, among warlike and predatory tribes. He had constantly to be prepared for defence and for attack, and to deal with political emergencies of great difficulty. The success of the main operations depended mainly on the manner in which these duties were performed. My Lords, the next name is that of Major General Ross, who is now in command of the Poonah Division. He was appointed to the command of the Peshawur reserve brigade, and subsequently to that of the second division of the North Afghanistan force. He was in command of the Infantry division on the march to and at the battle of Candahar, his services at which were duly recognized in the despatches and general orders of the day. Major General Hills was Adjutant General with Sir Donald Stewart at Candahar. He subsequently joined Sir Frederick Roberts in Kuram as a volunteer, and was appointed to the difficult position of Military Governor of Cabul. Sir Frederick Roberts reported that during the investment of Sherpur, General Hill's presence at this post relieved him of considerable anxiety. Major General Sir Robert Phayre did excellent service in laying out the lines of communication on the Bolan line. He is an officer of high reputation and great force of character. Of his attempt to relieve Candahar, Sir Frederick Haines reported that—

> "It is entirely due to the ability and energy of the commander and the spirit and discipline of the troops that they were so far forward on the 1st of September."

Colonel Watson received the thanks of the Government for his services in the earlier phase of the war, at the head of the Native contingent; and he had subsequently commanded the 10,000 men of the Kuram district. There was little of importance going on in the Valley; but an expedition into the Zaimukht country was successful, and at a very small loss of life. I have confined myself to the names of those distinguished officers who it is proposed should be thanked by your Lordships. It is impossible to read, as the great majority of your Lordships have done, the despatches published in *The Gazette* without observing the number of gallant men, Europeans and Natives, who, although not having had the same important commands as those mentioned in the Resolutions, have not only distinguished themselves, but so greatly contributed to the complete success of the military operations. It was a temptation to me to pick out some of these names in order to mention them to your Lordships; but it would have been impossible to enumerate them all, and therefore I felt I would be taking too great a responsibility upon myself to select names in that manner. I can only say that their deeds have not been forgotten in the despatches to which I have alluded, and that they are entitled to the strongest feeling of gratitude from the country for the services they performed. With regard to the third Resolution, by which it is proposed that this House shall state that it highly approves and acknowledges the valour and perseverance displayed by the non-commissioned officers and private soldiers, both European and Native, employed in Afghanistan during the late campaign, I am glad to quote words of more authority than any I could use. In announcing the close of the war, the Government of India publicly offered their

> "Hearty testimony to the unfailing discipline, the high spirit, and the cheerful endurance which had been so conspicuously evinced by the whole force under all the vicissitudes of prolonged, distant, and trying services."

They added—

> "To these most honourable and soldierly qualities it is due that rarely, if ever, has war been carried on in an enemy's country with so strict a regard to the laws of humanity and honour, and such a total absence of excess of any kind, as throughout the late operations in Afghanistan."

My Lords, I believe this statement to be absolutely true. I can conceive of no words of praise more dear to the gallant men who deserved them, or more likely to enhance the sympathy felt by this country with the gallant deeds of their fellow-countrymen in foreign countries engaged in war.

Moved to resolve,

"1. That the Thanks of this House be given to General Sir Frederick Paul Haines, G.C.B., G.C.S.I., C.I.E., Commander-in-Chief in India, for the ability and judgment with which he directed the recent operations from September 1879 to September 1880 in Afghanistan:

"2. That the Thanks of this House be given to

Lieutenant-General Sir Donald Martin Stewart, G.C.B.;
Lieutenant-General (local) Sir Frederick Sleigh Roberts, G.C.B., C.I.E., V.C.;
Lieutenant-General Sir Robert Onesiphorus Bright, K.C.B.;
Major-General Sir John Ross, K.C.B.;
Major-General Sir James Hills, K.C.B., V.C.;
Major-General Sir Robert Phayre, K.C.B.;
Major-General (local) John Watson, C.B., V.C.;

and the other Officers of the Army, both European and Native, for the intrepidity, skill, and perseverance displayed by them in the Military operations in Afghanistan, and for their indefatigable zeal and exertions during the late campaign:

"3. That this House doth highly approve and acknowledge the valour and perseverance displayed by the Non-commissioned Officers and Private Soldiers, both European and Native, employed in Afghanistan during the late Campaign, and that the same be signified to them by the Commanders of the several Corps who are desired to thank them for their gallant behaviour:

"4. That the said resolutions be transmitted by the Lord Chancellor to the Viceroy and Governor-General of India, and that His Lordship be requested to communicate the same to the several Officers referred to therein."—(*The Earl Granville.*)

Viscount CRANBROOK: My Lords, in consequence of my having held the Seals of the India Office at the time when part of these transactions took place, and from another cause for which I deeply grieve and to which the noble Earl opposite has so gracefully alluded in the earlier part of this evening, the duty devolves upon me to express, on the part of those with whom I act, our entire and cordial concurrence in the Vote of this House which has been moved by the noble Earl. The noble Earl has very justly praised the British and Native troops who were engaged in those arduous campaigns in Afghanistan; for the war has not been without its vicissitudes, nor without its dangers. It has been supposed that small forces may carve their way through a country of that description without much apprehension; but it has been proved in the course of this campaign, and also in the Tribal war to which the noble Earl has referred, how necessary it is that there should be not only bravery, but great prudence, on the part of those Generals who have the conduct of affairs in that country, and that their force should be of adequate numbers and of tried valour. I concur entirely in all that has been said with regard to the non-commissioned officers and private soldiers; and, like the noble Earl, I feel the same difficulty in singling out instances of officers not mentioned in the Vote of Thanks whose feats of arms were of a character that equal any like deeds which have been performed in any part of the world. But, as the noble Earl has said, it would be almost invidious to select, and I have the less difficulty in abstaining from doing so, because the Generals who have been in command in these great affairs have, with that generosity which is always found in men of their character, in despatches and speeches told their countrymen of the noble actions of those who had served under them, and have given them a very large portion of the credit which they themselves have gained—eager, indeed, to acknowledge how much they owed to these men. With regard to the Commander-in-Chief, he has held that position during the whole of this campaign in a manner that is highly creditable to his unselfish generosity. It is true that he has remained at head-quarters; but he is not a man who has not acted to the full extent as Commander-in-Chief in seeing that the troops were well supplied, that the troops themselves were in sufficient numbers for the Generals who were in the field, and that nothing should be wanting in the details of the campaign which might prevent those Generals from achieving the successes which they obtained. With regard to Sir Donald Stewart, no one can have watched his career, at Candahar and Cabul, both as an administrator and as a General, without being convinced that, in the high position he now occupies as Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army, he will render services as great as any of those which have been rendered by his predecessors. As to General Roberts, I had the opportunity of speaking before with reference to his services in the first Afghan Campaign. The country has pronounced its opinion, in very emphatic terms, upon what General Roberts has done, and your Lordships, I feel sure, will not be slow to acknowledge that he deserves the credit which he has gained. When he had to retire from Cabul into the Sherpur cantonments, of vast extent, with a comparatively small body of men, by his admirable arrangements he soon made his power again felt and broke up altogether the Tribal army which threw itself in such vast numbers upon his fortress. It is impossible to pass by that which was done in concert by Sir Donald Stewart and General Roberts on the occasion which occurred after the defeat of Maiwand; and here it is most important to notice the dates, in order to show that you have in the field Commanders who are not only equal to fighting, but also equal to a sudden emergency, which requires the collection of forces, arranging for efficient transport, and for the supplies of all other materials necessary for a force in the field. On the 27th of July the defeat of Maiwand took place; and almost within a month—namely, in September—the disaster was retrieved, and all opposition was put down in Southern Afghanistan. One cannot but feel that the Generals who effected that great object are men upon whom the country may thoroughly rely in any emergency which may occur. I may say that the Government have shown their sense of General Roberts' ability by sending him to the Cape; and though he was not called upon to act there, it is, at least, a testimony of the highest kind which the Government could give that he should have been selected for a command which involved so great a responsibility. General Roberts will probably return to India; and much as I desire the peace of that Empire, and much as I hope that its prosperity may increase by the development of its resources, still in that vast country, and amongst those numerous races which inhabit it, it is impossible that there may not be occasions when the elements of mischief will in some places be kindled. It is then you require a resolute will and adequate instruments to repress such outbreaks; and with men like Stewart, and Roberts, and Phayre, and others whom I might name, you may rely that the peace of India will be maintained. I believe that peace would be secured, without bloodshed, by the terror which the names of these distinguished Generals would exercise, and that if war ensue it will be conducted with combined vigour and humanity. My Lords, I should be wrong if I were to pass by the name of General Phayre, for though he was not up to take part in the action at Candahar, still he is always ready for action, and a man who is known to possess the most daring and dashing courage. He was, however, equal to the occasion in this respect—

that he provided the means of sending forward troops, if they should be required, and was in a state of preparation which would have enabled him to re-inforce General Roberts if the latter had not achieved the victory which he obtained with the force at his command. I need not say how much we are indebted to Colonel Watson; nor, indeed, need I go further in recommending to your Lordships' notice Resolutions so well deserved by the Commanders, the officers, and the troops, to whose services they refer.

THE DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE: My Lords, I wish to express my entire concurrence in the Resolutions proposed by my noble Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. I will not go into the details of the services of the officers mentioned in them — they have been fully enlarged upon by my noble Friends. But I may be permitted to say this in regard to the Commander-in-Chief in India, that I am very glad to see his name mentioned in the list. No man was more anxious to take the command of the Army in the field than Sir Frederick Haines; but as it was essential that he should discharge certain duties required of him, he was called upon, at great personal sacrifice, to give up the idea of himself proceeding to the seat of action, and remained at the request of the Viceroy to support him in the various great events which were then taking place. I feel bound to that gallant and distinguished officer to make that statement. It is, no doubt, a very disagreeable thing for a man filling the high post he did not to be able to take part in the operations in the field; but he is bound to undertake other duties when it is in the interest of the country that he should do so. The duties which he was called upon to discharge he efficiently performed. And here, also, I must say I think I should name two other officers — the Adjutant and Quartermaster-General of the Army. Their duties were very onerous, trying, and unceasing, and they performed them in such a manner as to enable the Commander-in-Chief to carry on the operations with complete regularity and success. With regard to Sir Donald Stewart, who, I rejoice to think, is Commander-in-Chief in India, Sir Frederick Roberts, and others, all these Generals came up fully to the expectations formed of them. General Roberts accomplished a great march of 321 miles in 23 days, and at the end of that march, with only two days' rest, he fought a great action resulting in a brilliant victory, and in the re-occupation of the country. And, my Lords, one of the most agreeable features of the campaign was the manifestation of cordiality and good feeling among the officers, and the spirit of obedience exhibited by the troops. I believe we may always depend on the loyalty of such men. It has been said that a difficulty has been experienced in obtaining Native recruits for the Indian Army serving beyond the Frontier; but I may mention, on the authority of Sir Frederick Haines and Sir Frederick Roberts, that these difficulties have entirely passed away. The Native regiments were considerably reduced at the commencement of the war; but in a short time the great majority of them were recruited to the full. The greatest credit is due, my Lords, to all concerned in keeping up the communications of the Army during the recent campaign; and I am glad to hear the reference made by my noble Friends to the services rendered in this respect by Sir Donald Stewart, Generals Bright, Phayre, and Watson. My Lords, as I am sure that the interest manifested by Parliament in the deeds of the Army is much prized by the troops, both British and Native, I am happy that those Resolutions have been proposed and have met with such a hearty reception in your Lordships' House.

THE EARL OF LYTTON: I should not presume to occupy the attention of your Lordships but for the recent and long relations I have held, personally and officially, with the distinguished officers mentioned in the Resolutions of the noble Earl. This will, I trust, be my sufficient justification for asking leave to bear my humble testimony to the ability of those distinguished men, and to their high sense of duty. I shall ask leave to express the lively satisfaction with which I have listened to the appreciative and gratifying recognition their services received from the observations of the illustrious Duke who has just spoken. With regard to my gallant friend and recent colleague, the late Commander-in-Chief in India, I am in a position to bear testimony to his constant vigilance for the wants and welfare of the Army in India, and to his serenity of mind under more than ordinarily trying circumstances. It was universally felt by the Government of India, that when the garrison of India was somewhat weakened, and considerable stress put upon the extent of our operations in the field, we should suffer much inconvenience and be exposed to great embarrassment, if deprived of the personal presence of the Commander-in-Chief in India, by his assumption of a command out of India, on the exercise of which he might, at any moment, be cut off from communication with the Indian Government, and the co-operating forces in Southern Afghanistan. In yielding to these considerations, I have no doubt my gallant friend Sir Frederick Haines made a sacrifice to duty, and I am bound to say it was most cheerfully made. But if he was not present in the field personally, I think I can say that his mind was there, and associated with all those arrangements which, under his orders, were so successfully carried out. With regard to the case of General Sir Frederick Roberts, we shall probably all feel that nothing said in this House to-night can very materially add to the essentially national character of those spontaneous and enthusiastic demonstrations of opinion—ay, I will even say outbursts of opinion—which have proclaimed already the value attached by the people of this country to the latest of the many great services of that great soldier. But with regard to the case of General Sir Donald Stewart, I think that justice makes a special appeal to the accuracy of our recollection; and I was particularly pleased to find that it had not been made in vain to the recollection of the noble Earl who moved this Motion. The services of General Sir Donald Stewart in connection with the successful conclusion of the second Afghan campaign, although they were scarcely less important than those of my gallant friend Sir Frederick Roberts, were less conspicuous; they were less directly sensational, and, therefore, more liable to be underrated by those who have not closely followed the incidents of his command. But I am quite sure that my gallant friend Sir Frederick Roberts himself would be the first to acknowledge that his brilliant march from Cabul to Candahar was materially facilitated by the previous march of General Stewart from Candahar to Cabul, and by the important and timely victory won by General Stewart at Ghuzni—a victory which broke up all serious power of armed resistance on that line of march. And, moreover, if in the most critical period of the second Afghan campaign the military genius of Sir Frederick Roberts was effectually supported by the discipline, the steadiness, and the intelligence of his troops, let us not forget how largely that result was due to the generosity with which General Stewart had placed at his disposal the picked flower of the army under his command. That was not a common act of generosity. It was an act, which, I venture to say, involved a high exercise of judgment, as well as of courage; because, not long before the event which called for the march of General Roberts on Candahar, the most alarming and alarmist opinions had been expressed, and vehemently expressed, and urged by the political officer attached to General Stewart, as to the great danger and difficulty and the possible disaster, which, in his opinion, would be incurred by any attempt on the part of General Stewart to effect the early evacuation of Cabul even with the large force he then had under his command; and I think General Stewart showed great judgment and a wise appreciation of the circumstances, as well as considerable courage, in putting aside all these alarming representations, and without hesitation making over to General Roberts all the most efficient fighting men of his force. I think, also, we are greatly indebted to General Stewart for the masterly manner in which he brought back the remnant of his force without a single casualty or disaster. I feel sure, my Lords, that to those distinguished officers who are named in the Motion before us, we shall all with perfect unanimity wish that the thanks of this House may be unreservedly expressed

Resolutions *agreed to, nemine dissentiente.*

Ordered, That the Lord Chancellor do communicate the said Resolutions to the Viceroy and Governor-General of India, and that his Excellency be requested to communicate the same to the several Officers referred to therein.

House adjourned at Six o'clock, till
To-morrow, half past
Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 5th May, 1881.

MINUTES.]—New Writ Issued—*For* the Borough of Knaresborough, *v.* Sir Henry Meysey Meysey-Thompson, void Election.

Select Committee—Customs (Outport Officers) *appointed.*

Public Bills—*Ordered—First Reading*—Local Government Provisional Orders (Brentford Union, &c.) * [149]; Post Office (Land) * [150].

Second Reading—Land Law (Ireland) [135]—[*Fourth Night*]—*debate further adjourned;* India Office Auditor (Superannuation) * [140].

Committee—Report—Bridges (South Wales) * [129].

QUESTIONS.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES ACTS — CASE OF ELIZABETH BURLEY — THE ACTION OF THE POLICE.

Mr. HOPWOOD asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether his attention has been called to the case of a friendless girl named Elizabeth Burley, who recently, through fear of the police officer appointed to carry out the Contagious Diseases Acts at Dover, threw herself into the water of the Harbour; whether she was, on being rescued, charged before the magistrates with attempting to commit suicide, but the case against her was dismissed; whether the officer in question was acting under any warrant of a justice; and, whether the police, under the Acts in question, have been informed that there is no authority given to them in those Laws to accost, question, or molest any woman, but only to proceed against those suspected of prostitution under a summons or order of justices of the peace?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: Sir, I have caused inquiries to be made as to this case, and I have had a report upon it from the police. The girl in question had been under the observation of the police for three weeks in consequence of the fact that she was leading an immoral life. This fact she appears herself to have admitted to the chaplain of the Sailors' Home. It was, therefore, the duty of the police to ascertain her name and address with a view to caution her. In endeavouring to ascertain these particulars the police seem to have shown a want of discretion and judgment, for which they have been severely reprimanded. The girl, to avoid the police, threw herself into the water, from which she was rescued; and there is reason to believe further that, owing to the attention which this case has attracted, she will be rescued from the unhappy life to which she had committed herself.

MINES ACTS — REPORTS OF INSPECTORS OF MINES, 1880.

Mr. MACDONALD asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If the Annual Reports for 1880 of the Inspectors of Mines have yet been received at the Home Office; and, if so, when they may be expected to be laid upon the Table of the House and printed for circulation?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: Sir, the reports have been received, are passing through the press, and, it is hoped, will be ready for circulation towards the end of the month.

SOUTH AFRICA — THE TRANSVAAL — THE BOERS.

Mr. RYLANDS asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether any despatches were received by the Colonial Department from Colonel Lanyon during the year 1879, or in the course of the year 1880, previous to the outbreak of hostilities in the Transvaal, expressing opinions as to the state of feeling amongst "the main body of the Boers," in accordance with the views attributed to him in Sir Garnet Wolseley's Despatch of October 29th, 1879 (South Africa Papers, C. 2866), in the following passage:—

> "I do not wish to imply that I myself apprehend the serious outbreak that is said to be threatened, but I have felt it my duty to state that there is good reason for the conclusion, which is now accepted, I think, even more completely by Colonel Lanyon than by me, that the main body of the Boers have a rooted dislike to English Government?"

Mr. GRANT DUFF: No, Sir; I cannot find any such despatches.

THE LAND ACT (IRELAND) — THE PURCHASE CLAUSES.

Mr. DONALDSON-HUDSON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he can inform the

House as to the present condition of those farmers in Ireland who have bought the freehold of their farms, either from the Church Commissioners or under the Bright Clauses of "The Land Act, 1870," and whether they are contented and loyal subjects; and, in default of such information, if he will cause inquiries to be made, and submit the result for the consideration of Parliament?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: Sir, I have communicated with the Secretary to the Church Commissioners and also with the Board of Public Works in reference to this Question. From the same body I learn that there is reason to believe that the condition of the farmers who purchased their holdings from the Church Commissioners is, on the whole, considering recent bad harvests, fairly prosperous. A small proportion of them are badly off, and they complain that they are no better off as owners than they were as tenants. The number of these persons is trifling, as compared with that of those who are satisfied and prosperous. The hon. Member asks me if they are contented and loyal subjects. In reply to the Question, I may say that I have reason to believe that they are so, and I base this statement on trustworthy private reports, and also on the tone of our correspondence with the Church Commission officers. The Board of Works is unable to give me information as to the condition of the farmers who purchased under the Act of 1870. To give such information would involve great expense, and a personal visit of inquiry to each of the farms so purchased.

CYPRUS—THE LAW COURTS—THE GREEK LANGUAGE.

MR. A. M'ARTHUR asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether instructions have been given to Her Majesty's Administrator in Cyprus to permit the introduction of the Greek language into the courts of justice in that island?

MR. GRANT DUFF: I regret, Sir, that it will be necessary to reply to this Question at somewhat greater length than to that of my hon. Friend the Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands). Proceedings in the Courts of Cyprus are usually commenced by petitions, which are written either in Greek or in Turkish, according to the pleasure of the litigant, and the litigant or his advocate usually argues before the Courts in one or other of these languages, which are on a perfect equality. In the Nicosia district five-eighths of the cases are argued in Greek. Other languages are not excluded, but are not encouraged. Summonses and the like are made out in Greek, Turkish, and English. In most of the Courts a majority, in all some, of the Judges speak Greek fluently. Judgments are recorded in English and Turkish, these being the languages chiefly spoken by the officers of the Courts who have to execute them. The re-organization of the Courts of Cyprus is under consideration, and the importance of these language questions will not be overlooked.

ARMY RE-ORGANIZATION—THE UNIFORMS—MILITIA OFFICERS.

MR. RITCHIE (for Earl PERCY) asked the Secretary of State for War, If it is true that the change of appointments, &c. consequent on the new Regimental organisation will impose an expense of about £80,000 on the officers of Militia; and if he proposes to relieve them by a grant from the public purse?

MR. CHILDERS: No, Sir; I have no reason to believe that the expense to officers of Militia consequent upon the change of appointments will approach the sum named by the noble Lord; and, so far as the substitution of gold for silver is concerned, the change is made, as a general rule, with their entire concurrence, and will be so timed as to cost but little. I have under consideration the propriety of granting some assistance in cases where the change is to or from Rifle uniform.

RAILWAYS (INDIA)—TREATY OF LISBON—PORTUGUESE TERRITORY.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the Secretary of State for India, with reference to an advertisement appearing in the newspapers, Whether he can now state the arrangements which have been made for a Railway through the Portuguese territory into Southern India; whether it is the fact that he has pledged himself to continue a short Railway in Portuguese territory to a connection with the British Indian system in the Deccan; and, if so, whether he has ascertained that the Port of Marmagao is superior to any British Indian

Port on the West Coast; that the line thence up the Ghats is easier than any line from a British Port; and that, altogether, this line has such great advantages over any other line as to counterbalance the disadvantage of a Foreign Port and a transit through Foreign territory?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Sir, the arrangements which have been made for a railway through the Portuguese territory into Southern India are briefly these. The Portuguese Government, in pursuance of the terms of the Treaty of Lisbon, 1878, have made a contract with an English company under which capital will be raised, with a guarantee from the Portuguese Government for the purpose of completing a harbour at Marmagao—commonly known as Goa—and of constructing a railway within their territory to the Frontier. The Government of India, when assured that sufficient progress has been made with the works, will, in conformity with the terms of the same Treaty, under which we have obtained very considerable advantages, take measures for continuing the line through British territory, and connecting it with the system of railways in Southern India. With regard to the comparative merits of this harbour, and any British port on the West Coast, the hon. Member does not, probably, include Bombay, which, of course, is pre-eminently superior to all; but, if he alludes particularly to the port of Karwar, some 50 miles south of Marmagao, I am able to inform him on high professional authority that the latter possesses as many, if not greater, advantages than the former. I am also informed that the line of railway may be constructed quite as easily up the Ghats from Marmagao as from Karwar. Under the arrangement which has been made, I do not apprehend that any hindrance to traffic or any inconvenience will occur in consequence of the communication between the interior and the coast being partially formed through Portuguese territory.

CRIMINAL LAW—JUVENILE OFFENDERS ACT.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether the Government will consider the desirability of introducing a measure for the alteration of the provisions of the existing Law, under which it is necessary that a juvenile offender should be sentenced to a term of imprisonment before being sent to a Reformatory School?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Sir, I am anxious to enable Parliament to deal with the subject of the treatment of juvenile offenders. But the introduction of a Bill will depend upon the progress made with the Business now before the House. Opinion on the question is divided. I find from the opinions which I have been able to collect from the authorities best fitted to pronounce judgment on the subject, that 35 are in favour of the imprisonment of juvenile offenders before they are sent to a reformatory, and 139 take the opposite view. My own opinion inclines to that of the majority.

SALE OF FOOD AND DRUGS ACT— OLEOMARGARINE.

MR. SEVERNE asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether oleomargarine is permitted to be sold under the name of butter; and, if not, whether since the admixture of oleomargarine with butter may be easily detected by analysis, the district inspectors are directed to endeavour to discover such fraudulent admixture?

MR. DODSON: Sir, the sale of oleomargarine as butter is not permitted under the Sale of Food and Drugs Act, and numerous convictions have taken place when it has been thus sold. The district Inspectors employed to obtain samples for analysis take their instructions from the local authorities, and the Local Government Board have no control over them. It is open, however, to private individuals to have samples analyzed under the Act.

THE STATE OF IRELAND—ALLEGED CRIMES AND OUTRAGES.

VISCOUNT FOLKESTONE asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is the fact, as stated in several newspapers—

> "That the house of a bailiff in Galway named King was visited on Friday night by a party of ruffians with their faces blackened, who assaulted him brutally, and held him over a fire, threatening to roast him alive, and inflicting such injuries that his life is in danger;
>
> "That at Deergrove, near Castlebar, county

Mayo, a band of twelve men, wearing masks, attacked the house of a herd, terrified the occupants by threats, and fired shots through the windows. They warned the herd that if he did not comply with the regulations of the Land League, and have nothing to do with grass land, they would take his life;

"And that a bailiff named Murphy, who was serving summonses at Cleanglass, near Newcastle West, a few evenings ago, was met by a number of men, who assaulted him with savage violence. Having beaten him unmercifully with his own blackthorn stick, they took all the summonses from him, and all the money he had about him, and then threw him into a deep pond, in which he narrowly escaped drowning. He managed to creep out of it and took refuge in an empty pigsty, where he was discovered next morning;"

and, if so, whether there appears any likelihood of the perpetrators of these outrages being brought to justice?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: Sir, in reference to the first case alluded to, I am glad to be able to state that there is no reason to believe that any such outrage took place. No information has reached the Constabulary of any outrage being committed at the time and place mentioned, and there is no baliff of the name in Galway. With regard to the second case, information on the subject is expected, but has not yet been received. With regard to the third case, I am sorry to say that an outrage was committed on Murphy, who has identified a number of persons as those who assaulted him, and there is good reason to believe that those who committed the outrage will be brought to justice.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, with regard to the first case, that he had received a letter from the clergyman of the district saying that the alleged roasting was a malicious invention.

ARMY—THE ZULU WAR—GENERAL NEWDIGATE'S MEDAL ROLL.

MR. BOORD asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether General Newdigate's Medal Roll has been received at the War Office; and, when the medals for service in the Native Contingent in South Africa are likely to be distributed to those entitled to them?

MR. CHILDERS: My answer, Sir, to the first Question is "Yes." My answer to the second is that it is a matter which concerns the Colonial Office; but, to save time, I have ascertained that the engraving of the medals was finished yesterday, and that they will be sent out at once

SOUTH AFRICA—THE SUZERAINTY OF THE TRANSVAAL.

MR. GORST asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether the substitution of suzerainty for sovereignty in the Transvaal is to be effected by an Act of Parliament; and, if not, how the substitution is to be effected?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): The Question is somewhat premature. As far as I can anticipate, there will be no necessity to resort to an Act of Parliament for the purpose indicated.

THE WILD FOWL ACT, 1880.

MR. JACOB BRIGHT asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he has observed that certain retail fishmongers and poulterers in Manchester have been summoned under the Wild Fowl Act of 1880 for selling wood pigeons, and that they have been reprimanded by the stipendiary magistrate and ordered to pay costs; and, whether, if it be unlawful to sell birds which it is lawful to kill, he will undertake to amend the Law?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Sir, the matter stands in rather a singular position, as often happens when an Act of Parliament is manufactured in this House. It was the intention, no doubt, when the Bill was in Committee to have exempted the owners and occupiers of land from the provisions of the Bill. If the law is as described, it should be amended.

SMALL-POX (METROPOLIS).

BARON HENRY DE WORMS asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether, seeing that the smallpox epidemic is very much on the increase in Greenwich and other parts of the Metropolis, and that the hospitals of the Asylums Board are overcrowded and incapable of dealing with the emergency, any, and what, steps will be taken by the Local Government Board to secure extra accommodation for smallpox patients whose confinement in crowded dwellings must tend greatly to increase the spread of the epidemic?

MR. DODSON: Sir, the Board have been earnestly pressing both upon the Guardians and the Vestries and District

Boards the necessity of supplementing the hospital accommodation for small-pox patients at the disposal of the Asylums Board, and I am glad to state that in several instances effect has been given to the Board's representations. At the same time, there is no doubt of the need for further provision for the isolation of these cases, and the Board are endeavouring to secure it; but it is scarcely necessary to state that the subject is one of great perplexity and difficulty.

Mr. DAWSON asked, whether there was any arrangement with the London hospitals for a convalescent home for the isolation of patients during the earlier progress of their recovery, which was the most dangerous period for the spread of the infection?

Mr. DODSON said, that no steps had been taken in that direction.

Mr. DAWSON gave Notice that he would on another occasion ask the right hon. Gentleman what were his intentions in regard to this subject.

ARMY ORGANIZATION — THE NEW REGULATIONS—COMPULSORY RETIREMENT.

Sir ALEXANDER GORDON asked the Secretary of State for War, If he will state the reason why, in the regulation which he has submitted for adoption by the House of Commons relating to compulsory retirement in the Army, he proposes to make the periods of non-employment which are to necessitate compulsory retirement, five years for General and Field Officers, and three years for Majors; while in a corresponding regulation for the Navy the periods of non-employment which necessitate compulsory retirement are, ten years for Flag Officers, seven years for Captains, and five years for Commanders and Lieutenants?

Mr. CHILDERS: In reply to my hon. and gallant Friend, I may say that there are several reasons why the rules for retirement from the Army and Navy in the upper ranks should not be identical, whether in respect of age, rate of pay, or non-employment; but I could not well state these in the compass of an answer to a Question. As to non-employment, I may say that the rule adopted for flag officers in the Navy in 1870 was an experiment, the result of which, in my opinion, justifies a shorter term now for generals in the Army.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE — THE PARLIAMENTARY OATHS BILL.

Mr. NEWDEGATE asked the First Lord of the Treasury, On what day he will invite the House to proceed with the Adjourned Debate on the Parliamentary Oaths; and, after what hour of the day he may select, he will not expect the House to enter upon the above Adjourned Debate?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, the Government propose to place this Order of the Day for to-morrow after Supply, when I hope time may be afforded for discussing the introduction of the Bill. In the event of the matter not coming on to-morrow, it will be my duty to ask the House to have a Morning Sitting on Tuesday.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked the right hon. Gentleman, after what hour the Bill would not be taken on Friday?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Not after half-past 10 o'clock.

THE MEDICAL ACTS—THE VICTORIA UNIVERSITY.

Mr. SUMMERS asked the Vice President of the Council, Whether the Royal Commission which is being appointed to inquire into the working of the Medical Acts will be empowered to receive evidence as to the grounds upon which the Victoria University claims to have the right conferred upon it of granting degrees in medicine?

Mr. MUNDELLA: Yes, Sir; the Royal Commission is fully empowered to inquire into and report on the claims of the Victoria University to grant medical degrees. Immediately the Commission has reported the Privy Council will take into consideration the claims of this important school of medicine.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT—PRISONERS UNDER THE ACT—NEWSPAPER EDITORS.

Mr. T. D. SULLIVAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether newspaper proprietors imprisoned under the Coercion Act will be allowed to supervise the matter prepared for insertion in their journals; and, in case such permission will not be accorded to them, whether the Government will relieve them of legal responsibility for all matters appearing in their journals during the period of their incarceration?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: Every written communication by an editor in prison will come under the supervision of the Governor of the gaol. I am informed by the hon. and learned Attorney General that no Court would hold an editor legally responsible for articles in his newspaper if by action of law he has no power of controlling or supervising those articles.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR asked, whether the Act did not contain a proviso allowing a prisoner to follow his ordinary avocation?

MR. W. E. FORSTER replied, that if writing was the ordinary avocation of the prisoner it would be supervised by the Governor.

MR. A. M. SULLIVAN asked, whether, if he supervised a political article, the Governor of the prison would not share to a certain extent the political responsibility of it when it was published?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: I believe that political articles will not be allowed to be sent out by the Governor.

MR. T. D. SULLIVAN: So much for the freedom of the Press.

MR. A. M. SULLIVAN wished to know how, in such a case, an editor in prison could follow his ordinary avocation?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: He cannot be allowed to write political articles, or articles relating to his imprisonment. The House must not forget that it was for articles in newspapers, as well as for other reasons, that some of these prisoners were arrested. The Government cannot be expected to stultify itself by allowing political articlesto be sent out of prison.

MR. PARNELL inquired, whether the right hon. Gentleman wished it to be understood—the articles for which one of the prisoners was arrested being articles inciting to violence—that he considered that all political articles written in Ireland were articles inciting to violence?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: No; I answer the Question of the hon. Member in the negative.

MR. J. COWEN asked the Chief Secretary for Ireland, whether it was not the fact that while Leigh Hunt, Robert Carlile, and Feargus O'Connor were in prison they were allowed to edit newspapers? How did the right hon. Gentleman distinguish between those editors and the present prisoners?

MR. HEALY: But they were editors of English newspapers.

MR. O'DONNELL asked the Chief Secretary for Ireland, whether this censorship of the Press had been adopted since the alliance of Her Majesty's Government with the policy of Russia?

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary for Ireland, whether he would state which of the gentlemen arrested under the Coercion Act were newspaper editors?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: I must have Notice given of all these Questions.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACT —OUTBREAK OF FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE AT NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

MR. ELLIOT asked the Vice President of the Council, If it is correct that it was known in Newcastle-on-Tyne that foot and mouth disease existed there on the 18th of April; and if it is correct that the many outbreaks of this disease in the North of England are traceable to Newcastle Market; and, if he can inform the House from where the disease was imported?

MR. MUNDELLA: Sir, information was received from the Town Clerk of Newcastle-on-Tyne on the 20th ultimo that animals affected with foot-and-mouth disease were discovered in a lair in that borough on the night of April 18th. It is believed that those animals were brought from Stockton Market. Several outbreaks in the North of England have been reported, which are supposed to be due to infected animals brought from Newcastle-on-Tyne.

CRIMINAL LAW—THE QUEEN v. BRADLAUGH AND ANOTHER— "FRUITS OF PHILOSOPHY."

MR. O'DONNELL asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether the conviction of the accused in the case of Bradlaugh and another, charged with the publication of an obscene work, was not set aside on appeal, in February, 1878, on the ground of a technical error in the indictment; whether Lord Justice Brett on that occasion did not state that, if the defendants again committed the offence of publishing such a work, another prosecution would doubtless be instituted, when, if the indictment were not again defective, they would receive even severer punishment than that to which they had been already sentenced; whether it is not the fact that the objectionable publication was subsequently continued by said defendants; and, whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to institute proceedings in conformity with the opinion of Lord Justice Brett, having care to avoid any technical defect in the indictment calculated to prevent the just enforcement of the existing Laws against obscene publications in this country?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): Sir, it is quite correct that the conviction referred to in the Question was, in February, 1878, set aside on a technical ground, which was that the alleged libel, for which the defendants were indicted, was not set out literally in the indictment. It is not correct, as stated in the Question, that Lord Justice Brett on that occasion stated that if the defendants again committed the offence another prosecution would be instituted, when they would receive a severe punishment. So far as I can tell by referring to the judgment of Lord Justice Brett, it is not correct to say that the Lord Justice said that another prosecution would be instituted; but what he did say was that, although on the point of law the judgment must be reversed, yet, if the book complained of was again published and the plaintiffs in error were convicted upon a properly worded indictment, the reiteration of the offence must be met with a greater punishment. I cannot say whether or not the publication has been continued, neither can I give the hon. Member any information whatever upon the point as to whether it is the intention of the Government to institute further proceedings. Having regard to the fact that the prosecution was not instituted by the late Government, but that my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Launceston (Sir Hardinge Giffard), who was then Solicitor General, was prosecuting, and that the proceedings were taken in February, 1878, I should think that the late Government came to the conclusion that there was no necessity to take any further steps in the matter, and I should think that anyone who now calls attention to the work would not be doing any great benefit to public morals.

PARLIAMENT—PUBLIC BUSINESS (HALF-PAST TWELVE RULE).

MR. MONK asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he will give facilities for the early resumption of the Debate on the Half-past Twelve o'clock Rule, which was adjourned on Tuesday last, at the request of the Government, in consequence of an erroneous impression as to the course which the Government intended to pursue having been conveyed on their behalf to some Members of the House, which occasioned their absence?

MR. GLADSTONE, in reply, said, he much regretted the misapprehension which had placed his hon. Friend in a disadvantageous position through no fault of his own. He hoped, however, that the discussion on the half-past 12 o'clock Rule would not itself be subjected to the injurious operation of that Rule. He hoped his hon. Friend would be permitted without any obstacle to take the decision of the House on the question.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACTS—OVERLOADING THE "DUBLIN CASTLE."

MR. EDWARD CLARKE asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether he will make inquiries of the emigration agents for the Cape and Natal as to the correctness of the statement of the owners of the Castle Line of Steamships that the overloading of their steamer "Dublin Castle," which left Dartmouth on the 1st October last, was due to the owners having received a very urgent message from the Cape Government asking them to take over a small body of Cape Riflemen, whose presence was immediately required; and, whether, in the event of his finding that no such excuse in fact existed, he will take the proceedings required by the Act against the owners of such vessel?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN, in reply, said, the Question of the hon. and learned Member appeared to convey a somewhat serious imputation on the owners of the *Dublin Castle.* The hon. and learned Gentleman did not state upon whose information he had put this Question, or what was the character of the information on which he relied. He could only say for himself that he knew no circumstances which would justify the imputation conveyed in this Question; and until he received definite information to justify such a step, he did not think it necessary to make any further inquiry.

STATE OF IRELAND—ALLEGED EXCESS OF DUTY BY BAILIFFS IN COUNTY MONAGHAN.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been called to the sworn evidence given at an inquest held in the townland of Drumbear on Saturday last, by Dr. Reed, coroner for county Monaghan, and to the following circumstances detailed by the different witnesses:—That the house of Thomas Stewart, a tenant on the Roscommon estate, was visited on the 18th of March by Mr. John Johnston, the under agent of Lord Rossmore's estate, and a number of bailiffs; that the under agent approached the bedside of Mrs. Stewart, the wife of the tenant, who was in an advanced state of pregnancy, and ordered her to rise and dress herself; that Dr. William Woods, her medical attendant, found her, as a result, suffering from excitement and heart disease, and threatened with premature confinement, and asked the under agent and bailiffs to retire; that the under agent and some bailiffs repeated their visit on April 29, and Johnston again went to the bedside of the woman, again ordered her to rise and dress herself, and called upon the bailiffs to remove her; whether the woman, in consequence of these threats, fainted in presence of the under agent and the bailiffs; that, on the 29th, the bailiffs again were in the vicinity of the house; that, on the 30th, Mrs. Stewart was prematurely delivered of a dead-born child; that the verdict of the jury was that the premature birth was brought about by the great excitement through which the mother had passed; and, whether he will take any steps for bringing the man, Johnston, to justice?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, he saw a statement in *The Freeman's Journal* yesterday, and he lost no time in writing to obtain full information with regard to what was stated to have happened. He would be glad if the hon. Member would repeat the Question. It certainly did appear that there had been unjustifiable hardship; but he was glad to see that the police were not mentioned as having been present on the occasion.

COMPANIES ACT, 1867—TRINITY COLLEGE, LONDON.

MR. EDWARD CLARKE asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether he has received a Report from the Education Department with reference to Trinity College, London; and what decision has been arrived at with regard to the application of that Association for a licence dispensing with the use of the word "Limited" as part of its title?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN, in reply, said, there had been some communications of a confidential character with reference to this subject between the Education Department and the Board of Trade; but independently of those communications he had come to the conclusion, after careful consideration of all the circumstances, that there were grave reasons why the application of Trinity College, London, to be allowed to dispense with the word "Limited" should not be complied with.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—MR. DILLON, M.P.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he will specify the passages in the speech of the honourable Member for Tipperary (at the meeting of the Irish National Land League, in Dublin, on the 27th ultimo), which, in his opinion, are objectionable; and, whether it is to be understood that the Government have finally decided, with regard to the thousands of evictions now impending in Ireland (as declared in the speech of the honourable Member for Tipperary), that no steps will be taken for the protection of the homes, the property, and the present or prospective rights of these thousands of Irish tenants, except such as are contemplated in the Irish Land Bill?

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, that before the right hon. Gentleman answered the Question of the hon. Member, he should like to know what was the protection afforded to tenants at the present time by Clauses 13 and 48 of the Land Bill?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: Sir, with regard to the first Question I do not think it would be convenient for me to answer it, and for this reason—that I could not answer it without anticipating the discussion on the Motion which has been given Notice of by the hon. Member for Longford (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) on the Orders of Business for this evening. As regards the second Question, that is really a Question which ought to be asked during the debate on the Land Bill, and I should have thought that the hon. Member could have elicited the information with more convenience even this very evening when a full answer could be given. In reply to the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold), I must say that I would refer hon. Members to the clauses in the Land Bill which he mentions. I believe they make it clear, as to any tenants against whom notices of proceedings of ejectment for non-payment of rent to be taken at Quarter Sessions or in the Superior Courts have been served, that during the whole time of such proceedings, including the six months' time for redemption, those tenants would be able, after the passing of this Act, to apply to the Court for a judicial rent to be fixed; and therefore, if the rent which they had paid was too high a rent, the Court might be expected to fix a lower rent, and by that means they would obtain tenant right, which would have a saleable value.

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL—"SUZERAINTY."

EARL PERCY asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it will be necessary that the future President or Chief Authority of the Transvaal States should obtain the sanction of Her Majesty, as Suzerain, to his appointment?

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, Her Majesty's Government have not placed any limitation whatever upon the discretion of the Commissioners in this respect. [*A laugh.*] Therefore, they will be quite prepared for whatever arrangements the Commissioners may make. Sir, I think that the hon. and learned Gentleman who sneered is evidently quite ignorant that there have been Colonies in full relation to this country where Her Majesty has not appointed a Governor. Perhaps he has never taken it into consideration that in North America hereditary Colonies were created where the Governor succeeded by birth, and not by appointment of Her Majesty, and that the Colony of Rhode Island had the privilege, after the first appointment, of electing its own Governor.

PEACE PRESERVATION (IRELAND) ACT—PROCLAMATION OF COUNTY MONAGHAN.

MR. GIVAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been directed to the marked absence of crime in the county of Monaghan, as appears by the Returns of agrarian offences for the past six months; and, if so, can he inform the House on what grounds the county has been proclaimed under the Arms Act of the present Session?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that the reason why the county of Monaghan had been proclaimed under the Peace Preservation Act was not because any large number of agrarian offences had been committed there, but because the Government were informed that a great number of people in the county were armed, having rifles and revolvers, which they carried frequently on the occasions of meetings and processions. Party spirit ran somewhat high in the county, and it was thought expedient to put a check on the indiscriminate possession of firearms.

RELIEF OF DISTRESS (IRELAND) ACT —EMPLOYMENT WORKS.

MAJOR NOLAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he has given, or will give directions to provide employment on a moderate scale, between the middle of May and the middle of July, in the county of Galway, particularly in the neighbourhoods of Loughrea, Athenry, Tuam, Oughterard, Clifden, Gort, and Ballinasloe?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, the hon. and gallant Member must be aware that the only way they could provide employment was through the baronial sanction. If the hon. and gallant Member would apply to him privately he would give him all the information in his power, as he could quite understand his wishing for the information. The Government had already given directions that the works sanctioned by baronial presentments should be carried out between the months of May and July.

YOUNG IRELAND DEBATING SOCIETY (DUBLIN)—ALLEGED INTERFERENCE OF THE POLICE.

MR. T. D. SULLIVAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of

Ireland, If his attention has been called to a letter signed by the honorary secretaries of the Young Ireland Debating Society, Dublin, published in the "Freeman's Journal" of May 2nd, wherein it is stated that, on the evening of April 29th, five policemen applied for admission to the meeting of the Society, and that, on the previous day, another policeman called at the house and asked the caretaker for the names of the officers of the Society, and for the key of the Society's room; and, if police interference of this kind with literary and debating societies in Ireland has the sanction of the Government?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, he had been in communication with the Chief Commissioner of Metropolitan Police in Dublin with reference to this Question. The writer of the letter to which the hon. Member alluded must be under some misapprehension. No member of the Metropolitan police had ever sought admission to the meeting of that society, and no one was more surprised than the police were to see such a charge made.

NAVY—DESTRUCTION OF H.M.S. "DOTEREL."

SIR JOHN HAY asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, If he will state any further particulars with regard to the destruction of H.M.S. "Doterel" than have already been made public?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, the most interesting information which can be given the House relates to the date when authentic information is likely to be forthcoming. In the first place, the *Britannia* packet, bringing home Commander Evans and the survivors from the ill-fated ship, is expected to arrive at Lisbon on the 25th of this month, and at Liverpool on the 1st of June. Then, and only then, we shall have the story so far as it is known to the men and officers who escaped. In the next place, the *Garnet*, corvette, has been ordered down to Sandy Point from Montevideo, and she carries an artificer diver as well as a seaman diver. The *Doterel*, if she sank at anchor, will probably lie in from 8 to 10 fathoms of water. The *Eurydice*, as hon. Members may be interested in knowing, lay in 11½ fathoms; and there is every hope that, with the assistance which Lieutenant Stokes, of the *Doterel*, who remained at Sandy Point, will be able to give, the condition of the vessel will be ascertained in all particulars. In consideration of the exceptional nature of the case, the Admiralty have ordered the *Turquoise*, corvette, which was on the Pacific Station waiting to be relieved by the *Champion* from Ashantee, to start on her homeward voyage at once, and to join the *Garnet* in the Straits of Magellan. The Commander-in-Chief on the Pacific has been informed that she is wanted to assist in diving operations, and will, no doubt, take care that she has divers on board. The report of what has been ascertained on the spot will be brought to Montevideo, either by one of these vessels, or by one of the Pacific Steam Navigation Company's packets, which pass through the Straits at intervals of about a fortnight. Something may be known sooner; but we may fully expect about the end of the month to know all that can be told, both by the survivors of the crew, and by the unfortunate vessel herself. I have with me full particulars of the quantity and stowage of the various explosives on board; but I do not think I need communicate them to the House further than by saying that there were 4 tons and 7 cwts. of powder in the fore magazine, which is quite enough to account for the accident itself.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) BILL—GRANTS OF PUBLIC MONIES.

SIR JOHN HAY asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If he will lay upon the Table an Estimate of the Liabilities which may be incurred under the various provisions of the Irish Land Bill?

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, the principal outlay for grants of public money contemplated under the Irish Land Bill is described for ordinary purposes in Part 5 of the Bill. That outlay will be under the control of Parliament from year to year, the Estimates can only be formed from year to year, and Parliament will have an opportunity of forming the estimate for the current year before giving its assent to any outlay. As to other expenditure under the Bill, I think a question of this kind may be more conveniently raised when we have made further progress with the measure. We shall be happy to give the best information in our power on the subject.

POOR LAW (IRELAND) BILL—ARREARS OF RENT, &c.

MR. O'KELLY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been called to the following evidence referring to the indebtedness of the Irish tenant farmers:—The following passage in the evidence of Professor Baldwin before the Royal Commission on Agriculture (Vol. I. p. 89):—

> "2805. Can you give us an idea of the amount of the state of debt they are in; how many years' rent in some cases?—As far as our inquiries have gone, it would not be too much to say that in many places they owe on an average from three to five years' rent to shopkeepers alone. In some cases we ascertained the figures, which we verified afterwards, and found they owed as much as from eight to ten years' rent to shopkeepers.
>
> "2806. Is that on account of goods bought or money lent?—Chiefly for provisions and for goods of different kinds; not so much for money lent."

The following passage in the evidence of Mr. Mulhallen Marum, M.P., before the Irish Land Commission (Vol. III. Question 35,886):—

> "They," meaning the tenant farmers, "are hopelessly in debt. My experience in the County Kilkenny and Queen's County, which is very large, leads me to say that their indebtedness is something nobody can have any conception of;"

whether his attention has been called to the following passages in the evidence before the Commission as to the remedy for this state of things. The following passage in the evidence of Colonel King-Harman (Land Commission, Vol. II. Question 14, 183):—

> "I think there is only one possible remedy in the West of Ireland—that is, local courts of bankruptcy, or giving power to the county court judge to deal as in bankruptcy with all cases of small debts. I think the people have got a load of debt about their necks now which it is utterly impossible to get rid of; but if they could pay a reasonable composition they would start fair, and it would prevent excessive credit being given again."

And the following passage in the evidence of Professor Baldwin (Royal Commission on Agriculture (Vol I. Question 2,808):—

> "Have you ever considered what might be a remedy for that?—Yes, we have thought a good deal over it, and we agree in thinking that there is nothing for it, except some system of bankruptcy courts which would go as near as possible to the homes of the people and give them a fresh start. It is a violent remedy, but the state of affairs is very critical;"

and, if he will insert in the Land Law (Ireland) Bill more provisions founded on these recommendations for dealing with arrears of rent in the case of tenants involved in hopeless indebtedness through bad seasons?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, he had read the passages from the evidence referred to in the hon. Gentleman's Questions. The last Question ought to have been addressed to his right hon. Friend the Prime Minister, because the Land Bill was in his right hon. Friend's charge, not in his own. But he might say—and hon. Members would be able to correct his statement if he was wrong by reading them themselves—that all the extracts to which the hon. Gentleman alluded related, not to the special debt for rent, but to every kind of debt. Therefore, if the passages were to form the ground of any recommendation at all, it would be a recommendation for the wiping out of all debt.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR asked the right hon. Gentleman, Whether the landlord had not a preferential claim for his rent over the debts of shopkeepers? And was he not aware that Colonel King-Harman had recommended that the debt due to the landlord should be placed on the same level as that due to the shopkeeper?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, the hon. Gentleman had asked him quite a different Question from that put by the hon. Member for Roscommon (Mr. O'Kelly), his answer to whom was, he believed, correct. He did not wish to give any opinion on other matters.

MR. O'KELLY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, On what authority he founds the statement that of the tenant farmers, against whom 2,200 ejectment processes were granted at the late quarter sessions in Ireland, many were able but unwilling to pay their rent; and, if he will state what is the proportion of the tenants decreed against who are unable to pay, and what proportion are able but unwilling to pay?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that the ground on which he rested his statement was the notorious fact that members and leaders of the Land League for months past had striven in the strongest manner to induce tenants not to pay their rent, even when they were able to pay, and that a large number of tenants had notoriously followed that advice. The probability—in his mind the certainty—was that many of those processes for the recovery of rent were issued by the landlords of such tenants. The hon. Member had asked him what proportion of the tenants decreed against were able but unwilling to pay. He must say that the hon. Member and his Friends were better able to answer that Question than he was, because they might have means of knowing what number of tenants had followed their advice "to hold the harvest," as it was called, and not to pay what they termed an unjust rent, although they were able to pay. But he might suggest a mode by which to make the comparison. If the leaders of the Land League would so far assist in the maintainenance of law and order as to desist from advising the tenants not to pay, they would soon be in the position of having few ejectments brought under their notice except those against tenants who were really unable to pay.

Mr. PARNELL said, the right hon. Gentleman had made an important suggestion; and he wished to ask him whether, if the Land League gave the advice which the right hon. Gentleman suggested, he would undertake to protect from eviction the tenants who were unable to pay?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER replied, that if the Government saw any probability or had any reason to believe that that advice would be really given, the whole question would be very much altered.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR: Then the right hon. Gentleman declines to give a guarantee to protect tenants who really cannot pay?

Mr. PARNELL said, he was quite prepared to give the advice suggested if the right hon. Gentleman would make that undertaking on his part.

Afterwards,

Mr. A. M. SULLIVAN asked the First Lord of the Treasury if, between now and Monday, he would consider not only seriously, but in the kindly spirit with which he was certain to approach the subject, the incidental observations which passed within the last five minutes across the floor of the House? So happy an opportunity had not occurred for many years for terminating the grievous state of conflict which existed.

Mr. GLADSTONE: Perhaps the hon. and learned Member has addressed to me a request rather than a Question. At the same time, I should be very sorry, after observations which had passed in such a spirit, to seem to meet them with disrespect. I would say whatever concerns the condition of Ireland has undoubted claims on the attention, and the close and early attention, of Her Majesty's Government, and I shall be glad to receive any further information bearing on the subject of the matters which have been referred to.

STATE OF IRELAND—DUBLIN.

Mr. DAWSON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the following words used by Mr. Justice Fitzgerald at the Commission opened in Dublin on the 7th April last, when addressing the Grand Jury of the city of Dublin:—

> "I am glad to be able to tell you that your duties will be of a very light character at the Commission. I am speaking now in reference not to the list of cases which may go before you, but to the police report generally. The cases are of a very small character, and represent those offences against property principally which are inseparable from a community where a great deal of poverty exists and a period of depression. There is not in the whole a single case of what I would call an aggravated character. Not any one that requires from me observation or instruction;"

and, whether, if he had this pronouncement before him when the city of Dublin was proclaimed?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: Sir, I have read the remarks made by Mr. Justice Fitzgerald at the opening of the Commission in Dublin on the 7th of April last, and I must remind the hon. Member that when the learned Judge made those remarks the speeches at some recent meetings of the Land League Committee in Dublin had not been delivered.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) BILL—YEARLY TENANTS.

The O'DONOGHUE asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, under the provisions of the Land Law (Ireland) Bill, a yearly tenant had a right to apply to the Court to fix the fair rent of his holding; or, whether that right only arose upon the landlord attempting to raise his rent; or, whether the right of the yearly tenant to apply to the Court was dependent on other circumstances?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: Sir, I must say it is inconvenient to ask Questions concerning a measure which is immediately to come under the consideration of the House. Still, I am not sorry this Question has been put. My answer is "Yes." I should say a yearly tenant can apply to the Court at any time to fix a judicial rent whether the landlord tries to increase the rent or not.

Dr. COMMINS asked in what part of the Bill this provision was to be found?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, the hon. and learned Member was a lawyer, and he was sure he would have no difficulty in finding it.

PARLIAMENT—PUBLIC BUSINESS (HALF-PAST TWELVE RULE.)

Mr. MONK gave Notice that it was his intention to ask the decision of the House on the half-past 12 o'clock Rule when the Orders of the Day were disposed of.

Sir JOHN MOWBRAY asked, Whether, under the proper interpretation of the half-past 12 o'clock Rule, it would be competent for the hon. Member to bring forward the subject after half-past 12, there being four Notices of Amendments to the Motion?

Mr. SPEAKER: I observe on the Paper four Amendments to the Resolution of the hon. Member for Gloucester; and, therefore, it comes within the operation of the half-past 12 o'clock Rule.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—PROCLAMATION OF CO. DUBLIN—THE ARREST OF MR. DILLON.

Mr. PARNELL asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether facilities would be given to his hon. Friend the Member for County Longford (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) for the discussion of the Motion with regard to the conduct of the Irish Executive in proclaiming the City of Dublin and arresting Mr. Dillon?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I do not know whether the hon. Member means to ask whether I am prepared to postpone the progress of the debate on the Land Bill. That, certainly, I am not prepared to do. I presume that that debate will terminate at a reasonable hour, and I most earnestly hope no one will attempt to interfere with the hon. Member for Longford in bringing forward the Motion of which he has given Notice. As far as I may presume to offer observations, we should offer no obstacle, and we trust the Motion may be discussed.

Mr. PARNELL: About what time does the right hon. Gentleman think it would be reasonable to adjourn the debate to-night?

Mr. GLADSTONE: There is a little difficulty in the way of the undertaking. There are several Orders of the Day—blocked Orders, I am reminded—over which the Government has no control. We are quite willing to put the Orders over which we have control out of the way, and I hope that other Members will do the same. Several Irish Members I have no doubt will give way. If an understanding can be arrived at that these Orders will not stand in the way, we shall stop the debate on the Land Bill before 12 o'clock.

Mr. O'DONNELL gave Notice that in case the hon. Member for Longford did not obtain facilities for discussing his Motion, he should oppose the taking of any Business at the Morning Sitting on Tuesday until after that Motion was disposed of.

ARREST OF SOCIALISTS IN AUSTRIA.

Mr. J. COWEN said, he had a Question to put to the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department with regard to the arrest of Socialists in Austria; but by some accident the Question did not appear on the Paper. He begged to ask the right hon. Gentleman, Whether his attention had been called to the following extract from a telegram from the Vienna correspondent of the "Daily News" of the 2nd inst.:—

> "During the last few days the houses of several Socialists in Vienna have been searched, and arrests have followed. This measure is connected with Herr Most's arrest in London. Letters in cipher from Vienna Socialists were found in Most's possession. The letters and the keys to them were sent from London."

He wished to ask the Home Secretary if the statement there made was correct?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: Sir, in answer to the Question of the hon. Member I have to state that the arrests of Socialists and other persons which are alleged to have taken place in Austria are, as I am informed, in no way connected with the proceedings against Most in England, or owing to any information derived from the English Government or the English police. But as this question has been asked, and the matter is one of great importance, it is desirable that I should state distinctly what is the view of Her Majesty's Government on this matter. For my part, I desire to say that I have never allowed myself to be the dupe of the mischievous fallacy that assassination plots by secret societies are venial crimes to be tolerated or extenuated as political offences. In my view they are ordinary murders or attempts at murders, and are to be dealt with in all respects as such. And if the police in this country, in the discharge of their ordinary duties and in the administration of English law, became acquainted with circumstances which place in danger from the hand of the assassin the life of any person, whether he be a Sovereign or a private person, whether at home or abroad, it is, in my judgment, their duty to give such information as shall be best calculated to avert the perpetration of the crime. We should have the right to expect such a course of conduct from every civilized Government if the life of our own Sovereign or our own citizens were in peril, and that which we should regard as the duty of others we shall not fail ourselves to perform.

NOTICES.

MONUMENT TO THE RIGHT HON. THE LATE EARL OF BEACONSFIELD, K.G.

MR. GLADSTONE: I desire to give Notice of the Motion which I shall make on Monday in these terms—

"That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying that Her Majesty will give directions that a monument be erected in the Collegiate Church of Saint Peter, Westminster, to the memory of the late Right Hon. the Earl of Beaconsfield, with an Inscription expressive of the high sense entertained by the House of his rare and splendid gifts, and of his devoted labours in Parliament and in great Offices of State; and to assure Her Majesty that this House will make good the expenses attending the same."

LAND LAW (IRELAND) BILL.

MR. PARNELL: I beg to give Notice that on the second reading of the Land Law (Ireland) Bill I shall move the following Amendment:—

"That, in the opinion of this House, the Bill in its present shape will fail to secure for the tenant farmers of Ireland such a reduction in their rents as to afford adequate protection for the property in their holdings acknowledged by the Act of 1870 to belong to the occupying tenants, while it leaves tenants evicted or threatened with eviction for inability to pay rack rents in a defenceless condition; and further, that the provisions of the measure afford no suitable guarantee that its operation will result in the establishing of a sufficient number of occupying owners to check the monopoly in land at present existing, or to make available for the employment and support of the labouring population of Ireland any of the large area of cleared land from which the former occupying tenants were evicted, and whose property in the soil was forcibly and fraudulently appropriated by the landlords without any compensation."

MOTIONS.

AFGHAN WAR—VOTE OF THANKS FOR THE MILITARY OPERATIONS IN AFGHANISTAN.—RESOLUTIONS.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: In rising to propose the Vote of which I have given Notice, I desire to make a very slight explanation. The names in the second Resolution, as they are given in the Paper, are in the order of their Army rank. But, as Major General Sir Frederick Roberts held throughout the campaign the local rank of Lieutenant General, and served in command of several of the officers whose names appear in the Resolution, I think that it will be more fitting that the name of General Roberts should occupy the place which it would have occupied if he held the rank which he enjoyed in Afghanistan. The Resolution will, therefore, be amended by the insertion of the name of General Roberts next to that of General Stewart, according to the local rank held by him. Sir, in moving this Resolution, I think I may justly say that it is my object to avoid all reference to any subject of controversy whatever. We have had frequent opportunities of discussing the policy of the Afghan War. I hope it may not be necessary to renew those discussions; but if it is, I am sure it will be the opinion of the great majority of the House that this will not be a fitting opportunity to do it; and I think most of us will agree that whatever may be our opinion of the policy of the war, the gallant officers and soldiers engaged in it had no other duty, when war was once declared, than to use their utmost exertions to carry it on and bring it as successfully and speedily as possible to a close. I have one word to say in explanation of a departure which has been made in the present instance from the practice which has been pursued on former occasions. On other occasions the Vote has been prefaced by offering the thanks of the House to the Viceroy for the part he has taken in applying the resources of India to the prosecution of the war. Exception has been taken upon more than one occasion to the earlier practice. When the thanks of Parliament were voted to the Army that had been engaged in the suppression of the Indian Mutiny, Mr. Disraeli took exception to the Vote to Lord Canning, the then Viceroy, on the ground that the introduction of the name of a civilian or Viceroy was calculated to intrude matters of controversy into a proceeding which ought, as far as possible, to be removed from controversy in such a connection. And when the right hon. Gentleman opposite, two years ago, moved a Vote of Thanks to the troops engaged in the Afghan War, I thought it necessary, although I raised no opposition to the Vote, to call attention to what fell from Mr. Disraeli, and expressed my opinion that the course indicated by Mr. Disraeli might have been more wisely followed. We have, after some consideration, decided to take upon this occasion the course which I indicated my preference for two years ago. But I need hardly say we have done this, not with a view of casting the slightest slur upon, or in any way of disparaging the services of either the late or the present Viceroy. I do not think anyone would imagine that I should be a party to disparaging in any way the services of the present Viceroy; and I hope that no one would expect that I should take this opportunity of voluntarily casting any slur upon the late Viceroy. Whatever may be the views taken upon questions connected with this war, I, at all events, am the last man to impute to the late Viceroy any want of energy, forethought, or skill in the prosecution of the war. I will now very briefly mention to the House one or two of the leading events of the late campaign, in regard to which I propose that the thanks of the House should be given to the Army. The House will remember that, on the conclusion of the Treaty of Gandamuk, in May, 1879, the Army of the Khyber and the Kuram line was immediately withdrawn into India, and it was decided that the occupation of Candahar should be continued until autumn. On the 3rd of September the Residency at Cabul, whither Sir Louis Cavagnari had been sent as our Envoy, was treacherously attacked, and, in spite of a vigorous defence on the part of Sir Louis Cavagnari and his escort, the greater part of them were murdered. The Government of India, of course, took immediate measures to avenge so treacherous an act, committed on the person of our Envoy. The measure immediately resolved upon was the re-occupation of the Shutargardan Pass, with the object of advancing the Army upon Cabul. The re-occupation of Jellalabad and the Khyber Pass was determined upon, and the evacuation of Candahar, which was then in progress, was at once suspended. At the same time, orders were given to General Stewart to advance upon Cabul. Well, Sir, immediate effect was given to this determination of the Government of India. Between the 3rd of September and the 12th of September, 6,000 men advanced on Cabul, the Shutargardan Pass having already been occupied by General Massy. On the 5th of October General Roberts gave battle to a large force of the enemy, who had taken up a formidable position in the form of a horse-shoe, extending over two or three miles of hills, which were described as rising one behind another. The attack of the British upon that position was completely successful. The enemy, after severe fighting, were entirely dispersed, and many of their guns were taken. On the 8th of October, the brigade under General Massy occupied Sherpur; and on the 12th the British flag was hoisted upon Bala Hissar. The energy with which these operations were performed may, I think, be realized when the House considers that it was only on the 3rd of September that the murder of Sir Louis Cavagnari and his companions took place, and that by the 11th of October, in spite of the most serious opposition, the result I have mentioned was achieved. In these operations, no less than 214 guns belonging to the enemy were captured by the force under General Roberts. General Sir James Hills, whose name is included in the Vote, was appointed Governor of Cabul; and, in that capacity, he rendered most efficient service in various operations in the neighbourhood, and was frequently mentioned in the despatches of General Roberts. Well, Sir, at the same time, steps were taken for the re-opening of the Khyber Pass. This step was necessary because, though the Shutargardan route was one by which the advance could most rapidly be taken, it was not a route which was open throughout the whole of the winter. Meanwhile, General Bright was employed in re-opening communications through the Khyber Pass. By the 14th, means had been adopted for keeping open the communication. On the 5th of November, the Forces of Generals Bright and Roberts met at Cabul. From that time until the arrival of General Stewart, General Roberts exercised supreme political, as well as military, control at Cabul. General Roberts at once saw the necessity, although the capture of Cabul had been effected, of breaking up the combinations which were rapidly forming themselves around Cabul for the purpose of threatening his communications and attacking his position. This enterprize proved to be one of a much more formidable character than was at first anticipated. General Roberts achieved considerable success in breaking up those combinations; and on the 10th of December dispersed large bodies of the enemy; and, for the purpose of checking the movements of the enemy, a force under General Massy was despatched upon the following day to follow up that success. He encountered a large number of the enemy, not less than 10,000 men, under the command of Mahommed Daoud, and was obliged to fall back. In the course of this affair, he lost two guns, which were, however, recaptured the same day. From the 12th to the 14th of December, very constant and severe fighting took place; but no advantage was gained by the enemy. However, a force, estimated at not less than 50,000 men, surrounded Cabul, which was too overwhelming a force to justify General Roberts in holding the city, and, on the 14th, he retired into Sherpur. That cantonment was occupied from the 14th to the 22nd of December. The duty which fell upon the troops during the period I have mentioned was of the most severe and arduous kind. The attacks of the enemy were constant; the cold was very severe, and the duties altogether were of the most trying description; but, animated by the example of General Roberts and the other officers, the troops behaved in a way than which nothing could more admirable. On the 22nd of December, an attack was made on the cantonments. That attack was well resisted; and, at the same time, General Roberts made a flank attack, the result of which was the complete defeat and dispersion of the enemy. From that time until the return of the troops from Afghanistan, although several expeditions of a minor and unimportant character were undertaken with the view of breaking up hostile gatherings, the operations were not of very great importance. In the Kuram, the route through which had been abandoned after the Khyber was opened, no military operations of any great importance took place; but General Tytler found it necessary to make an expedition against a tribe which had treacherously murdered a British officer. That operation was conducted with complete success; but I much regret to state that in consequence of exposure General Tytler died. The command in the Kuram Valley was exercised by Major General Watson, who, in the earlier phase of the war, had commanded the contingents furnished by the Punjab Chiefs to the complete satisfaction of the Government of India. He held the Kuram command till the close of the war. On the renewal of hostilities it had been arranged, on the relief of his troops by corps from Bombay, that General Sir Donald Stewart should, if necessary, threaten the fortress of Ghazni, and it was resolved that he should march from Candahar by Ghazni to Cabul, returning to India by the Kuram or Khyber route. On the 31st of March, the General marched with this object from Candahar, and on the 19th of April he was attacked at Ahmed-Khel, 20 miles from Ghazni, by a large body of the enemy. The attack was one of an extremely important character. It was made by a party of greatly superior force, and the enemy was aided by many thousands of fanatical soldiers, whose onslaught was pushed with such desperation and persistency that General Stewart was obliged to put every man of his reserve into the firing line. The loss of the enemy was very severe, amounting to between 2,000 and 3,000, over 800 having fallen in the attack; and the value of the success achieved was enduring. No further operations of importance took place until the month of July, when, in consequence of the advance of Ayoob Khan from Herat, the Government of India found it necessary to despatch a small force to Candahar, under the command of General Burrows, to assist the Wali, who had shown the greatest loyalty to the Government. Sir, I need not detain the House with any record of the events which took place at that time. They are, unfortunately, better known to the House and the country than are the more successful operations of the war to which I have referred. It is enough to say that on the 28th of July General Burrows suffered the reverse of Maiwand; and in referring to that reverse, deplorable as it was, I must say that although there may be reason to think that the result might have been different if the troops had been otherwise handled—still, it is but just, both to the officers and the men engaged, to say that it ought to be remembered that they met an enemy immensely superior in number, and animated by the same fanatic courage with which they had attacked General Stewart. The result of this unfortunate action was the retirement of General Primrose from the cantonments to within the city and citadel of Candahar, where he was very soon afterwards besieged by Ayoob Khan, the siege continuing from the 28th of July to the 24th of August. The principal event which took place during the siege was the sortie of the 16th of August. The result of that sortie, though extremely creditable to the valour and courage of the troops engaged in it, was not altogether satisfactory, although it relieved the garrison for some time from annoyance. I cannot pass from this subject without mentioning the loss which was sustained by the British Army on that occasion by the death of General Brooke, who was shot while endeavouring to save the life of a wounded comrade. Sir, immediately upon the disaster of Maiwand and the investment of Candahar, orders were given to Sir Robert Phayre, who was in charge of the communications in the Bolan Pass, to concentrate his force and proceed immediately to the relief of General Primrose. Although Sir Robert Phayre was unable to reach Candahar before it was relieved by General Roberts, great credit is due to him for the energy with which he encountered and overcame innumerable difficulties in the way of obtaining transport and supplies, and in hurrying up his force as quickly as he did. In the meantime, it had been decided that Sir Frederick Roberts, at the head of a picked force of 10,000 men of all arms, should march from Cabul to the relief of the garrison at Candahar. General Roberts left Cabul on the 9th of August, and arrived at Candahar on the 31st, having covered 316 miles in 23 days. On the very day of his arrival the General reconnoitred the positions of the enemy in force, and the next day he attacked them, and with perfect success, completely routing Ayoob Khan's force and dispersing them, capturing 34 guns. So much has been said as to this memorable operation that it is unnecessary I should detain the House with respect to it; but I cannot leave the subject without mentioning the name of General Ross, who commanded the Infantry division, and whose able assistance, not less than that of many of the brigadiers and other officers, has been so frequently and generously acknowledged by General Roberts in his despatches, and by the Government of India in commenting upon those despatches. Sir, I have only been able to give to the House the barest outline of the principal operations which took place. I cannot, however, but feel that in this, more than in ordinary wars, even if the record were more complete, it would still convey a very inadequate idea of the dangers, the difficulties, and the hardships encountered by our gallant troops. A large portion of the service was necessarily of a kind which could not be reported in despatches, or in that or any other way be made known to the world. A great part of it consisted of operations of the most trying and difficult character. During the occupation of the country, as well as during the progress of the operations, the troops were constantly in contact, and frequently in collision, with an active, brave, and sometimes treacherous enemy, especially on the line of communications and on the dangerous duty of securing supplies. The officers had, therefore, to be constantly on their guard, and were frequently engaged in skirmishes of which no record has been left. It is service of that kind—signally trying as it is—that is a better test than is furnished by more conspicuous operations of the true qualities of the men. I am happy to say that, in the opinion of the Government of India, the conduct of the troops in all these services was everything that could be desired. I propose that the thanks of the House shall be given, as they are due, to Sir Frederick Haines, the Commander-in-Chief. It was his earnest desire to have taken personal command of these operations, and he pressed his wish on numerous occasions upon the Government of India. For administrative reasons, however, it was impossible that his request could be complied with. All these military movements, however, have been entirely under his direction, and the uniform success which has attended them is due to the ability with which they have been planned as well as the fidelity with which they have been executed. The Government of India has paid testimony to the unfailing discipline, the high spirit, and the cheerful endurance which have been conspicuously evinced by the whole force during this prolonged and trying service. They exhibited the most soldierly qualities, and rarely, if ever, has a war been conducted in an enemy's country with such a strict regard to the principles of humanity and honour, and with such a total absence of excess of any kind. I think the House will agree with me that great credit is due to Sir Frederick Haines and his predecessors for the high state of discipline which rendered it possible that so flattering a tribute should be offered to the Army. I have referred to the active services of Sir Donald Stewart. It is impossible, in speaking of him, not to mention the spirit of self-sacrificing generosity with which, on the eve of a critical military operation, he reduced his own force, and placed the pick of his troops at the disposal of Sir Frederick Roberts. It has not been usual in Votes of this character, and I have not thought it necessary, to make special mention of the services rendered in this campaign by the political officers. But it would not be right that I should conclude without reminding the House that in wars of this description the services which are rendered by the political officers are not only of the highest importance, but are frequently attended by personal risk. Of the political officers, and the services rendered by them, I can only speak in the most general terms. The services of the Lieutenant Governors of the Punjab and of Bombay have been recognized by the Government of India. Sir Robert Sandeman, our Agent in Beloochistan, has, throughout this campaign, rendered services of the most signal and valuable character. He has preserved, with great ability, the best relations between our Viceroys and the Khan of Kelat, who has shown loyalty to his allies, and has on several important occasions rendered the greatest service to our Army. Sir Robert Sandeman was also placed at the head of the administration of the whole line of communications, and his services cannot be overestimated. The Government of India have also rendered a just tribute to the skill of Mr. Lepel Griffin, who for six months was in charge of our political relations at Cabul. I need not remind the House of the assistance rendered, at personal risk, by Colonel St. John at Candahar on the unfortunate day of the battle of Maiwand. It remains for me to say what has been done by the Government of India in the direction of rewarding these services. To Sir Frederick Haines, to Sir Donald Stewart, and to Sir Frederick Roberts, Her Majesty has been graciously pleased to offer the honour of baronetcies, which two of these officers have accepted; but Sir Frederick Haines, for personal reasons, has declined, at all events for the present, the acceptance of that distinction. In conformity with former precedents, the Indian Council has also granted to Sir Donald Stewart and Sir Frederick Roberts, who are officers in the Indian Service, pensions of £1,000 a-year for life, or, if they prefer, a capital sum of £12,500. The troops have received six months' batta, and a medal will be struck for the Afghan Campaign, with the names of several engagements on the clasps. In commemoration of the famous exploit of General Roberts, a bronze star will be given to those who took part in it. I have now only to say that, cordially as I trust the thanks of both sides of this House will be given, and fully sensible as I am of the extent to which the troops of all arms have deserved it, I hope that the time is far distant when we may be called upon to renew these military operations. Successful as, on the whole, they have been, it cannot be denied that, as must always be the case, they have shown us some defects in our military organization which the Government of India are now earnestly engaged in considering. There is an ample and honourable field open to British officers to co-operate with that Government in remedying those defects and increasing the efficiency of the Army of India, upon which our power must always rest, and which must always, therefore, be maintained in the highest state of order and efficiency.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Sir, I rise to second the Vote of Thanks which has just been proposed by the noble Lord, and I can assure the House it is not my intention in any way to weaken the statement of the noble Lord by attempting to add any comments or remarks of my own. I am convinced that the simple narration which the noble Lord has so ably given of the events of the recent campaign is, in itself, enough to reward those to whom we wish to do honour. It was but necessary for the facts to be stated—for the facts, I am sure, will speak for themselves. I agree—and I trust the House will also thoroughly agree—with the sentiments of the noble Lord in his opening observations, that this is not an occasion on which, if ever, we ought to discuss the policy of the Afghan War. It would, indeed, be a very great misfortune if, when we were considering how we were to acknowledge the gallant conduct of our brave soldiers, we were to mix up our expressions of admiration for the men who have shown such devotion to duty—a question upon which there can be no difference of opinion among our fellow-subjects—with matter which may be of a contentious character. We cannot but feel, however great may be the honours bestowed by the Sovereign, or in any other way, upon the soldiers who fight for us in the field, there is one honour they covet, I believe, above all others—I mean the honour of special mention in the Houses of Parliament, and a Vote of Thanks from those Houses. I am convinced that although the British soldier, when he is far from home, and when called upon in a strange land to undergo, not only the perils of battle, but also the long and trying sufferings which the noble Lord has so well pointed out, in campaigns like this—and not only the British soldier, but the Native soldier also, when called upon to fight for the flag under which he is so contented to serve, and under which he has shown himself on many occasions to be so true and loyal—I am convinced that both the British and the Native soldier, when they are called upon to undergo these sufferings and make these exertions, are largely sustained by the certainty that their efforts will be recognized and appreciated by those in whose cause they are engaged. I will not make any remarks upon the question the noble Lord referred to when he spoke of the change he has made in not introducing the name of the Viceroy of India, as has been customary in such Votes. We fully understand the ground on which he has made the alteration. It is not with reference to this occasion only, but as to what has been his opinion on a former occasion, and that it is not one Viceroy only, but two—one not belonging to the Party to which the noble Lord is opposed, but to which he himself belongs, whose name has been deliberately omitted. We, therefore, understand that no slight has been intended, but that the intention of the Government has been to direct our special attention to those who have been engaged in the military operations, and it is purely in connection with those operations that the Vote is proposed. In selecting the names that have been brought before us for commendation—those who are to receive the thanks of this House and those whose names have been mentioned, though not included in the Vote—the desire has been to pick out the names of those to whom great honour is due; and I can only express regret at the omission of any special reference to the conduct of our Native officers and the Natives who have been employed in our service. I may take the opportunity of mentioning a name well known to many in this country besides those directly connected with the administration of India—I mean Sir Gholam Hussein. I am glad to be permitted to second this Vote, and to associate myself with the Vote of Thanks which the noble Lord has proposed in the full confidence that the Vote will be passed in the spirit in which such Votes are passed—namely, as a Vote of Thanks to those noble and gallant men who have laid down their lives or endured hardships in our behalf without reference to any other consideration.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the Thanks of this House be given to General Sir Frederick Paul Haines, G.C.B., G.C.S.I., C.I.E., Commander in Chief in India, for the ability and judgment with which he directed the recent operations from September 1879 to September 1880 in Afghanistan."—(*The Marquess of Hartington.*)

Mr. HEALY moved, as an Amendment—

"That this House, disapproving of the Afghan War as needless and unjust, considers it inexpedient to return Thanks to Officers or Soldiers for slaying a number of people with whom we had no righteous quarrel, and devastating their Country."

The hon. Gentleman said, that, although the Prime Minister refused to allow time to discuss a Motion with respect to the arrest of a Member of the House, because it would stand in the way of the Land Bill, he had arrested the progress of that important measure in order to introduce this Motion. He would not make any needless remarks to delay discussion; but he considered it his duty, even although he had only one other Member to go into the Lobby with him, to take a division upon his Amendment for the purpose of protesting against the unjust and needless slaughter and reckless invasion of Afghanistan. He had often thought, when reading the accounts of the battles in that country, particularly in the way of setting up pretenders, that he was reading a chapter in the history of his own country 200 years ago; for, in almost every particular, the old system of British policy as carried out in Ireland was renewed in Afghanistan. On this ground, as well as on general grounds, he had put down his Notice. He thought it would be considered rather remarkable if it were to go forth to the world that it was only successful soldiers who were to be thanked. Had this war ended by the defeat and dispersion of the British forces and their being driven beyond the Frontier, the House would never have been asked to accord them thanks. When the Boer War was ended the Government would not be willing to return thanks to the soldiers who had suffered in that country, although they had performed a more arduous task, as they had to stand up against trained marksmen instead of fighting an undisciplined rabble, as the people of Afghanistan were. The noble Marquess referred to the fanatic swordsmen; but the people who had been resisting British invasion might have been spared the sneer. Were they fanatics because they were true to their religion and their country? If that were fanaticism, he was proud to own himself a fanatic. He moved his Resolution, believing that everyone who voted for the Resolution of the noble Marquess associated himself in some way with blood-guiltiness.

Mr. O'KELLY seconded the Amendment.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "this House, disapproving of the Afghan War as needless and unjust, considers it inexpedient to return Thanks to Officers or Soldiers for slaying a number of people with whom we had no righteous quarrel, and devastating their Country,"—(*Mr. Healy,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. GLADSTONE: I am very sorry, Sir, that occasion should arise which would call upon me even for one moment to give the House the idea that I supposed anything would require to be added to what has been said by my noble Friend and the right hon. Gentleman opposite. Such is not my intention; but I do wish very respectfully, and at the same time earnestly, to deprecate a division on this occasion. I would say, Sir, to the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down that in one respect I sympathize with him if he thinks that some disparagement has been shown to the great and important measure relating to the tenure of land in Ireland by allowing precedence to be given to the subject now before the House. I assure the hon. Member that if he examines the annals of this House he will find that it has been usual on every occasion, even when the most vital subjects were under discussion, to allow prior consideration to be given at the commencement of the evening to Motions of this kind, having in view the graceful and complete rendering of a just honour to those to whom it is due. It is assumed that such Motions will require a very short time; and it is also felt that to give them the most marked and prominent position in the proceedings of this House is the mode in which we would desire to give that which, after all, is nothing but an honorary gift, in order that it may have its greatest value. On that account I am sure the hon. Member will not at all suppose that in this proceeding we have attempted in the slightest degree to derogate from the strong sense we have so often expressed of the importance of going forward with the subject to which I have referred. Two observations I may make. One is that I am quite sure that nothing could be further—indeed, I am authorized to say that nothing could be further—from the intention of my noble Friend than to cast any slight upon the desperate valour which has been shown by the Mohammedan population of Afghanistan in defending, as they conceived, their religion and their country. The word "fanatical" is a word which describes enthusiasm carried to an extreme, and which is well known to characterize both religion and conduct in the East in a manner so traditional and historical that the use of the epithet does not convey the slightest discredit. On the contrary, I believe that we who sit in this House should not rest satisfied with merely expressing a negative or a neutral opinion; and that, while we deeply regret the occasion for a collision arising, we can truly honour in our hearts and minds the unsparing exercise of valour which can ever be found in the cause of what the Natives believe to be true. In the same way I wish to say that the omission in this Motion of specific nominal reference to the Native Forces is entirely due to the observation of strict rule and precedent in the case; and I certainly am of opinion — and I believe it is the general opinion—that in all matters of this kind the observance of rule and precedent is a matter of practical prudence, tending both to the dignity and safety of proceedings, such as that in which we are now engaged. On the question of the Motion itself, I hope the hon. Member will feel that he has sufficiently discharged his duty by the protest which he has made. He felt himself compelled to make a protest, and he has made it; but why should he persist in carrying with him some few Members of this House into the Division Lobby with no other possible effect than that of detracting from the grace and kindliness of the act which it is the desire of nearly all the Members of the House to perform? Surely the hon. Member cannot think that the gratitude of this House to the Army in the field ought to depend on the degree of approval or disapproval with which it may regard the policy that that Army has been called upon to give effect to. Deplorable indeed would the position of the soldier be, considering the enormous efforts, considering the costly sacrifices, he has to make in the performance of his duty in the field, if he found that he would be judged by his country, not according to his own conduct, or the manner in which he had fulfilled his covenant with the Sovereign—not by the manner in which he had displayed even the very noblest qualities which war, with all its miseries, is calculated to produce; but that he was to be tried by reference to another standard —namely, by reference to the rectitude of the judgment or purity of the judgment of those who had ordered him into the field, and for whose error, if error it was, he was to be the sufferer. I am sure he will see that such a doctrine really will not bear examination for one moment at the tribunal of common sense; and I do earnestly and respectfully submit to the hon. Member that he would do no disparagement to himself, and would greatly promote the general wish of the House, if, content with his protest, he will withdraw his Motion, and allow this to be an unanimous Vote.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON said, that with some portion of the speech of the Prime Minister he agreed. He had intended to move the Previous Question, as on a former occasion, when the noble Lord who moved this Resolution sat on the other side of the House. On that occasion he moved the Previous Question, and went to a division upon it. He regretted when he saw the Notice which the hon. Member (Mr. Healy) put upon the Paper, and he would make an appeal to him now. He did not condemn the sentiments of the hon. Gentleman with regard to the Afghan War; but he thought the hon. Gentleman had not taken the best way of putting himself in accord with the sentiment of the House by moving an Amendment which, as the right hon. Gentleman pointed out, seemed to condemn the soldiers for actions for which the House really was responsible. If, therefore, the hon. Member would kindly accede to his suggestion to withdraw his Amendment and the House would allow it to be done—["No, no!"]—he would move the Previous Question. He proposed to move the Previous Question, because he felt strongly on the matter. But he was going to oppose the Vote of Thanks in a manner least repugnant to the sentiments of those who were about to support it. He congratulated the noble Lord upon the position in which he found himself in moving this Vote. It was rather different from his position two years ago. Then they were in a state of alarm about wars in different parts of the world; but now the noble Lord had the proud satisfaction of rising to propose this Vote when, for a wonder, we were at peace with all the world, when we were not annexing anybody's territory, nor vindicating the Queen's authority anywhere by force of arms, when we were not making Naval demonstrations, not even carrying out "the mandate of Europe," which was, perhaps, the little failing of the present Government amongst its many virtues. Indeed, we were in such a condition that an hon. Friend said to him the other day that if we did not take care we should be slipping into Christianity. Honestly enough he could say he was grateful for that state of things. Dr. Johnson had said that gratitude was a lively sense of favours to come. But he felt grateful because he hoped they would never again have to speak on a question of this kind; and unless the right hon. Gentleman opposite came into power he hoped they would have no more wars. He did not think the noble Lord was very happy to-night; he did not speak with that energy he sometimes exhibited. He had a shrewd suspicion that the noble Lord hated the whole thing from the bottom of his heart. It was not the noble Lord's Motion really. The voice was the voice of the noble Lord; but the Motion was the Motion of the hon. Member for Guildford (Mr. Onslow). They should have heard nothing about this Vote of Thanks were it not for the persistent Questions—there was nothing like persistency—of the hon. Member for Guildford. He regretted to see the noble Lord dragged at the chariot wheels of the hon. Member. He did not think the noble Lord liked it much, or that his Colleagues liked it, for he noticed that they all got up and went out of the House. He was not going to find fault with the noble Lord, who was driven to it by the commonplaces of the House and the way they were going on about these military matters. He hoped for the future the noble Lord would not be so much influenced by the hon. Member for Guildford, but would take counsel with the Radical Members below the Gangway. [*Laughter.*] Let not hon. Gentlemen laugh. It was the Radical Party who put the present Ministry into power. Nobody knew that better than the noble Lord and the Prime Minister, and they also knew that among the cardinal points of the Radical programme was their hatred, their condemnation of that spirit of military adventure which had cost the country so much. What was the philosophy of these Votes? Why were they called upon ever and anon to give these Votes of Thanks to soldiers? What was a soldier? He was a man who made a contract with his country to kill anybody whom the country wished him to kill, anybody whom the country wished to destroy, to destroy people's property, burn their houses, and inflict untold misery upon them, perfectly regardless whether it was right or wrong. The soldier left that to that House to decide. He became a mere animated machine, with no consideration of right or wrong. ["No!"] He was astonished to hear anybody deny that. He thought even the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) would not have denied it. Surely the soldier was bound to fight whether the cause was right or wrong; it was not for him to reason, but to act. It was different with the Volunteers; they did not fight, but only simulated fighting. Yet he had just seen in a paper that a large sum had been given to teach them how to shoot moving objects at unascertained distances. But the real soldier meant business. He was not there for one moment to discredit the soldier. ["Oh!"] Not a bit. Parliament was responsible for all he did. He did his best, and generally went to fight for us in a wrong cause, for most of our causes in the last century had been wrong. He did not always win, and then he did not get thanked. He wanted to carry that a little further. If they were to have thanks given to those great commanders for doing what was called "brilliant deeds," let them have some censure for those who did deeds worthy of censure. If the one thing was right the other was right. His doctrine was that they all did their duty courageously and fulfilled their contract. We ought to fulfil our contract with them, and not make this invidious distinction of proposing thanks to those who happened to be lucky and nothing to those who brought us into disaster and disgrace. It was better to assume that all did their duty. Why were the Army and Navy to be singled out for special Votes of Thanks when they did their duty? Did not the police do their duty? [An hon. MEMBER: Not in Ireland.] Well, he did not understand Ireland. Very few people in that House did. He was only talking about the English police, with whom he was better acquainted. Why was not the policeman to be considered as good a character as the soldier? The policeman was much more useful, because the soldier was employed to break the peace, and the policeman was employed to keep the peace. Therefore, he would wish to have a new system adopted at our public dinners—though he was not a great man for toasts—and to have the toast proposed of "The Army, the Navy, and the Police." Why should not the distinguished services of a more useful nature than the slaughter of our fellow men be honoured? When the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister was in Office a few years ago he, in conjunction with his Colleagues, did a thing not very popular on the other side, but which would be remembered to his honour years and years after he was taken from us—he meant the peaceful settlement of the Alabama question. That was real nobility, real Christianity, and would redound more to the credit of this country than the slaughter in battle of any number of people opposed to us. He was glad to take that opportunity of paying a tribute to the right hon. Gentleman opposite, who had so justly won the confidence of his Party. There was nothing for which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) would be more honourably remembered hereafter than for the part he took in the peaceful settlement of that International business. He objected to the special glorification of war which this Vote involved. As for the occupants of the Treasury Bench, he should like to know what had become of the two right hon. Gentlemen the Members for Birmingham, and whether it was their intention to vote in favour of the Motion? According to another prominent Member of the Government, war might be described as "a combination of all the crimes, horrors, and sufferings of which human nature is capable," and the Prime Minister had said—

> "A long experience of life leads me to a deeper and deeper conviction of the enormous mischief of war, even in the best and most favourable circumstances, and the mischief, indescribable and irredeemable, of causing an unnecessary war."

Hon. Members in that part of the House had unanimously condemned the Afghan War as unnecessary, and as connected with the most horrible incidents. ["Question!"] The question surely was the value of the services performed by the Army, in regard to which it had been said that they hanged more Afghans than they shot. He contended that Votes such as these were not only mischievous in principle, but also most injurious to the public feeling and public welfare of the country; and he hoped that, at least, hon. Members below the Gangway would join him in making a protest against a glorification of the military spirit, and in declaring that they did not feel joy in the destruction of their fellow creatures, but that they preferred a policy of "peace on earth, and good-will towards men."

MR. J. COWEN said, he entirely agreed with the Prime Minister as to the desirability of their having no division on the question before the House. If the Vote had to be of any value it ought to be unanimous, cordial, and hearty. A division would sensibly detract from its merit. By voting for the Motion no one committed himself to the policy involved in the Afghan War. It would be quite justifiable for those who disapproved of that enterprize to vote in favour of the Resolution. The Army was simply giving effect to the instructions of Parliament; and Parliament was giving effect to the wishes, or at least the supposed wishes, of the country at that time. He had no desire even to refer to the purpose of the war. It would open out a wide field for debate if they were to comment on it. But he would say this, in reply to his hon. Friend the Member for Wexford (Mr. Healy)—who compared the struggle of the Afghan tribesmen with the struggle of his own countrymen against the English—that the fight was not a fight for nationality. He would yield to no one in his concern for nationalities or for the independence of other nations. But the conflict in Afghanistan, so far as England was concerned, had reference to another Power than the Afghans. The Afghans were merely the instruments. They were moved by a distant but potent mechanism. It was not these Asiatic Highlanders that the English Government fought. It was a much more powerful people. The hon. Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) talked about the spirit of the late Government and the hands of the present. But in the Afghan War the hands were the hands of Esau, and the voice was the voice of Jacob. ["No, no!"] Well, he did not wish to raise any controversy. He was only desirous, as the subject had been referred to, of recording his opinion that it was not a struggle against a nationality, but a struggle against a Power that had destroyed more nationalities than any other in existence. Dismissing that aspect of the question, however, he was glad that the proceedings of that night had done a tardy act of justice to a distinguished soldier. No man had been more harshly censured than General Roberts when he was fighting the nation's battles in a remote country, under terrible disadvantages, and when, too, he had no means of defending himself. He was accused of having deliberately hanged men who were opposing him in fair fight, with having burnt the houses and destroyed the villages of inoffensive non-combatants—of having, in fact, been guilty of no end of wanton cruelty and hardship. These charges were made against Sir Frederick Roberts in his absence, and repeated from day to day. If he was guilty of them, instead of being thanked he should have been censured. If he was not guilty of them, the men who made them ought to retract and apologize. The statement that had been made by the Secretary of State for India was a vindication of that gallant officer's conduct, and as such would be received with satisfaction and pleasure by the entire nation. He had only one further remark to make, and that had reference to the observation of the hon. Member for Wexford, who said the proceedings in Afghanistan resembled the doings of the English in Ireland. He (Mr. J. Cowen) did not think the facts warranted such a remark. However painful some of the incidents in the war in Asia might have been, there had been no pitchcaps, no triangles, and none of the other atrocities that characterized the suppression of the insurrection in Ireland in 1798. Indeed, no more marked proof of the improvement in the mode of conducting warfare could be cited than the contrast between the struggle in Afghanistan just terminated and the war we waged in the same country in 1842. He was not aware that the discussion was going to take place, or he would have prepared himself with information to show how the English Army acted in Afghanistan 40 years ago. They burnt villages, cut down trees, destroyed standing crops, and converted beautiful and richly cultivated plots into a barren wilderness. For miles everything above the earth that was consumable was put into a blaze, and both property and persons were destroyed wholesale. Anyone who would contrast the action of the English troops when they retreated from Cabul at that time with the action of the Army that General Roberts had recently led through the country would be able to appreciate the great advance that had been made in the mode of conducting war by civilized countries. The educating influence of the age had nowhere been more beneficially felt than in our military operations.

MR. ASHTON DILKE said, he thought some reference ought to be made during this debate to the attitude taken by a large section, he believed the majority, of the Liberal Party in the months of December, 1879, and January, 1880, in regard to certain acts which were said at the time to have been committed by General Roberts in Afghanistan; and he thought they were indebted to his hon. Colleague (Mr. Cowen) for having reminded them that they then took an attitude which, so far as he could judge, was not the attitude of the Liberal Party now. He knew that it would be impossible to omit the name of General Roberts from this list. He was not going to vote against the Vote of Thanks. He could not agree with the Amendment of the hon. Member for Wexford, for the war was their own doing, and he thought they ought to thank the soldiers who had carried out their wishes. Nor could he vote for the Previous Question with the hon. Member for Carlisle; but so long as the name of General Roberts was included in the list he could not conscientiously vote for it. ["Oh!"] He should not trouble the House with any remarks of his own; but would prove his case out of General Roberts's own mouth. In his Proclamation on entering Cabul he said—"The British Government has the right of totally destroying Cabul." Had the British Government that right? They would not dare to use such language if they were fighting a civilized enemy; and were they to say when fighting a savage and uneducated enemy thousands of miles away from public opinion what they would not say under other circumstances? On October 18—

> "Rewards are offered for any person who has fought against British troops since September 3; larger rewards offered for rebel officers of the Afghan Army."

Were these men "rebels"? ["Yes!"] Rebels to whom? General Roberts spoke with just and proper indignation of the murder of Sir Louis Cavagnari, and he would have entirely sympathized with him if he had been content to hang or shoot only those who were concerned in that murder. But he went much further. On November 12 he said—

> "Amnesty will not be extended to those concerned in the attack on the Embassy, or who were guilty of instigating the troops and people to oppose the British troops. Such persons will be treated without mercy as rebels."

It was to that General that they were asked to vote thanks. At the time the Press was under the military censorship of Cabul, telegrams emanating from Cabul contained in them nothing which was unpleasant to the military authorities. The newspaper correspondents wrote—

> "The trial of the prisoners is proceeding daily; all convicted are hanged. The city Mollah was hanged for preaching a religious war. The Kotwal was hanged for inciting and organizing resistance to us at Charasiab."

But Charasiab was a fair and pitched battle. Again—

> "All the villages round Cabul are hostile to us. No quarter is given to anyone firing upon us, and prisoners taken in fight are shot."

As for the execution of the city Mollah, what, he might ask, would they say if a German Army came and hanged the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Lord Mayor of London for inciting them to do their duty as patriots and citizens? These facts might receive the cheers and the honours of the House of Commons; but if they ever came to a war with a civilized nation these things would recoil upon our heads.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, the speech of the hon. Member who had just sat down had thrown a new light on the question now before the House. The charges referred to had been either falsely or truly made. If they were false, why had they not been repudiated by the Members of the Treasury Benches? They were asked to thank, among others, General Roberts. He found reported in *Hansard* a debate in the Session of 1879 in which nearly every one of the Generals named in the present Resolution were thanked for what they had done in this war in Afghanistan. It was said that they should not wage a discussion on the policy of the war on this occasion; but men who represented the minority in the country—a minority that would stand by peace and non-intervention—were bound, in season and out of season, to make their opinions heard. But Ministers had themselves discussed the conduct of officers, and had thus initiated a discussion of the kind, which had been deprecated. These officers were Civil Governors as well as Military Chiefs, and it was in the former capacity that they were guilty of the acts that had been complained of. Comments had been made on the attitude of the Government, and on the absence of the right hon. Gentlemen the Members for Birmingham; but he thought their absence was more honourable than the presence of the Chief Secretary for Ireland. That right hon. Gentleman also had been a member of the Society of Friends; but he had probably seen and learned so much in the course of the last 12 months that he was now willing to support a Vote of Thanks to an Army. The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, whom, in many respects, he recognized as his political tutor, had, in one of the reports of his great speeches, quoted the phrase of Wilberforce with regard to the "noxious race of heroes and warriors." It was, therefore, not surprising that the right hon. Gentleman was not here to-night. His hon. Friend who had raised this question would have been perfectly willing to have left it to some other Members; but he had shown that, if the English Members neglected to stand by the principles of justice and peace, some Irish Members would stand up and do so for them. He should go into the Lobby with his hon. Friend, and the only difference between Afghanistan and Ireland was this—that what had been done in Afghanistan within the last year or two had been done in Ireland some time ago.

MR. E. STANHOPE: I had hoped that the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War would have thought it necessary to say a few words on behalf of the Army of this country. That Army does not require any defence from me. Under difficult circumstances on many occasions, it has discharged the duties intrusted to it in a manner which has done it the greatest possible honour. I am glad to think that it has done so in the present instance, and that now, as on so many previous occasions, it has obtained the respect and gratitude of this country. But I rise in particular in consequence of the attacks which have been made on Sir Frederick Roberts. In ordinary circumstances, I think I might safely have said that I would leave his reputation to the judgment of his fellow-countrymen. They have heard the case, and have decided it in a way which cannot fail to be gratifying to Sir Frederick Roberts, as is shown by the reception he has met with in this country since his return, and by the universal opinion which has been expressed respecting his conduct. But the hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle (Mr. Ashton Dilke) has acted in the most unfair possible way. He has raked up some old charges against Sir Frederick Roberts; but he has not referred to the fact, which most Gentlemen in this House know perfectly well, that a complete defence of Sir Frederick Roberts was laid before this House in the form of a Parliamentary Paper. This fact the hon. Member for Newcastle had never alluded to. [MR. ASHTON DILKE: I only read Sir Frederick Roberts's own words.] The defence of General Roberts was laid before this House in the year 1880. I think the letter in which it was sent was dated the 27th of January in that year. It was laid before the country for its candid consideration. It offered a complete denial of the charges which had been made, and from that time to the present no Member of the House had stood up and reiterated those charges. Sir Frederick Roberts might well have been fully convinced, therefore, that after the answer which was given to those charges they would never again be brought forward, and that he would be protected from a most unfair attack such as had been now made upon him.

MR. CHILDERS: A minute or two before the hon. Gentleman who has just spoken rose to address the House I had asked my noble Friend the Secretary of State for India to obtain for me from the Library that despatch which has been referred to, and if my noble Friend had returned in time I should have at once risen to address the House. The Paper itself has not yet reached me; but I have the fullest recollection of having most carefully studied that Paper when it was laid on the Table of the House, and I thoroughly satisfied myself that Sir Frederick Roberts had successfully and satisfactorily rebutted the charges which had been made against him. I regret I had not had an opportunity of saying this before the hon. Gentleman opposite rose; but I hope the House will excuse me for wishing to wait for a few moments until I could get the actual correspondence. Sir Frederick Roberts was attacked—though not by me or my noble Friend—for his supposed improper conduct in putting to death certain Afghans in connection with the rising which took place in consequence of the Cavagnari murder. I hope the House will accept from the hon. Gentleman opposite and from myself the assurance that, the case having been fully looked into and considered by us, we—speaking for Her Majesty's late Government and Her Majesty's present Government—are satisfied that those charges were without foundation. I intended also to say a word or two—and really no more is necessary—with reference to the general imputations which have been made against the British Army, and as to the effect of Motions like the present. Motions like the present are the customary course adopted in both Houses of Parliament when an Army has done its duty in obedience to the commands of its Sovereign. On the completion of its work the House has uniformly been asked if the operations were considered of sufficient importance to pass a Vote of this kind. I will go the length of saying that it would be a great misfortune if the Army was to be taught to believe that such a Vote of Thanks was to depend on the approval or disapproval by a section or a majority of Parliament of the political reasons which put the Army in motion. Soldiers in the discharge of their duty should know nothing of politics. If a Vote of Thanks was voted on one occasion and negatived on another, when the successful operations of the Army were of equal importance, the soldier will begin to think—"I wonder whether the case in which I am engaged is one of which the political grounds are sufficient to gain me the thanks of Parliament?" I hope the soldier will never ask that question. I hope the soldier will always do his duty, and without asking for the reasons of the war, as he has done it in the past, and as he is doing it now. On that ground I much regret the Amendments which have been made to-night, and I still hope the House will pass the Motion *nemine contradicente*, as on past occasions.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said, that if the Previous Question had been moved by the hon. Member for Carlisle many hon. Members would have had an opportunity of escaping from a position of some difficulty. It was a fact that the war in which our Army had been engaged was condemned by the great majority of the people of this country. The responsibility in no way rested on the Army; but a double responsibility rested upon those who originated the war in Afghanistan. ["Divide!"] How was it that the enthusiasm for this Vote came entirely from the country Gentlemen on the other side of the House, who occupied a front position by their relatives and friends in the British Army? The statement that General Roberts had done nothing unbecoming a British soldier only showed what a low standard prevailed on the two Front Benches as to what was just to a country which we invaded without any show of reason or justice. This Resolution was not to convey the thanks of the House to the private soldiers who fought in the war. A glorification of the war system, which had its basis in what was called society, was the real reason for the Vote. [*Interruptions.*] If he was not allowed to proceed with his remarks he would be under the necessity of moving the adjournment of the debate. Representing a large constituency (Bradford) holding a strong opinion on this question, he asked the indulgence of the House. He ventured to think that the Government were performing merely a perfunctory duty in this matter, and that their hearts were elsewhere. Even if the House passed this Vote unanimously, it must not be understood by the country that it had in any degree altered its opinion as to the injustice of the war. He hoped the Amendment would be withdrawn, in order that the Previous Question might be moved.

MR. O'DONNELL said, he could not but think, looking to the general policy of Her Majesty's Government, that a Vote of Thanks to the troops engaged in the Transvaal would come with better grace from their lips than a Vote of Thanks to the troops engaged in Afghanistan. In either case, criticism or opposition, it seemed to him, was perfectly legitimate, otherwise there would be nothing to prevent the Chief Secretary for Ireland from coming down to the House some evening and proposing a Vote of Thanks to the Constabulary engaged in shooting down the poor Irish peasantry in the West of Ireland. He was anxious to know at what date the Government became aware of the spotless and stainless character of the officers and troops engaged in Afghanistan; because if they did so at a tolerably early date, it would not be easy to reconcile their silence at the period of the General Election on the subject of the excesses alleged to have been committed by General Roberts and others. Those alleged excesses were among the most powerful arguments used by Radical speakers and writers for the overthrow of the late Government; and the Members of the present Government, by their silence in reference to them, connived at the charges made. The hon. Member, amid signs of impatience on the part of the House, quoted some doggrel verse which had appeared in a Radical organ—*The Echo*—in 1879, describing the British troops as—

> "The Christian sons of pillage,
> That burned the Afghan village."

He trusted the hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. Healy) would acquiesce in the appeal made to him by those Radicals who had not yet lost all sense of consistency in the delights of power, and withdraw his Motion in favour of the Previous Question, which, if adopted, would leave the matter *in statu quo*. For his own part, until an investigation showed whether the British troops had been unfairly vilipended or not, he was not prepared to express an opinion on the question. After due investigation, he would have no objection to support a Vote of Thanks to an acquitted and glorified Army.

MR. OTWAY said, the attacks which had been made on Sir Frederick Roberts had been conclusively answered. That gallant officer would probably survive the charges of the junior Member for Newcastle-on-Tyne (Mr. Ashton Dilke), as well as the attack of the hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. Healy), and of the hon. Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson). He pointed out that when Sir Frederick Roberts was accused of shooting Afghans as rebels, they were actually in rebellion against their own Sovereign, Yakoob Khan, who had made a Treaty with Sir Frederick Roberts, and was in his camp. Although he had never approved the Afghan War, he could not refuse a Vote of Thanks to the Army which had so gallantly done its duty.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL, while acknowledging the gallantry displayed by the troops generally, by the commanders, and by Sir Frederick Roberts, said, he could not approve all that Sir Frederick Roberts had done in his political capacity; and after what had been said by the Secretary of State for War, he thought it necessary to protest against its being supposed that those who voted in favour of passing a Vote of Thanks to the Army were, in consequence, committed to the support of all that had been done in prosecuting the Afghan War, and after Sir Frederick Roberts's victories.

MR. HEALY asked permission to withdraw his Amendment in favour of the Previous Question. ["No!"]

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 304; Noes 20: Majority 284.—(Div. List, No. 194.)

Main Question put.

(1.) *Resolved*, That the thanks of this House be given to General Sir Frederick Paul Haines, G.C.B., G.C.S.I., C.I.E., Commander in Chief in India, for the ability and judgment with which he directed the recent operations from September 1879 to September 1880 in Afghanistan.

(2.) *Resolved*, That the Thanks of this House be given to—

Lieut. General Sir Donald Martin Stewart, G.C.B.;
Lieut. General Sir Frederick Sleigh Roberts, G.C.B., C.I.E., V.C.;
Lieut. General Sir Robert Onesiphorus Bright, K.C.B.;
Major General Sir John Ross, K.C.B.;
Major General Sir James Hills, K.C.B., V.C.;
Major General Sir Robert Phayre, K.C.B.;
Major General (Local) John Watson, C.B., V.C.;

and the other Officers of the Army, both European and Native, for the intrepidity, skill, and perseverance displayed by them in the Military Operations in Afghanistan, and for their indefatigable zeal and exertions during the late Campaign.

(3.) *Resolved*, That this House doth highly approve and acknowledge the valour and perseverance displayed by the Non-commissioned Officers and private Soldiers, both European and Native, employed in Afghanistan during the late Campaign, and that the same be signified to them by the Commanders of the several Corps, who are desired to thank them for their gallant behaviour.

(4.) *Resolved*, That the said Resolutions be transmitted by Mr. Speaker to the Viceroy and Governor General of India, and that His Lordship be requested to communicate the same to the several Officers referred to therein.

PARLIAMENT—NEW WRIT FOR KNARESBOROUGH.

LORD RICHARD GROSVENOR moved—

> "That Mr. Speaker do issue his Warrant to the Clerk of the Crown to make out a New Writ for the electing of a Member to serve in this present Parliament for the Borough of Knaresborough, in the room of Sir Henry Meysey Meysey-Thompson, whose Election has been declared to be void."

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he had hoped some statement would be made by a Law Officer of the Crown under the peculiar circumstances of this case. Knaresborough was one of the rottenest of the rotten boroughs in England. ["No, no!"] It was one of those petty, trumpery places which could not possibly survive any new Reform Bill. There were 5,000 inhabitants in it formerly; but the latest Returns had shown that that number had decreased.

The principal industry of the place was beer, there being no less than 47 public-houses for over 4,000 people. The result of the recent inquiry had shown that at the last and previous General Elections corrupt practices were practised extensively on both sides, a man's vote being easily bought by a liberal allowance of beer. He protested emphatically, therefore, against the issue of a new Writ for the return of a Member to represent in Parliament so worthless and insignificant a borough as the one he had described.

MR. DAWSON said, he should not oppose the granting of the Writ which was asked for; but he could not let the opportunity pass of remarking upon the fact that while the Government moved for the election of a Member for Knaresborough they were willing to continue the disfranchisement of Cashel and Sligo, in neither of which boroughs had it been proved that nearly the same amount of either bribery or corruption had ever existed.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he could not allow the observations of the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) to go uncontradicted. The Report of the Commissioners went to show that corrupt practices had not extensively prevailed, and that in itself was a sufficient reason for issuing a Writ for the election of a Member. There could be no doubt that the Commission of Inquiry was the result of an unfortunate accident; and it would certainly be hard that a whole constituency should be disfranchised by reason of the conduct of an individual, in addition to having to pay a heavy rate in order to pay the cost of the inquiry. He was afraid that if a searching Commission were issued into every borough of England there would be scarcely one that would come out of the ordeal purer than Knaresborough. He would also include Ireland in that statement. [Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL: And Scotland?] He would not include Scotland. There they never gave anything to anybody. By issuing the Writ Parliament would restore to Knaresborough the representation which it ought never to have lost. As far as the observations of the hon. Member for Carlow (Mr. Dawson) were concerned, he could only say that in his view there was no similarity between the cases of Knaresborough and Cashel and Sligo; and that he should be glad if there could be found equally cogent grounds for re-enfranchising Cashel and Sligo with those on which it was now proposed to give Knaresborough an opportunity for returning a Member to the House.

MR. SEXTON said, that he would be sorry to compare Sligo and Cashel, or any Irish borough, with Knaresborough, where it was well known corrupt practices prevailed. The House had recently by five to one refused to issue a Writ for Sligo, which had suffered for 14 years for the fault of a small and insignificant number of voters. It would now be seen how unfairly the two Irish boroughs were treated.

SIR HENRY TYLER said, he would not have risen but for the sweeping assertion of the Attorney General, to the effect that if a searching inquiry were made into every borough in England, scarcely one would come out of the ordeal purer than Knaresborough. He would take this opportunity of reminding the hon. and learned Gentleman of the very searching inquiry that was instituted into the borough of Harwich, which he had the honour to represent, and of the excellent Report that resulted from it. And he was the more anxious to take the opportunity of drawing attention to that Report, because he was aware of the prejudice with which small boroughs were regarded by certain Members on the Liberal Benches.

Motion *agreed to.*

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) BILL.—[BILL 135.]

(*Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Forster, Mr. Bright, Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland.*)

SECOND READING. ADJOURNED DEBATE.

[FOURTH NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [25th April], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

And which Amendment was,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "this House, while willing to consider any just measure, founded upon sound principles, that will benefit tenants of land in Ireland, is of opinion that the leading provisions of the Land

Law (Ireland) Bill are in the main economically unsound, unjust, and impolitic,"—(*Lord Elcho*,)

—instead thereof.

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Debate *resumed*.

SIR HERVEY BRUCE said, he rose with some considerable diffidence to offer any remarks upon this important Bill, because, naturally, anyone whose personal interests were supposed to be involved in the question concerned in the Bill must be listened to with some degree of doubt as to whether he was speaking from his own standpoint, or whether he was speaking only for the benefit of the country. In the few observations he was about to make, however, as he did not propose to utterly condemn or to utterly praise the Bill, he hoped he should not be interrupted before coming to the conclusion of the remarks which he wished to make. Before he touched upon the Bill, he should make some remarks upon the Bessborough Commission. The First Minister of the Crown, in his speech, had not attributed much importance to it, and he (Sir Hervey Bruce) had reason to find fault with the manner in which that Commission was in many respects conducted. He admitted the courtesy of the Commission in sending round to the landlords the reports of the evidence given against them. But their courtesy went no farther. Landlords against whom he knew that in many instances grave, and, as in his own case, false charges had been made, were allowed to remain in ignorance of these charges for three months before the Commission sent the evidence to them; and that, he thought, was hardly fair. He remonstrated with the Commission on that, and when evidence was given against him later on, he received it on a much earlier date. He did not attribute so much importance to that as to think that they should have published all this mass of evidence, which could not be borne out by the facts. He also complained that in the second volume of this evidence—for the first was only a Report—no marginal notes appeared stating that portions of the evidence could be contradicted. This, he thought, was most unfair. It could not be expected that the Commission would put a refutation of those charges in the first volume; but, in the second, it could have been stated that portions of the evidence had been contradicted on authority. But they did nothing of the sort. They published the second documentary volume, and the landlords remained under its stigma for many weeks before the charges which it contained were contradicted. Not only that, but the Commission admitted as evidence the anonymous statements of four individuals who, he was sure, need not have concealed their names from the public. The tenantry of Ireland were not such craven cowards as to be afraid to give evidence, even if it were against the landlords. He was proud to say that not one tenant of his own had given evidence to the Commission; but strangers volunteered with all their heart to do so. He had as independent a tenantry as was to be found in Ireland, yet they declined to listen to the suggestions of hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway (the Home Rulers), or anywhere else. The first who gave evidence against him was a person named Tommy Warnock, well known in that part of the world. He did not live in his (Sir Hervey Bruce's) neighbourhood, and he was a gentleman who, it was to be regretted, had so little to do at home that he had plenty of time abroad. Mr. Warnock not only lectured landlords as to their duty, but tenants also; and if he did not find the latter amenable to his views, and sufficiently angry against landlords, they were told they were a "set of fools." He had latterly attacked the clergy of the district; but, happily, he put himself in the wrong box, for he was told that unless he apologized there would be an action for libel. He (Sir Hervey Bruce) thought he could have brought a similar action against this man; but he concluded that Warnock was not worth the powder and shot. The next gentleman who gave evidence against him was a Mr. Collison, whose name he never heard before he saw it in the Report, and he did not know where he lived. Nine or ten years ago he (Sir Hervey Bruce) sold a property in the county of Tyrone, as to which Mr. Collison told the Commissioners that his tenants were led blindfolded on the occasion, because they would not be allowed to employ any solicitor but his own, who did the business for both parties. That was utterly false. The very day after he saw this statement, he (Sir Hervey Bruce) went to his solicitor, who showed him the correspondence with the tenants, asking him whether he would be their solicitor in the matter of the sales, and he saw a copy of his answer, which was to the effect that much as he would like to act for them he declined to do so, as it would not be proper for him to act as solicitor for the buyers as well as the seller. Another person named Joseph Smith gave evidence against him. He rather thought Mr. Smith was the Chairman of some Town Commissioners. He never lived on his (Sir Hervey Bruce's) property, and he did not know who he was, nor what he knew of himself (Sir Hervey Bruce); but he gave evidence which very much attracted the attention of the senior Member for Cork County (Mr. Shaw), who put some very pertinent questions to him. The witness said, in answer to the hon. Member, that a particular property was leased away by a former Bishop of Derry to his relative, Sir Hervey Bruce, who then raised the rents twice before selling the property in the Encumbered Estates Court. That was utterly false. He (Sir Hervey Bruce) was old enough, God knew; but he was represented by this witness as having had property leased to him by a former Bishop (Lord Bristol), who died in 1803, so that he did not know what his age would be now. If statements of that kind were accepted and published against one landlord, it was not unreasonable to suppose there were others who were treated in a similar manner. But what was worse still was the statements of anonymous witnesses. Surely there were plenty of persons who knew the state of Ireland that could have come forward and given evidence, without the Commissioners bolstering up a case by means of persons who were afraid to let the world know what they said. In one instance, an anonymous letter was sent in, against a noble Friend of his and his family, and it was published, though it contained charges which were of the grossest nature, and absolutely and utterly untrue. English Gentlemen could not place much confidence in a Commission which received and published such evidence as that, without giving those attacked an opportunity of repelling the charges, except when it was too late. He denied that there was any truth in the statement, made a few days ago in an anonymous publication, that he had raised the rents of tenants on the estate which he bought from the Clothworkers' Company from 30 to 80 per cent. With regard to the Bill itself, if he believed that the measure would restore peace and tranquillity to his unhappy country, no matter what harm it might do to himself, he would go most willingly into the Lobby with Ministers in every division, both now and when they got into Committee. But, from the utterances which he heard around him every day in Ireland, he did not believe that the land was at the bottom of that agitation; on the contrary, it was Communism and a desire to separate his country from England, which would be a most fatal thing for Ireland. The Prime Minister had twice before sent "Messages of Peace," as they were called, to Ireland. He had disestablished the Irish Church—a measure which had not brought much tranquillity to the country; nor had it been of much advantage, except in a sentimental sense, to the adherents of other communions, many of whom would have infinitely preferred the establishment of other religious bodies to the pulling down of an ancient and sacred Institution. ["No!"] He denied that the disestablishment of the Irish Church was a necessary measure, nor was it desired by the Roman Catholics. He would have had no objection to other religious communities receiving endowments from the State, for he would regard that as a statesmanlike measure. Then they had the Land Act of 1870. Had that Act conferred any great benefit on any class? He had conversed with many tenants who wished to stay in the country, and he found that they bitterly regretted its passing; they said it had conferred no real benefits on them, that they would rather have remained as they were, trusting to the landlords, who, as a general rule, had treated them better than they had been treated under the Act of 1870. He did not, therefore, see that the Bill of 1881 would make matters much better. It would not make the discontented content, nor render them more loyal to England. The expropriation of the landlords would not make the Irish people either more peaceable or more prosperous. The Prime Minister's statements were at variance with those made by the Chief Secretary for Ireland in introducing the Bill, for the former acquitted the landlords of having acted unjustly; but the latter did not. The Prime Minister had in his speech clothed the Bill in the garb of mercy to the Irish landlords; but when they came to see the measure in its naked simplicity the pleasing illusion was rudely dispelled. The Bill bristled with penalties, complications, uncertainties, and the prospect of endless litigation. Statesmen, like ladies, were privileged to change their minds; so he would not make any quotations to show that right hon. Gentlemen on both sides had changed their opinions. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Law) appeared, from his remarks, to have a tremendous regard for mud cabins, and to be strongly opposed to consolidation; but for the life of him he (Sir Hervey Bruce) could not see anything comfortable or blessed in a mud cabin. Again, the Prime Minister was rather pleased that there should be consolidation, for without it there would be no improvement effected in the condition of the Irish people. It was all very well to bring in Bills to tie the hands of landlords; but that would not in the least help the unfortunate people who lived on patches of ground that were utterly unfit to provide bread for them and their families, or even for single men without anybody depending on them. There must be consolidation; and as to mud cabins, in his opinion, they were not even fit for pigs, much less for human beings, and it had been his object, during the time he had administered his estate, that the tenants should be provided with suitable dwellings, instead of the mud cabins which the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite so much admired. In introducing the Bill, the Prime Minister attempted to draw an analogy between it and the Act for emancipating negro slaves. Possibly, there was some degree of analogy; but the Irish tenants, he was happy to say, were not slaves. And there was also this difference, that whereas in the Act emancipating the slaves compensation was given, here there was no compensation. Only one class was to be benefited by the Bill. The Irish landlord was supposed to lose another considerable portion of his estate; the tenant was to derive some benefit by it, of which he (Sir Hervey Bruce) was doubtful; and the labourers were to be left out in the cold. But he hoped the day would come when the Government would see fit to bring the labourers within the scope of their benevolent legislation. The Prime Minister had said that there was nothing easier than to find the value of the tenant's interest, by discovering the price which it would obtain in the market. Now, there was no more fallacious test than that. A large farm would not command the same price as a miserable little holding, for which a man anxious to obtain land would give far more than it was really worth. No man in Ireland left his holding, unless he was obliged to do it; but yet the hunger for land was so great that a little bit of land run out to the last degree brought a bigger price than a larger farm, although in a better condition. The Prime Minister had made allusion to Donegal and Mayo; but although Donegal was not in the condition of other parts of the country, it was not in a very comfortable state, and yet it was one of the tenant right counties. He (Sir Hervey Bruce) spoke from personal knowledge, and not from hearsay. The right hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland had said that there was no such thing as free contract. Well, the Bill would prevent the landlord from making a reasonable bargain with his tenant; but it encouraged free contract in every other direction, and, as a consequence, the man who came into possession through land hunger was beggared. Some of the landlords had gone beyond what was reasonable; but why were they to curse the whole class, and bring many respectable tenants into unpleasant conditions, because some had done wrong? With regard to free contract, he asked why were they to abolish it as between the tenant and the landlord, whose interest it was to do fairly by the tenant, declaring that the landlord shall make no arrangement with the tenant, and leave it free to everybody else—to the money-lender, to the man coming in, and to others—to come to what terms they pleased with the tenant, much to the injury of the latter? Coming to the Bill itself, he would first deal with free sale. This free sale simply amounted to a system of sending money out of the country. The prosperous, careful, industrious farmer did not want it, for he did not leave the country; but the idle, the drunken, or the extravagant tenant did, for by it he got a preposterous sum for his interest, which he was enabled to carry away to a foreign country, or one of the Colonies. Many of the better class of tenants, although they did not like to speak out plainly about this free sale, knowing agitators made such a point of it, who wished to improve and consolidate their farms, hated free sale. They said it was the curse of the country, and prevented them improving their farms as they wished to do. He did not think landlords ought to hamper their tenants too much in free sale; but if the Bill was to allow the land of Ireland, whenever an idle or discontented man thought proper, to be put up to sale, the country would be thrown back a century and a-half. As for fair rent, he had no objection to it in the least, and if it would pacify the country, he would approve of the naming of the rent being taken out of the hands of the landlords; and that none the less, because it would prevent the possibility of any agitators saying that the landlords were putting on an undue rent. But he objected strongly to the constitution of the Court. He objected to the Court of First Instance. If he read the 37th section correctly, one Assistant Commissioner could name the rent to be paid all over Ireland. He thought the appointment of the Land Commissioners should not be placed entirely in the hands of the Government, but that the Judge who was to be selected from one of the Superior Courts ought to be chosen by the Judges themselves. The Government should appoint one Commissioner, and the Houses of Parliament the other. With respect to fixity of tenure, whatever remarks it was open to on social and economic grounds, he should have no objection to it if it would tend to pacify the country. No landlord, unless he was blind to his own interest, would wish to remove a tenant who farmed the land properly and paid a reasonable rent. It was practically fixity of tenure in that part of Ireland with which he was associated. He had no faith in the clauses providing for the establishment of a peasant proprietary; his own experience was most decisive against the system. But if it would give satisfaction to the country, he had no objection to the experiment being tried. In his part of the country, however, the condition of the holdings showed him that the land held by peasant proprietorship was the most wretched in the country. But he approved cordially the sections providing for the payment of a fee-farm rent, and he thought greater facilities ought to have been provided to enable ordinary rents to be commuted into fee-farm rents, and more liberal advances promised for that purpose. With regard to the emigration clauses in the Bill, he thought that instead of doing good they would do harm, inducing the labouring class to emigrate, and not the small holders, whose removal from their wretched holdings would be desirable; but other provisions of the Bill held out inducements to them to remain on the land, and placed barriers on their removal, so he saw no likelihood of practical utility from the emigration clauses. He objected, too, to the jurisdiction in the matter of the Civil Bill Courts, as it would probably make different ruling in different counties, though there could be no objection personally to the County Court Judges. One of the greatest evils which would result from the Bill would be the opportunity which would be given to the usurers. Since the Act of 1870, tenants had been far more in the hands of usurers than before. The landlords used to protect their tenants against the importunities of the former; but, at the present time, they could not do so. Now, the usurer held the tenant's farm, and was the man who benefited under the Act of 1870 to benefit by the Bill of 1881, and injure the tenants more than all the landlords for many a long day? He had mentioned the faults of commission in the Bill, and he would next advert to its sins of omission. One of these was the total absence from the Bill of any provision on behalf of the labourers, who were hardly dealt with, and who, most of all, needed legislation. Another was that there was no compensation for the injured classes. The tenants were the only persons proposed to be benefited by the Bill. The last omission was the absence of a remedy for the evil of the removal from England and Scotland of Irish paupers to their own country. It frequently happened that persons who had lived 40 or 50 years in England were sent back to their own country in circumstances of great hardship, and too often only to die. That evil he himself had attempted to deal with in his Poor Removal Bill, which he had reason to believe was to be opposed by the Government. In conclusion, he must say he feared the Bill would not remove the real evils of Ireland. He felt strongly and had spoken warmly in the interests of his native country, on whose behalf he longed to see really beneficial and remedial legislation. He could not approve the Bill as it stood; but he trusted that moderate counsels would prevail in all parts of the House, and that Her Majesty's Government would allow it to be so re-modelled in Committee as to come as near as a Bill of the kind could to those immutable principles of which they had heard more than they had seen; so that, under fairer auspices and with some degree of unanimity, it might be sent to "another place," where, alas! the voice of the great Leader who had so long been their counsellor and guide would be heard no more—of him who, by courage and patience in adversity, wisdom and moderation in prosperity, had won for himself a world-wide reputation, and, what was dearer to him by far, the imperishable gratitude of his Sovereign, whom he served so faithfully and well, and of all her loyal subjects.

Mr. O'CONNOR POWER said, there were several statements made by the hon. Baronet the Member for Coleraine (Sir Hervey Bruce) which he did not wish to recall; but, as representing a county (Mayo) which had been most intimately associated with the land agitation, he wished to say a few words upon the grave accusations which the hon. Baronet had brought against the majority of the tenant farmers of Ireland, the Irish people generally, and, he supposed, with special force against the county which he (Mr. O'Connor Power) had the honour to represent. The hon. Gentleman could arrive at no hope of peace being the immediate result of the passage of this measure; and the reason he gave was, that he was convinced that the masses of the people in Ireland had abandoned themselves to the theories of Communism, and that no legislation of this character consequently could have any effect in promoting their tranquillity. Since the land agitation started in Ireland, many people had undertaken to speak the sentiments of the Irish people, and many had undertaken to represent the views of the people of Mayo. He (Mr. O'Connor Power) thought that he might, without much diffidence, undertake to speak their sentiments there that night; and he as their constitutionally-elected Representative said, with as much emphasis as was proper on the occasion, that he repudiated, on the part of the people of Mayo, any sympathy whatever with the theory or principle of Communism. He understood the feelings of the people of the country of Ireland, and he was quite prepared to acknowledge that in the progress of the agitation language might have been used by individuals now and again smarting under a sense of wrong and oppression, which, taken closely and literally, might give some colour to the accusation which had been levelled against them; but they must judge of a people, not by outbursts of popular agitation, but by what they affirmed on calm deliberation. He was opposed to Communism, because it destroyed individuality, and would repress energy by leading men to look to the State for support. He trusted, therefore, that whatever impression might have been made by certain expressions emanating from individuals here and there, such wholesale accusations as that were not to receive the assent of the House of Commons. The hon. Baronet made another complaint, which he (Mr. O'Connor Power) supposed was addressed to Her Majesty's Government, against the Bessborough Commission—that they had not afforded the landlords of Ireland an opportunity of rebutting the accusations made against them in time. Now, it seemed to him (Mr. O'Connor Power) that the first duty of the Commission was to take evidence from the persons aggrieved by the existing land system, and when they had concluded the taking of that evidence and had it in an intelligible form, he was not aware that they delayed its publication, or hesitated to take the rebutting evidence, and publish that too. They had entered upon that duty upon very short notice; and he was bound to say, though he was not prepared to assent to all their conclusions, that they had discharged their duties with every ability and remarkable industry, and that they deserved very great thanks from those interested in the solution of this question. He was glad, however, to say he could quite endorse all that the hon. Baronet had said as to the spirit in which all parties should come to the consideration of the Bill. He thought that, in the long run, that Party in the House would best promote its own political interests that exhibited, on that occasion, magnanimity and generosity in the treatment of a question which would be just as difficult to the Predecessors of Her Majesty's Government, or to the Representatives of the Irish Party if they sat upon the Government Benches, and were called upon to grapple it. Shortly after the introduction of the Bill, he attended a county meeting in Mayo, where it had been freely distributed, called for the purpose of considering its provisions. The meeting was held under circumstances where admission was feasible to all. The people of Mayo passed the following resolution at the meeting :—

> "That while we re-affirm our convictions that the only final solution of the Land Question is to be found in legislation enabling the cultivators to become the owners of their own farms, we recommend our Parliamentary Representatives to support the second reading of the Land Bill, and to make strenuous efforts, after its getting into Committee, so to improve its provisions that in its passage through Parliament it may become a measure of real protection to the tenant farmers of Ireland."

He (Mr. O'Connor Power) thought the interpretation he was entitled to put upon the resolution was this—that as the Representative of the county he would be justified in voting for the second reading of the Bill. He was not, however, authorized to interpret the resolution as a declaration that the proposal of the Government as it stood could possibly constitute a solution of the Irish Land Question. He hoped he should be able to show, before he sat down, that the Bill needed considerable amendment in Committee before it could at all claim to be anything like a settlement of the great agrarian difficulty in Ireland. He should like to ask, in the first place, what was the policy of the Bill? He presumed that the policy of the Bill was founded upon the necessity of improving the condition of the agricultural population of Ireland, and he thought no one could doubt the urgent need of such improvement. He had heard of writers and public men who had paid flying visits to Ireland say a good deal about Irish prosperity. He believed it was true that Dublin had increased in prosperity in recent years; but he was bound to say it had been very much at the expense of the smaller tenants in Ireland. Consequently, when they went outside Dublin, they saw villages disappearing and towns decaying very rapidly, and hundreds of thousands of the working population in a condition of great poverty and misery, toiling all day for that which would not procure the necessaries of life. His estimate of the Bill had been framed upon the principle of ascertaining how far, in its present shape, it was likely to realize the objects which its framers had in view. In one part, it favoured the creation of a peasant proprietary; but it recognized that the transference of the ownership of the soil from one class to another must be a gradual operation; and, knowing that that operation must be gradual, the framers said there must be something done to mitigate the severity of the system as it stood. Subsequently, in the very forefront of the Bill, they found provisions dealing with the relations between landlord and tenant. He ventured to think that, notwithstanding the declared intentions of the Government, the principle of free sale was hampered by vexatious restrictions, which would in many cases make free sale very difficult, if not entirely impossible. Another theory was that the best thing they could do for the social and political condition of Ireland—it was also said the industrial condition—was to effect a wider and better distribution of land. But the earlier provisions of the Bill did not show that its framers were anxious to bring about such a result. Take the clause with respect to free sale, for instance, it said that a tenant might sell his tenancy for the best price, but subject to certain conditions, and that, except with the consent of the landlord, the sale should be made to one person only. But why to one person only? Why should not the tenant of a 200-acre farm have the right to disposing to more than one? He granted that there was a dual interest concerned, that of the landlord and the tenant; but it was admitted that the conflicting interests of landlord and tenant, especially in the matter of rent, could not be settled except by the Court. Thus there was primarily an interference with the landlord as to the price he was to obtain for his land. They interfered by the agency of the Court. And he (Mr. O'Connor Power) did not see why the Court should not also determine whether the rights of the tenancy should not be sold to 20 persons instead of one. Liberal and generous as were the proposals referring to a peasant proprietary, he feared the operation of the clauses would be so gradual that 100 years might elapse before they were of any advantage. He should, therefore, be very glad if the Government could see their way to alter that portion of the Bill so as to enable a tenant, with the consent of the Court, to sell his tenancy to more than one person without prejudice to the interests of the landlord. The same remark applied to the devolution of tenancies. It was much to be deplored, when they had been preparing for so many years to legislate on this great subject, that they should not realize all the possibilities of the question as now presented to them. In the early provisions of the Bill, there was an opportunity of distributing land advantageously, and of spreading the population by enabling large farmers to sell their interest in lands; and it was a pity that such an opportunity should have been lost sight of by the Government. He would be glad to see an alteration in the Bill in these respects, particularly in regard to the devolution of the tenancies. When a tenant sold his interest, he generally sold it to a stranger, in whom he had no following interest. But if the man was the tenant of a large farm, and was the happy owner of a large family, for the members of whom he was anxious to make provision out of his rights to the land, it was deplorable that he should not be able to do so, except with the consent of the landlord. And it was cruel, either by agitation or by Ministerial speeches, or by the introduction of a Bill of the kind under notice, to raise expectations in the minds of the people of Ireland which were not likely to be fulfilled by the machinery now proposed to carry it out. He thought the devolution should not be limited to one person, unwisely as it was, seeing that in many cases a farm might be fairly broken up and sold to a number of small tenants. But objection had been taken to the provision of security of tenure. It could not be too clearly pointed out that the Bill did not provide for what was popularly called and known in Ireland as fixity of tenure. It provided no fixity of tenure beyond a limit of 15 years. Even that security was conditional on the ground that the tenants should not sub-divide or sub-let without the consent of the landlord. On that point, he submitted that on many large estates the principle of sub-division might be advantageously introduced. On the other hand, he would not deny that, in other cases, the principle of consolidation urged by the hon. Baronet the Member for Coleraine (Sir Hervey Bruce) might not be introduced with equal advantage. It could not be too soon or too emphatically asserted that there were in the West and South of Ireland tens of thousands of tenant farmers who were living upon wretched patches of land which would not, under any circumstances, afford them a comfortable livelihood; so that, while he would advocate sub-division in the one case, he advocated consolidation in the other. Then, again, the landlord's right of resumption would interfere very much with the security of the tenant in his holding. The landlord might resume, for any one of three reasons—for the good of the holding, for the good of the estate, or for the good of the labourers on the estate. These reasons were all dangerously vague. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Law) considered fair rent one of the most important provisions of the Bill. Looking to the constitution of the Court which was to determine what was a fair rent, he (Mr. O'Connor Power) admitted that the legal element should be strongly represented; and he should have no objection to the Judge of the County Court forming part of it; but he hoped the Government would re-consider the question, so as to associate with him either two professional valuers, or laymen who might be expected to have some knowledge of agriculture and some knowledge of the districts with which they would have to deal. He could speak, in the heartiest terms of commendation, of the spirit in which the clauses providing for the creation of peasant proprietorship had been framed, and he wished he could add that those provisions were likely to produce at an early period the results which they were aimed to produce. He did not see why the whole purchase money should not be advanced to the tenants; but it had taken 10 or 12 years to show that it was one thing to have a grand object in view, and another to provide proper machinery for carrying that object into effect. There still seemed to be a little half-heartedness in the clauses for the creation of a peasant proprietary. The provision that sales might be negotiated by the Commission, upon the application of landlord and tenant, was a decided step in advance of the Act of 1870. If the Land Commission were constituted of men who understood their work, who were willing to pull off their coats to it, and who would look for lands to purchase on advantageous terms, considerable progress might be made. But he (Mr. O'Connor Power) was strongly of opinion that it would be necessary, in the first place, to lend the whole of the purchase money to the tenants; and, secondly, to proceed where a smaller number than half the tenants were willing to purchase. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland had said that he looked to the clauses for the reclamation of waste lands as the means, to a great extent, of remedying the evil of over-population in certain parts of Ireland. He (Mr. O'Connor Power) feared the expectations of the right hon. Gentleman were doomed to disappointment. The clauses as to reclamation he looked upon as utterly worthless. If anything was to be done in that direction, provisions of a more sweeping character would be necessary. The right hon. Gentleman, speaking of Mayo, said what a good thing it would be if the poorer classes of that county could be made to avail themselves of the emigration clauses and get out of their misery. Now, he (Mr. O'Connor Power) admitted that the poorer tenant farmers of Mayo might be better off in Canada or the United States; but Ireland would not be better off for being deprived of that portion of her population. He heartily echoed the remark of the hon. Member for Tipperary (Mr. P. J. Smyth) that Ireland could well support double her population if the land were properly managed and developed. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland seemed to think that there was not land enough in Mayo to give the population profitable employment. But Mr. Brett, the County Surveyor of Wicklow, and formerly County Surveyor of Mayo, stated that in one portion of Mayo there were 232,888 acres of waste land which could be profitably reclaimed. Mr. Brett also said that there were several improving landlords who had profitably reclaimed land in that county. The people of the South and West of Ireland could not be persuaded to go to Canada or elsewhere; they were too much wedded to Ireland, though they would not so cling to a farm of three or four acres as to refuse one of 20 if given in some other part of their native land. In addressing the House just now he was labouring under one embarrassment, and that was that, to his great regret, the noble Lord opposite (Lord John Manners), who had given Notice of an Amendment, had not stated in what way he proposed to develop the industrial resources of Ireland. As the Conservative Party had a strong prejudice against interfering in the relations between landlord and tenant, and as their past policy had been one of oppression and coercion towards Ireland, they were bound to have some policy which would recommend them to the Irish people. A great deal also remained to be done by the House for developing the resources of Ireland. His (Mr. O'Connor Power's) claim on that score was based on the fact that the industrial resources of Ireland had in times past been interfered with by Act of Parliament for so long a period that her most flourishing manufactures had been destroyed. But he could assure the noble Lord that in no case would a proposal of that kind exempt Parlialiament, and, through it, the Irish Members, from the duty and the necessity of dealing with the relations of landlord and tenant. An industrial scheme, which might, perhaps, take a quarter of a century to come to maturity, would not save a tenant from eviction, or enrich a man who could not pay his rent. He hoped, however, that the noble Lord would soon have an opportunity of explaining his views. Before dismissing the subject of the reclamation of waste lands, he wished to point out that the provisions of the Bill were likely to be inoperative, because they did not charge anyone with the duty of reclamation. It was the business of a Commission to negotiate the purchase of estates; but if the Government were in earnest on this question of waste lands, why should not they authorize the Commission to purchase, or even to expropriate them? He might say emphatically that he was in favour of the expropriation of the waste lands of Ireland. Every landlord owning any portion of these waste lands who declined to utilize his resources should be told by the Commission that if he was not prepared to cultivate his land the Commission would purchase it at a fair price. At present many tracts of land were useless which, in the hands either of peasant farmers or of the Commission, would in time become capable of supporting a large portion of the Irish tenant population. It was calculated that there were 4,000,000 acres of waste land in Ireland, and 3,000,000 of semi-waste; and if to the latter about one-third of the wholly waste lands were added, there would be a total of rather more than 4,000,000 acres which might be reclaimed. According to the English practice of employing hired labour, that land would never be reclaimed; but that was not the plan on which he should propose to proceed. The Commission ought to take the preliminary steps, and then send in men from the more populous parts, and keep them afloat by lending them enough money for their necessary expenses. That scheme, if carefully carried into effect, would obviate the extreme danger of occasional bad harvests. He thought the Bill was also defective in another respect, in so far as it took no serious notice—indeed, no notice at all, as far as he could gather—of the estates of corporate bodies. The estates of corporate bodies in Ireland — the London Companies' estates, and others—were managed in a way which he knew had given rise to considerable complaint on the part of the tenant farmers. It had been said that corporate bodies were without consciences, and once land was within their hands, it could not very easily be got out again. In the cases where land was in the possession of these corporate bodies, there was no room for that mutual development between landlord and tenant which was desirable. He would, therefore, strongly urge that the Commission should be empowered to buy up these estates of the corporate bodies, and also the estates of the absentees, which were grievously mismanaged. Of course, many of the absentee estates of Ireland were the best managed, which arose from the fact that the owners were wealthy landlords in England; but it might be urged, on the other hand, that many of the absentee estates were very badly managed, to which fact was to be attributed a great deal of the discontent which prevailed among the tenantry. Among the contributions to the discussion on the Land Bill, with which the country had been favoured, he would direct special attention to the resolutions arrived at by the Archbishops and Bishops of Ireland. He regretted that the Prime Minister, in his letter to the Archbishop of Armagh, seemed, for the moment, at all events, to dispose of those resolutions in a somewhat off-hand manner. But the Catholic hierarchy had adopted a very prudent course, and, after taking the opinions of eminent lawyers, had given in a list of 18 Amendments, embodying their views on the subject; and, in his (Mr. O'Connor Power's) opinion, many of those Amendments might have been advantageously adopted by the Government without "altering the character of the measure." The Prime Minister had declared in his letter to the Archbishop of Armagh that Amendments could be accepted from no quarter which would alter the character of the Bill; but, of course, it was difficult to know what interpretation to place upon that statement of the Prime Minister. He (Mr. O'Connor Power) hoped they would receive before long some intimation as to how far certain Amendments in contemplation would alter the character of the Bill. He had in view some moderate Amendments himself, which he hoped the Prime Minister would not regard as having that effect. One recommendation of the Bishops, as to the constitution of the proposed Court, was, he thought, a valuable one—namely, that the electors should elect two Commissioners with the County Court Judge. The Prime Minister seemed to give colour in the speech with which he introduced the Bill to the general fallacy as to the "scarcity of Irish land." There was no real scarcity of land. In an economic sense, he (Mr. O'Connor Power) would say again, as he had often said before, that the land of Ireland, properly managed, would support double the population it now had. The right hon. Gentleman had also referred to the "lack of the habit of self-government" in Ireland, as a difficulty in the way of legislation of the kind; but was there any country in which there was a habit of self-government without the practice of self-government? The historical circumstances of Ireland showed that the habit of self-government must necessarily be of slow growth. Once Ireland was given a fair chance in the matter, they would exhibit as much aptitude for self-government as the Scotch or English. He hoped the Bill, so far from being modified, would be strengthened; and that the Government would not give in to the forebodings and prophecies of the opponents of the Bill. To build up a system which depended upon the landlords, would be, for the future of Ireland, like placing the pyramid on its wrong end, which would in time topple over. He trusted no efforts would be made to prevent the enlightened opinion of Parliament doing a complete act of justice to the people of Ireland. Having considered the provisions of the Bill very carefully himself, he felt it his duty, as an Irish Representative interested in the peace and tranquillity, as well as in the prosperity, of his country, to support the second reading of the Bill. That declaration, however, was not to be taken as affirming the proposition that the Bill in its present shape could be accepted by the tenant farmers of Ireland as a solution of the question. It would be a great pity if, after all the agony and excitement of the agitation through which hon. Members had passed in recent years, they allowed this Bill to escape from their hands without making it a complete measure of justice. It had been said by the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) that the Bill was a great measure. He (Mr. O'Connor Power) admitted that it was a great and a large measure; and he was not at all hopeful, if they lost the opportunity which the Bill presented of dealing completely with the Land Question, that any fair opportunity would soon be presented to them of approaching that branch of the question. Again, it must be borne in mind that English Business was considerably in arrears, in consequence of the necessity under which the Government had been in devoting its attention to Ireland. He did not look forward to the time when English Business would not be in arrears, as long as the present arrangement was carried out; and, therefore, he did not wish the Bill to escape until it was made a measure which would really be a great instrument in promoting the tranquillity of his country. He would close as he began, by saying all parties were interested in the settlement of the great Land Question. Certainly, the Government were interested, because they could not hope, even with the extraordinary powers of the Coercion Bill, to maintain order in Ireland until the question was settled. The landlords of Ireland, who were represented there by the Conservative Party, could not hope to secure punctual payment of a fair rent until it was settled; and the Irish Members, even with the powerful aid of the Land League, could not secure to the tenant farmers of Ireland the undisturbed enjoyment of the fruit of their labour, until the question was settled, inasmuch as the sanction of law was the only permanent security for the possession of property and the security of right. He was anxious, also, that when they appealed to the tenant farmers of Ireland and preached the doctrine of peace and tranquillity, they should be able to refer to the measure as one that had secured their rights and had stamped with the sanction of the law their claim to live on their own farms and in their own homes in peace and security.

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, he thought every hon. Member must have listened with the greatest admiration to the apposite and patriotic speech—in the best sense of that term—that had just been delivered by his hon. Friend the Member for Mayo (Mr. O'Connor Power), who throughout these long and difficult controversies had always endeavoured to rise superior to the passions of the hour, and who had thus set a great and noble example to his countrymen. Hon. Members approached the question under a disadvantage, inasmuch as they had not yet heard the speech of his noble Friend the Member for North Leicestershire (Lord John Manners) in support of the Amendment of which he had given Notice. His noble Friend by his Amendment announced that the idea of the Conservative Party was that we might leave the welfare of Ireland to be promoted by great measures for the material development of the wealth of the country; but he (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) must say it was not the first time that in great crises in public affairs the Leaders of the Conservative Party had come forward and announced that they were going to solve the question by bringing forward a comprehensive plan for that purpose. He remembered that his noble Friend the Member for Liverpool (Viscount Sandon) stated, during the height of the Eastern Question, that that question was going to be solved by the introduction of steam ploughs into Asia Minor by a Conservative Government. The steam ploughs had not yet been introduced there, and he wanted to know whether the Amendment of his noble Friend (Lord John Manners) was an announcement on the part of the Conservative Party that the steam ploughs they intended to send to Asia Minor were to be sent to Galway instead? The views of the Party opposite were, unfortunately, vague. This discussion included a "No surrender" speech by the noble Lord the Member for Haddingtonshire (Lord Elcho); but he (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) did not hear one practical suggestion in it. He should like to know what the noble Lord proposed to do, for surely he could not deny that an Irish Land Question existed; and it was certainly the duty of any Government that might be in Office to attempt to settle it. This opinion he (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) gave all the more unreservedly, because he did not profess to believe that there were not many things in the Bill which, to say the least, required the most careful consideration. Neither did he profess to be at all enamoured of some of the schemes which had been put forward in regard to the rights of property in Ireland. If some of those schemes were adopted by the House, the unfortunate landlords would have to say, in South African phraseology, that they possessed a suzerainty over their estates. Travellers were shown in the City of Prague the horse of Prince Wallenstein. The head, the legs, the body, and the tail of the horse were restored, and travellers were informed that all the rest was the original animal. If some of this scheme were adopted, a future traveller in Ireland might be told—"This is the estate of Mr. So-and-so. The ownership has been altered, the occupation taken away, the reversion impaired; but all the rest is the original estate consolidated." He would now proceed to examine the scheme actually before the House. He was bound to say that many points had been brought forward in the course of the debate to which no satisfactory answer had yet been given by the Ministers in charge of the Bill. He alluded more particularly to the celebrated 7th clause. Now, as regarded that clause, he had never been able to see why the Government should not have been content with the definition of fair rent adopted as satisfactory and calculated to meet all requirements by that eminent Irish lawyer and patriot, the late Mr. Butt, and accepted after his decease by his Successor in charge of his Land Bill, the late Mr. M'Carthy Downing—a Gentleman who had also a profound acquaintance with the subject, second to that of no man in Ireland. Upon that Gentleman's lamented death, also, the same definition was taken up by the present hon. Member for Cork County (Mr. Shaw). Mr. Butt's definition of fair rent had already been read to the House; and, as hon. Members were no doubt aware, it was free from the objectionable rider to Clause 7, which had been so much criticized. Was it probable, he would ask, that a man like Mr. Butt—a lawyer and a political economist—would year after year have introduced into his Bill, and obtained for it the support of the Home Rule Party, a definition of fair rent which was not satisfactory? The hon. Member for Tyrone (Mr. Litton), who had a large acquaintance with the question, introduced a Bill last year, and he had adopted substantially a similar definition, and it was exceedingly improbable that he would have fallen into so inconceivable a trap as not to present to the House a definition of fair rent sufficient for all practical purposes. Those were questions to which he should be glad to have an answer from the Government. Passing now to the landlord's right of pre-emption—as to which he would say, in answer to a challenge thrown down in the debate, that he did not like the idea of hanging up the future tenant between heaven and earth, like Mahomet's coffin, and he should therefore not be afraid to give the tenant, in certain circumstances, the right of buying out the landlord—he looked upon it with disfavour, and he was not at all sanguine of its success in clearing estates of complicated titles. He would ask how it could be desirable that the landlord, after buying out one tenant, should, after a certain lapse of time, have a second tenant upon his hands enjoying three-fourths of the rights possessed by the first, all of any value, in fact, except that of appealing to the Court? If the landlord was to be allowed to buy out a tenant, the purchase ought, in his opinion, to have its natural effects—effects which, by the way, the present Ministers proposed to give under the Land Act of 1870. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Law) said the justification of the Bill was that Irish tenants could not contract. That proposition he (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) would not dispute; but how came the right hon. and learned Gentleman to contradict himself at the end of his speech, and say that the Irish tenants were perfectly able to take care of themselves? Then he noticed that there was a great inconsistency in the speeches of the Prime Minister, and of the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. W. E. Forster), and the First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Shaw Lefevre). The Chief Secretary for Ireland argued in favour of general free sale; and, no doubt, the Bill conferred that, because in the Bill he (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) found none of those limitations which the speech of the Prime Minister led them to suppose it contained. The Chief Secretary for Ireland, while supporting general free sale, did not attempt to show that there was anything to prevent the danger of free sale eating into the fair rent. But the argument of the First Commissioner of Works on the point was totally at variance with that either of the Chief Secretary for Ireland or the Prime Minister, for he said it was a matter of universal experience that the value of the tenants' interest and fair rents rose together. That position was rather inconsistent with those previously taken, and it would be desirable to know what the Ministry actually thought on the matter. His (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice's) own experience was that free sale was an excellent thing. It had worked well in Ulster, and he had seen it work well in many parts of Kerry also. But what he wished especially to dwell on was the fact that the House had not yet been put in possession of the exact views of the Government on the subject, or what, in their opinion, was likely to be the economic effect of introducing free sale. In a properous season, as the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) had stated, fair rents and free sale might, perhaps, go on rising together; but the danger was that when a bad season came, the tenant who had had to borrow money to purchase his holding might find that he could not get a fair interest for that money, and might be, in consequence, tempted to join in an agitation for reducing the fair rent fixed upon. That was what the landlords were afraid of. There were three points, which although, no doubt, points of detail, he wished to press on the attention of the Government. It had always hitherto, he might add, been the practice in discussing the Irish Land Question to distinguish clearly between large and small holdings. He was, he believed, right in saying that Mr. Butt, in his first Bill, fixed a limit in regard to the value beyond which a holding should not be included. In the present Bill, however, for the first time, the same rights were indiscriminately extended to every holding in Ireland. It was true that at £150 value and upwards the tenant could contract himself out of the provisions of the Bill; but the House should remember that, under its operation, the landlord would have nothing to offer the tenant to induce him to contract himself out of it, and he did not think any Irish tenant would be such a fool as to contract himself out of the good position given him by law without obtaining any equivalent. The clause dealing with the point might, therefore, as well be struck out of the Bill, for it would be a mere stalking-horse. But, apart from that, he wished to point out to the Government that the large tenant farmers did not stand in the same position as the tenants of small holdings. With regard to the small tenants of Ireland, the House could hardly go too far. No class in the country had throughout a long period of years suffered so severely. They had been driven up to the lone mountains of the South and West by the tide of English conquest. Proud as he was of being the descendant of a Cromwellian settler himself, he should be the last man in that House to close his eyes to the great sufferings in the past of the Irish people in the West and South. If they in the year 1881 could do anything to bridge over that great historic chasm which had divided Ireland into two peoples, let them in the name of Heaven do it. Let them not fight over details, but let them be just and generous—just to the tenant and landlord alike. He would tell his hon. Friends that it was not the way to introduce peace and goodwill in Ireland to leave even the landlord, belonging, as he did, to a small and unjustly abused class, with a rankling sense of wrong. The hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell), whose views were of great value on this question, said that the claim of the small Irish tenant did not rest solely on economic grounds, but on history and tradition; but that the large farmer was comparatively a newcomer, who was a creature of pure contract, with claims resting on purely economic grounds. He would next ask the Government, whether the distinction between present tenants and future tenants was one that could be supported? If it were, a new class of tenants would be created in Ireland, and the titles to land would consequently be confused. They must either do what the Bessborough Commission told them to do—namely, treat the present and future tenants alike—or they must do what The O'Conor Don in his minority Report proposed—namely, confine the Bill to the present tenants. Before concluding, he wished to refer to one aspect of this question, which to him was nearest and dearest of all. He wished to say a word or two on behalf of that much-abused goddess, political economy. From his hon. Friend the Member for Southwark (Mr. Thorold Rogers) he had expected to hear something in favour of that science; but, as far as he could make out from the speech of the hon. Member, he seized half a brick and hurled it at political economy. He had great respect for the opinion of his hon. Friend; but he must absolutely decline to accept what he said with regard to the connection of political economy with this Bill. If the House accepted the Bill, it must make up its mind to accept it as an exception to all the laws and rules of political economy. His hon. Friend had written a pamphlet, in which he proposed that the rents of the small tenants should be fixed now and for ever; but that was very different from the proposal of the Bill, that there should be a rent Court always existing and always interfering between landlord and tenant, which, he (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) maintained, was a distinct violation of political economy. It was true, as had been said by the hon. and learned Member for Dundalk (Mr. C. Russell), that the late Professor Caird argued that certain propositions of political economy might be brought forward in defence of a Bill of this kind; but he contented himself with saying that it might be done, and failed to show that it could be done. Coming to the question of the institution of a Land Court, he (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) would urge the House not to conceal from itself that the powers which the Bill would give to such a Court were terrible and gigantic. They might be necessary, but they were enormous. Looking at the question from the point of view of the future prosperity and welfare of Ireland, he expressed astonishment that the Representatives of Irish constituencies should select that moment, when, according to their own view, a new era of prosperity, self-government, and independence was beginning for Ireland, to say that Irishmen were incapable of making their own contracts. Nobody would expect from him a defence of the Land League, far from it; but he believed that, in the same manner as the Agricultural Labourers' Union in England did good work by teaching the labourers to look their employers in the face, and make their own contracts, the Land League—had done this good work—it had taught the small tenant farmers that by combining together they could secure for themselves freedom of contract; and if they would only combine peaceably and lawfully, and refrain from outrages such as those which had latterly disgraced the country, the Land League, so far from having done harm, would have done the best thing that had been done in Ireland for years. It was a pity they could not learn the lesson without violating order and committing outrages. As regarded freedom of contract, he believed the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland was right in saying that the tenant farmers in many parts of Ireland were incapable of taking care of themselves; but if there was one class more incapable at the present time of taking care of itself in that respect than another it was that unfortunate and much-abused class, the Irish landlords. He did not wish to be understood as saying anything disagreeable or hostile to the Bill when he said that he should have been glad if the Government had decided to make the peasant proprietary part of the measure the strongest part of it. He wished that had been put in the front of the battle. He believed the economic conditions of Ireland were such that if a scheme had been set on foot for capitalizing the large sums of money recklessly paid for farms, they would be able, without robbing the landlords of a single farthing, easily to establish a very large number of small proprietors. Mr. Senior, a high authority on such subjects, had said that a country without a peasant proprietary, but with capital, could get on, and that a country in the reverse condition could get on; but that a country that had neither a peasant proprietary nor capital, was a country that was essentially unsound. And that was the state of Ireland now. The establishment of a cottier or peasant proprietary was the first step towards the political salvation of a country; but he regretted that the Government had not based their scheme upon the distinction between the large farmers on the one hand and the small occupiers on the other. Some scheme of that kind would, in his opinion, have been less offensive and complicated, and far better than the Chinese puzzle which the Government had placed before them. Having spent a full month in the study of the Bill, he was all the more alarmed at its complexity. Its effect would be to make the village attorney and the village solicitor the lords and masters of Ireland. There were really two schemes in the Bill, and these were parallel the one to the other—he alluded to the scheme known as the "three F's," and next to the scheme as to compensation. These were constantly cropping up; and in the result, while the tenant on the one hand would go to the village lawyer—should go—for if the Bill were put into his hands he could in no wise understand it, and ask which of the provisions of the Bill would be most likely to benefit him, the landlord, on the other hand, would go to his lawyer and ask which of these provisions he could bring to bear upon the tenant. He confessed that he could not conceal from himself that not merely with regard to the Irish Land Question, but in Ireland, speaking generally, they were in the presence of a tremendous crisis. They were on the brink of events the magnitude of which it would be folly to underrate. They must not imagine that after dealing with this Irish Land Question, they could go to sleep saying—"Thank God, we are done with Ireland!" He saw articles every day in English newspapers on the subject, and he often wrung his hands in despair when he read them. When they had settled the Land Question, even if they could do so on the lines of the present Bill, it would assume more portentous proportions, and they should make up their minds to deal in a thoroughly satistory manner with many other questions which would arise. One effect of the Bill would be to enormously weaken the influence of the "English garrison" in Ireland; but when they had done so, they must look forward to something that would supply its place. He hoped the result would be that the people of Ireland would become prosperous and contented, and that sentiments of gratitude and affection towards England would be widely entertained by them. That was the hope and expectation with which statesmen had proposed the repeal of Irish disabilities; but they ought not to be blind to the fact that those hopes and expectations had been disappointed. The anti-English feeling in Ireland was strong, and it was, moreover, as strong now as it had been at any time in the course of the present century. ["Oh, oh!"] An hon. Member near him dissented from this proposition, and he hoped the hon. Gentleman was right; but it was impossible to conceal from themselves that there was a great deal to be said on both sides of the question, and that the question with which Parliament had to deal was both important and portentous. He might be told that he was that most disagreeable of persons—a prophet who prophesied disagreeable things. This was, perhaps, true; but he sincerely hoped that his prophecies would be falsified, and that every fear which possessed him might turn out to be founded in error. He hoped that in the days to come Ireland might be free, great, and prosperous; and he should hold the same view if his family, which had been for 200 years in Ireland, had at once to sever its connection with the country. At the same time, he had thought that he could not better express the love which he bore to the country than by frankly expressing the feelings which animated him in reference to this particular question. Although he gave the utmost credit to Her Majesty's Government for the immense pains and trouble which they had taken with the Bill, and although he was convinced it was their earnest desire to do everything which was right and just for Ireland, he, nevertheless, felt that they were debating under the shadow of a tremendous crisis, and great dangers coming on; and that it required the utmost patriotism and the utmost good sense on the part of every Member of the House of Commons, if those dangers were to be prevented from becoming so great as to shake and impair, and even destroy, that which he, at least, believed had been of untold advantage to the people of both England and Ireland—he meant the Union which connected the Kingdoms of Great Britain and Irland.

LORD JOHN MANNERS: I do not propose to follow the powerful and argumentative speech of the noble Lord who has just sat down (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice); but I do not think that anyone who has listened to the speech of the noble Lord, would have believed that he was a supporter of the second reading of the Bill, had he not told us so in his opening sentences. In the very eloquent peroration of the hon. Member for Tipperary (Mr. P. J. Smyth) the other night, this Bill was described as a solemn temple of union and concord; but I look in vain for signs of that union and concord, whether I cast my eyes across the Channel or watch what is transpiring in the House. I would ask, in the first place, whether Ireland was in a better or worse position before the Coercion Act was passed than she is at this moment? Are there fewer murders? Are there fewer outrages of any kind at this moment than there were six months ago? I believe that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland is unable to answer the question in the negative. This Bill has now been for nearly a month under the consideration of the people of Ireland, and, so far as we know, the only result has been the proclamation of the Capital, the arrest and imprisonment of the Colleague (Mr. Dillon) of the hon. Member (Mr. P. J. Smyth), who spoke with so much eloquence the other night; and a Vote of Censure impending over the heads of the Government, to be proposed by an hon. Member below the Gangway (Mr. Justin M'Carthy). Well, Sir, what I wish to ask is what is the real evil we have to meet, and to which Parliament should apply its serious attention? In answering that question, I agree very much with what fell from the hon. Member for the county of Mayo (Mr. O'Connor Power) in the course of the observations which he has addressed to the House this evening. I say, the real evil we have to meet in respect to that part of Ireland which we really have to consider is this—that you have a redundant population, dependent for its subsistence and employment upon the cultivation of a not very fertile soil, under humid skies, and dependent for its food upon that one crop which, of all others, is liable to sudden and total destruction. I think that Her Majesty's Ministers have some belief that that is to a great extent the evil they have to meet, because I notice with satisfaction the proposals they make in the fifth part of the Bill. The hon. Member for Mayo has properly described the condition of things when he says that tens of thousands of people, particularly in the West and South of Ireland, are dependent for support and, indeed, existence, upon the cultivation of a land which cannot and never could be made to support them. Well, Sir, with the exception of the fifth part of the Bill, upon which I propose by-and-bye to say a few words, I contend that the whole scope and tendency of the measure is directed towards increasing and perpetuating the very evil we ought to meet. The very object, as it seems to me, of this Bill is to stereotype and aggravate that dependence of the poorer classes of the tenantry of Ireland on that soil which cannot and will not maintain them. The noble Lord who has just sat down dealt at some length, not only with the Court by which the provisions of the first part of the Bill are to be brought into operation, but also upon the scheme which the Bill contains. I do not propose at this late hour to follow the noble Lord in detail into that branch of the subject. Her Majesty's Government say that the foundation of all improvement in respect of the land in Ireland is that there should be a Government valuation of land. Well, that is a very grave, and a very delicate, and a very serious proposal to make. The noble Lord has dwelt largely upon its delicacy and danger. I admit the delicacy, and I admit the danger; but for the sake of argument I will assume that the Government have proved their case by the Reports of the Commissions, and that the necessity of some interference on the part of the Legislature may be conceded; but I demur to the conclusions which the Government have drawn from that statement of the case. I deny that it is necessary to proceed further in that direction in providing for the free sale of land and the perpetuity and continuity of the lease. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister bases the legislation he proposes upon the recommendations of the Duke of Richmond's Commission; but the Duke of Richmond's Commission carefully guarded themselves against being supposed to be favourable to the other two schemes set out in the Bill, and restricted themselves to the more moderate suggestion that legislative interference might be necessary with respect to the fixing of fair rents. The right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite made a great point by connecting fair rents with the other two "F's"—fixity of tenure and free sale. In my opinion, however, if free sale is to be given unlimited, as is now proposed, you cannot stop there. The justification for fair rents and free sale is simply this, as it was put just now by the noble Lord, that the Irish tenant is unable to protect himself against the landlord. But if that be so — if the Irish tenant is in that unfortunate position when you grant free sale—you must protect him, by a parity of reasoning, against other dangers than those which arise from the superiority of his landlord. What does it matter to the incoming poor tenant, if he has to pay what is substantially a rack rent to two persons instead of to one? As the Bill stands, the perfect freedom of sale which tt gives must be restricted in some way or other, or else the incoming tenant, who might arrange to pay a fair rent to the landlord, will have to pay what is substantially a rack rent in consequence of the large sum of money he may have to pay the outgoing tenant, and, still worse, the interest he may be forced to pay the local usurer from whom he has borrowed the purchase-money. By having to pay a large sum down to the outgoing tenant, his means for stocking his farm and for carrying it on profitably will be greatly crippled. Therefore, if the Bill is to effect its object, it must proceed one step further; and, having interfered with the valuation of the land, it must interfere to regulate the interest upon borrowed capital—it must re-enact the old usury laws—and then I shall be able to show that you have not carried out sufficiently and fully your own proposals to their ultimate conclusion. I may mention that this idea is not confined to English people. What is the organ of public opinion which has done more than any other to keep alive the flames of agitation in Ireland? What is that organ which has done more than any other to procure funds for the maintenance of that agitation? We all know that it is *The Irish World*. And what does that paper do? It devotes one-half of its space to arguments in favour of abolishing Irish landlordism, and the other half, with equal impartiality, to denouncing usury as one of the curses of the country. Can we believe that the Irish tenants and the Irish peasants who read this paper, and know the advice it gives them, would be satisfied with being secured against the unjust rent of the landlord, and would be content for the future to pay the exorbitant rates which the local usurers demand from them? If that be so with respect to the tenant farmers, I wish now to say a very few words on that other person, who has hitherto been only lightly alluded to in these debates, and who is not mentioned with any degree of substantiality in the Bill of Her Majesty's Government—I mean the Irish labourer. My impression is that the Bill, as it is drawn, affects prejudicially those 440,000 individuals who are classed as Irish labourers. Everybody will admit that of late years the wages of the general body of Irish labourers have been much improved; but have they been increased by the action of the tenant farmers or of the landed proprietors? No one will deny that it is by the latter and not by the former that the wages of the labourers have been increased and their condition improved, and this Bill, which aims a blow at the rights and position of the landlords, does indirectly, but very substantially, affect very prejudicially the interests of the labourers. That, I say, is the indirect influence of the Bill upon the labourers; but in other respects the interests of the labourers are directly prejudiced by the provisions of the measure. According to the fifth part of the Bill, the landlord is to sell his property to his tenant. Upon the property so sold are the cottages and allotments of the labourers. But by a subsequent provision of the Bill the moment the tenant becomes the proprietor, by an exemption contained in the last page of the Bill, he becomes the absolute lord of the labourers, their cottages, and their allotments on the farm, on which, perhaps, they were born. I do not know whether it is an omission or not; but, undoubtedly, as the Bill is drawn, and as I am advised, this exemption would place the labourers completely at the mercy of the new peasant proprietor. I know it will be said that in two clauses of the Bill there is some slight mention made of the labourer. But how? The landlord is to have the power of resuming possession of a portion of the farm for the benefit of the labourer. But when? When he raises the rent of the farm; but not until then. I believe, if that clause is read with the only other one in which the labourer is mentioned, it will be found that even this very limited and illusory relief is put off for a period of 15 years. Therefore, I say that, as far as the Irish labourer is concerned, both directly and indirectly, he is prejudiced by the whole scope of the Bill. I believe that all the Members of this House have received a very remarkable letter, signed "Edward Richards," which bears on this branch of the question, and I would ask leave to read a few words from it. Mr. Richards gives his name and address. He says—

> "In defence of a much maligned class, and as a duty I owe to the public, I must say that the most powerful case of eviction I ever heard of was that of a poor tenant farmer."

The story is too long to tell; but suffice it to say that Mr. Richards found himself the champion of the poor tenant against a rich neighbouring farmer—also his own tenant—and, failing all other means of obtaining redress, he became the defendant in a Chancery suit. And while the poor tenant was turned into the road, the rich farmer, having crushed the poor tenant, became a leading member of the local Land League, and now refused to pay a farthing of rent for the perpetuity farms which he held. What justice or mercy could the labourers expect from farmers or peasant proprietors of that kind? This Bill, unjust as the noble Lord who has just sat down knows it to be, acting most prejudicially upon the interests of the landlords as a body, might possibly have been accepted in some of its main provisions by them, in the miserable and disturbed condition in which Ireland now finds herself, owing very much, as I maintain, to the mixture of arrogance and weakness displayed by Her Majesty's Government—the landlords, I say, might possibly have been content to accept some of the many provisions of the measure, if the Government could hold out anything like a reasonable expectation that the measure would really settle the Land Question in Ireland. I do not ask the Government to say whether they intend the measure to be a settlement; because, after what has occurred, their intentions go for very little. But can the Government point to any facts which can in the least justify them in the expectation that the Bill would settle the question? We have heard to-night a very able speech from the hon. Gentleman the Member for Mayo. He, like the noble Lord opposite, is going to vote for the second reading of the Bill; but what was the whole tone, tenour, and scope of the speech of the hon. Member? It was this—"If you will insert in this Bill all the Amendments which I suggest, and the whole of the 18 Amendments suggested by the Roman Catholic Prelates of Ireland, then I and my Friends will continue to support the measure, and we will hope that it may be for the benefit of Ireland." We have the assurance of the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government that he will not assent to the propositions made by the Roman Catholic Prelates; and we must assume, until we hear to the contrary, that he will refuse his assent to the still wider proposals we know are in store for us from hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway. Well, then, what hope have we that this Bill, so deficient as I have shown it to be, with respect to the largest and poorest class now suffering in Ireland—this Bill which fails to receive the support of those Gentlemen by whose labours it has been mainly produced, and to gratify and satisfy whom it may be reasonably supposed to have been suggested to the House—what hope have we that this measure will in any degree be regarded or received as a settlement of the Land Question? But, then, while I object to the whole of the first part of this measure as being essentially unjust, and while I hold that it does not contain within itself any reasonable ground for regarding it as a settlement of the question, I freely admit that there are other proposals which do seriously deserve the consideration of the House; and I agree with the noble Lord that it is a pity these proposals have not been submitted in a more substantial, clear, and enlarged shape for our consideration. The hon. Member for Mayo has shown that with respect to the reclamation of land the scheme is very misty, and that the Government proposals are drawn in a manner which is not in the least likely to attract a sufficient amount of capital to enable them to be carried into effect. The whole scope and tenour of the Bill appear to me almost intended to drive capital away rather than to induce it to flow into Ireland. There were some sentiments expressed by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Law) which somewhat favoured that view. He seemed quite annoyed that anybody should suggest that the introduction of fresh capital thrown into Ireland was really one of the wants of the country. "Want of capital!" said, in effect, the right hon. and learned Gentleman. "No; the sinews and muscle of the tenant farmer who cultivates the soil—that is capital sufficient. Only give him a little more security in regard to the occupation of small farms—that is the sort of capital that is wanted for the restoration of the prosperity of Ireland." Now, I greatly doubt that. I believe, with everybody who has hitherto sifted the question, that it is to the introduction of capital in Ireland, and to the development of her industrial resources, that you must look in the long run for that prosperity which we all equally wish should be the fortune of that country. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister has based this measure to a great extent upon the recommendations of the Duke of Richmond's Commission. I have, I think, already shown that the right hon. Gentleman has greatly exaggerated and altogether mistaken the recommendations of that Commission; but before any recommendation on the subject of tenure in the Duke of Richmond's Commission, stood a recommendation on the subject of public works, which I propose shortly to read to the House. The hon. Member for Tipperary (Mr. P. J. Smyth) asked what has become of, and where is the development of the industrial resources of Ireland? I would answer the hon. Gentleman in this way. I was looking, a few months ago, to a remarkably able letter written on this subject, to which his own signature was appended, and to which I would refer him for an exhaustive statement on the subject; and I find this reference to the industrial resources of Ireland in the Report of the Duke of Richmond's Commission—

> "The employment of capital and labour in the development of the resources of the country by arterial drainage, the construction of railways and other public works, and the encouragement of fisheries, is also urged upon us by the witnesses as one of the best remedies for the present depression and to prevent the recurrence of the existing distress. It will be seen from the evidence that from the want of regular, continuous employment for the people, the condition of these classes is deplorable, and the consequent sufferings and privations which they and their families have periodically to endure demand the serious attention of Her Majesty's Government and of Parliament."

That is my answer to the hon. Member for Tipperary and the hon. Member for Mayo; and I say that in the first recommendation of the Duke of Richmond's Commission I find a justification for the Amendment which I am precluded from moving, but in the spirit of which I desire to make a few further remarks. This is no new idea. The hon. Member for Mayo said, and it was the only part of his speech which was liable to complaint, to my great amazement, that the Tory Party have only one policy for Ireland, and that is coercion and proscription. How any Gentleman, who is going to support Her Majesty's Government on the second reading of this Bill, could presume to lecture the Tory Party on the subject of coercion I confess I am unable to understand. It would seem as though the Tory Party have never before now proposed any measure for the real material advantage of Ireland. For myself, I take my stand to-night on precisely the same ground as that on which the late Lord George Bentinck took his 34 years ago. I venture to ask the hon. Member for Mayo this question—How was it that that great scheme, which now everybody connected with Ireland admits would have been greatly for the benefit and would largely have contributed to the prosperity of that country, came to be rejected? It was rejected because the political Predecessors of the hon. Member for Mayo, in the so-called Liberal representation of Ireland, at that time preferred their Party to their country, and threw out the Bill. Lord George Bentinck said—

> "There has been no inquiry made by Parliament, in which the result has not been a recommendation that the difficulties of Ireland should be sought to be overcome by stimulating the employment of her people."—[8 *Hansard*, lxxxix. 776.]

Well, Sir, I say that that is as true now as it was true then, and it is the justification and the vindication of the course which I presume to recommend for the adoption of the House. We have heard a great deal about the Devon Commission of 1847; but I will refer to a Commission which sat even 10 years before that —namely, the Land Commission of 1836. That Commission recommended for the benefit of the Irish people that railways should be assisted by the Government. I will venture now, in a very few words, to indicate some of the public works to which the attention of the Government might beneficially be directed. In the first place, there is arterial drainage, which is, perhaps, at the root of the real improvement of the soil of Ireland. I do not know whether any hon. Member is prepared to dispute that proposition; but, if so, I would refer him to a statement by Professor Baldwin. He says—"I think it is the foundation of the permanent improvement of the agriculture of Ireland." Now, I would venture to ask Her Majesty's Government what has been done of late years in promoting the arterial drainage of Ireland? I believe, according to the best evidence which can be obtained, that at the normal rate at which the arterial drainage of Ireland has been going on it would take about 1,000 years to perfect that drainage. There you have a very great subject for your favourable consideration, and a subject on which there is no considerable difference of opinion. Perhaps it may be said that in the fifth part of the Bill there is some reference to drainage, and that "drainage" may be held to include arterial drainage. I do not know how that is; but I would ask how is it proposed that the drainage should be carried out? Why, by the formation of companies. The Government are not to be authorized to give assistance unless and until a company is formed. [An hon. MEMBER: That is the law now.] Then, what I say is, that that which is now suggested by the present Bill is not sufficient for the purpose. I would wish to go much further than the present law, and I presume that the Government intended to go further by the clause of the Bill to which I refer. Otherwise, why is it inserted in the Bill? I am pointing out now that the provisions of the Bill are insufficient, and that they are really illusory. I would ask what prospect the Government have that those companies would be formed, to which they would be willing to advance the money, so that arterial drainage might be carried out? I am satisfied that the whole scope and tenour of the measure is such as to deter and not to induce the flow of capital into Ireland. Well, then, Sir, there is another question which was very much debated in this House last year, and in the discussion of which I took a part—I mean the promotion of fisheries in Ireland. I cannot conceive any work more important at the present moment to Ireland and the future prosperity of Ireland than the development of the fisheries. There was last year absolute unanimity among the Irish Members on that question. I had the pleasure of supporting the proposal, both by my speech and by my vote. It was suggested that there should be a large increase in the money already voted to the Irish fisheries and the Irish fishermen for the purpose of restoring that which before the Famine of 1846 was a very important and lucrative source of employment to large numbers of the Irish people. A development of this industry would be a source of great relief to large numbers of the Irish people, especially on the Western coast, where there has been great suffering. Under the system established by my right hon. Friend the Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), I believe about £5,000 a-year is now voted in loans to fishermen. Sir, I propose that this should be largely increased, and that all the fishermen who ask for grants under proper circumstances should receive them. For this purpose, I consider about £15,000 annually would be sufficient. But then comes the other important question of fishery piers and harbours; and there, also, a great work is to be accomplished, for no work in Ireland, I am certain, could be undertaken by this House or any Commission which Her Majesty's Government might appoint, which would be more beneficial and productive, and which would tend more to further the improvement of the condition of the maritime population of that country. Since Lord George Bentinck made his proposal, private enterprize has undoubtedly done much to supply Ireland with main lines of railway, and it is therefore unnecessary to propose any great scheme of that kind. But there are many small lines of what might be termed mountain railway which are much wanted in Ireland, and which would tend to develope the dormant agricultural resources of great tracts of land in that country. I suggest, therefore, that the Government should undertake to give increased facilities for the construction of these smaller lines of railway. It will then be asked, "How is the money to be found?" Sir, I cannot conceive that the Irish Church Fund could be better applied than in promoting works of the character to which I have alluded. I do not say that I have given anything like an exhaustive list of those works of the character I have indicated which may be beneficially promoted; but I repeat, that I cannot conceive any more beneficial objects to which the Irish Church Surplus could be devoted. Following out the line of argument which the hon. Member for Mayo pursued, I go one step further, and say, if it be necessary to supplement that fund by a draft of money from the Imperial Treasury, either by way of loan or as a gift, I would far rather adopt that course; and, in so doing, expiate, if need be, the sins of the forefathers of the present House of Commons in destroying the Irish manufacturing trades. That course appears to me much preferable to the scheme which finds favour with the hon. Member for Southwark, who told us that we are bound to do penance for the sins of our forefathers, and expiate them at the expense of the Irish landlords, who, like the rest of the Irish population, were injured by the unjust legislation of the English House of Commons. I regret I have not had an opportunity of taking the sense of the House upon my Amendment, as distinguished from that of my noble Friend the Member for Haddingtonshire (Lord Elcho); but I feel very strongly that this Bill is not the proper solution of the Land Question, and as we have had no indication from Her Majesty's Government that they are prepared in any way to mitigate its injustice or modify its injurious provisions, no other course is left to me than to vote for the Amendment of my noble Friend. If this Bill could be made more consonant with justice, and deprived of those harsher features which alarm and perplex the public mind, it would not be a measure of which I should feel disposed to say that it ought not to receive the sanction of this House; and I will still hope, amidst all the difficulties of the position, that Parliament may devote itself to the consideration of the question how the real evils and wants of Ireland may be best met. Sir, there is no Royal road to national prosperity, but there may be many humble paths which, taken together, lead to that result; and I trust we shall not finally part with this question without having devised some schemes which will be beneficent in their effects, and contribute to the lasting peace and prosperity of Ireland.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Errington.*)

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the right hon. Gentleman at the head of Her Majesty's Government, what would be the course of Public Business? He was unable to understand why the debate should be adjourned at that early hour (12.30), unless it was for to give the hon. Member for Gloucester (Mr. Monk) an opportunity of bringing on his Motion, which had miscarried on Tuesday last, on account of a misunderstanding on the part of the Whips. If the Motion for adjournment were assented to with that object he should certainly oppose it.

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, the Motion for the adjournment of this debate is no matter of arrangement or any act of ours, and I do not know that we should be justified in opposing it. Yet I hope the House will now begin to think of some arrangement for drawing the debate upon the second reading of the Bill now before us to a close. It is a matter of very great urgency that the judgment of the House should be taken on the main principles of the Bill; and we learn to-night from the Opposition Bench that the Amendment of the noble Lord the Member for Haddingtonshire is to be supported from that Bench. The discussion upon the Amendment of the noble Lord will necessarily occupy some time, and it is a perfectly fair and straightforward Motion. But, Sir, I think, after four nights' debate, it is not unreasonable to express a hope that we may now very soon reach the conclusion of this stage of the Bill. The limit of time necessary for this purpose I will not undertake precisely to fix; but, as far as Her Majesty's Government are concerned, we hope the debate will be brought to a close within what I think will be a liberal extension of time—namely, the two Government nights of next week.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Sir, it is, no doubt, very desirable that we should make progress with Business, and get on with such an important Bill as that under discussion. At the same time, it cannot be wondered at that a measure of such great importance and of such complication should encounter a very considerable amount of discussion. The Bill raises a large number of questions, and I am well aware that there are many hon. Gentlemen who are anxious to take part in the discussion upon the principles of the measure. One thing, I believe, would tend very much to the limitation of the debate, and that is that the Government should give us, in a clearer and more intelligible form than we have yet received, some explanation of the 7th clause. A great deal turns upon this. The question was raised at the very beginning of the discussion by my right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Dublin University (Mr. Gibson), and so much hinges upon it that we are entitled to have with regard to it a clear and intelligible explanation. With that assistance on the part of Her Majesty's Government, I think it may be found possible to conclude the debate upon the second reading within a reasonable time; but that assistance is quite essential. It will, I am convinced, save time in the long run, that those who have strong opinions on the subject, and wish to bring forward their views in the course of the discussion upon the second reading of the Bill, should have an opportunity of doing so.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL desired to point out to the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister that, in showing what appeared to be rather undue impatience that the debate upon the second reading of this Bill should close, he had somewhat forgotten the extraordinary course which the debate had taken from its commencement. It must not be forgotten that the debate on the first night practically collapsed owing to the conduct of Her Majesty's Government. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin made on that occasion a speech, in which he put certain questions to the Government apparently of so difficult a character that the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant was quite unable to make any answer to them. It ought also to be borne in mind that one of the events of that first night's discussion, which occurred on that day when the House met after the Easter Recess, was that Her Majesty's Government, as he believed, tried to snatch a division, because the only occupant of the Treasury Bench, after the right hon. and learned Gentleman had concluded, was the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, who cried "Divide!" On another night of the discussion, the First Lord of the Treasury very gratuitously put down a Motion which had raised a controversy that occupied two hours. On the previous occasion there had been a discussion of great length, chiefly owing to the remarkable opinions held by hon. Members opposite with regard to a matter on which they found themselves unable to agree with hon. Members on that side of the House—namely, the war in Afghanistan. Looking at all these events, he could not but think that the right hon. Gentleman was far too sanguine in thinking that the debate was likely to close within the period he had indicated.

Mr. LITTON said, there were, undoubtedly, many Irish Members as well as himself who desired to speak upon the second reading of the Bill. He had attentively listened to the debate during the four nights which it had occupied;

and although he wished to address the House, he had failed to catch the eye of Mr. Speaker. He was at all times indisposed to press any observations of his own, if the House considered that the subject had been sufficiently discussed; but he did not feel himself bound to yield to the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman to give up the right which he claimed of speaking upon this question.

Mr. SHAW said, he had remarked since the commencement of the debate that English Members had absorbed a great deal of the time spent in discussion. But there were Irish Members who also desired to take part in the debate. He knew that Gentlemen who sat behind him, and many Irish Members on the other side of the House, had risen repeatedly, but had failed to catch the eye of Mr. Speaker. Although the Bill was said to be of very great importance to English Members, it had struck him that they had, in the course of the discussion, advanced very little argument. Under the circumstances, probably Irish Members might be allowed to occupy more time in discussing the Bill during the next two nights. The nights they had already devoted to this subject had been very much interfered with; but, no doubt, if the next two Government nights were given to it, it might be possible to close the debate within that time. But he understood there was a subject upon the Paper for discussion on Monday, which might give rise to a great deal of controversy; and therefore he suggested that the matter, which was not one of pressing importance, should be deferred. He hoped the House would not misunderstand him as having the slightest wish to interfere with any proper mark of respect to the memory of that great Statesman, Lord Beaconsfield; but the Motion was not one of such pressing importance as the going into Committee upon this Bill. Even the question referred to by the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition was one which could not be discussed so completely at the present stage as in Committee. Undoubtedly, the 7th clause was one which it would be found very difficult to explain. Nevertheless, when it was reached in Committee, and dealt with as a matter of Business, he saw no reason why progress should not be made with it. He trusted the House would not object to the suggestion he had thrown out for postponing the Motion to which he had referred. He was quite sure they would consider it in a proper spirit, and arrive at a just decision.

Mr. CHAPLIN said, that, no doubt, Irish Members should take a prominent part in the debate; but, at the same time, he would point out that the Bill contained a principle that the Prime Minister had said was quite as much English as Irish, for in 1870 the right hon. Gentleman had said in his hearing—"This is quite as much an English as an Irish Land Bill." Therefore, he hoped he might be allowed to say a word for English Members, who also desired to take part in the discussion. He should be sorry to say anything disappointing to the Prime Minister; but, as far as he had been able to ascertain the views and wishes of hon. Members on that (the Conservative) side of the House—Irish as well as English Members—he did not think there was the remotest chance of the debate being finished in the course of two more Government nights next week. He had heard Member after Member signify his intention to take part in the debate, and he remembered that the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Gladstone), at the very commencement, had said that this was the most serious question that had ever arisen in his time. He (Mr. Chaplin) agreed with his noble Friend below him (Lord Randolph Churchill), that the Prime Minister was over sanguine if he thought that five or even six days were sufficient for the discussion of the Bill on second reading. The days which had been devoted to the debate had only been, so to speak, half days, for a great deal of time had been taken up on those occasions by the consideration of other matters. Take, for instance, to-night, when the Afghan Question had been considered, and very few Members had had an opportunity of speaking on the Bill. With regard to what had fallen from the right hon. Baronet below him (Sir Stafford Northcote), it was a fact that no answer had been given to the speech of the right hon. Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson). Not only was the speech of the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant insufficient; but when the Attorney General for Ireland was pressed across the Table by a right hon. Gentleman on this side of the House, he said—"Oh, dear, no! I am not going to be entrapped into any offhand statement of this kind." If the Government thought they were going to get rid of the second reading in two more days, they would find themselves very much mistaken. It would last a great deal longer than they seemed to suppose.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON said, he did not wish to procrastinate or prolong the second reading of the measure; but the hon. Member for the County of Cork (Mr. Shaw) had said that if they got into Committee on it, it would then be very easy to settle what was the meaning of Clause 7. He would venture to suggest to the Prime Minister, however, that nothing would tend more to facilitate the discussion, and probably the conclusion, upon the second reading than a clear definition from the Government as to what was the meaning of Clause 7. Speaking as one tolerably conversant with the Ulster Custom, which it was proposed to extend all over Ireland by this Bill, he said that the whole principle and the whole purport of the first part of the measure depended upon the interpretation to be put upon Clause 7. The Attorney General for Ireland had not attempted to dispute the contention of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin; in fact, he had expressly declined to explain the meaning of certain clauses, lest he should be drawn into a wrangle. ["No, no!"] The right hon. and learned Gentleman had said—but he (Lord George Hamilton) would not enter into a dispute with hon. Members on the question, because there was really no answer given to the arguments of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin. The hon. and learned Member for Dundalk had confirmed the construction put upon the clause by the right hon. and learned Gentleman. The Chief Secretary had told them that the interpretation of the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin did not convey the intention of the Government; then, all he would ask was that they should put up someone—say, the Solicitor General for Ireland, whose answers were not wanting in intelligibility—to tell them what were the intentions of Her Majesty's Government as to Clause 7; and if the words which were now in the clause were insufficient to adequately explain their intention, what words could be employed in order to make their object perfectly clear.

MR. GORST only wished, for a moment, to correct a misapprehension of the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin), which, he thought, in justice to Her Majesty's Government, ought to be corrected; and he was not sure that the right hon. Baronet the Member for North Devon had not fallen into a somewhat similar mistake. They had both stated that Her Majesty's Government had given no answer to the speech of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin; but that was not correct—it was an injustice to the Government. The Government had given three answers to that speech. The first was given by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant; the second was given by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Dundalk; and the third was given by the Attorney General for Ireland; and the peculiarity of the case was this—that all three answers were entirely inconsistent with one another. If the Government would allow so humble an individual as himself to give them a piece of advice, with a view to bringing this discussion to a satisfactory close, he would suggest that they should make up their minds what they really did intend to mean by Clause 7. If they would state to the House what their real intention was, the House would be able to debate the Bill.

MR. MAC IVER would not like the Motion for adjournment to pass without saying a word on behalf of a class of Members who, he thought, had a right to be heard—namely, those Members who, though representing English boroughs or counties, still had a large number of Irish constituents. He was one of those Members, though, it was probable—and he admitted it at once — that, at the last General Election, did not get one vote from these Irish constituents. None the less, however, did he wish to urge in the strongest manner possible—and, no doubt, many Members from Ireland and those who sat on the Conservative Benches, and probably some who sat opposite, would agree with him—that the Government should pass some measures which would really be of advantage to Ireland. He referred to matters such as those which had only been referred to briefly by the noble Lord who spoke just now (Lord John Manners). He had listened to all the speeches of importance on the Land Bill; but felt that questions which had been put from that side of the House had not yet been answered by the Government—consequently, that the time had not come when he would wish to place his view of the subject before the attention of the House. If he did not divide the House upon the Amendment which stood in his name, it would not be from any lack of intention to do so, but from lack of the opportunity.

Mr. DAWSON had given three weeks for the discussion of this measure on various platforms, and he must be anxious to know the result; therefore, it would be interesting to them and to the Government to learn what instructions the Irish Members had received from their constituents on this question. It could do no harm to hear the opinions of English Members on the matter, for then not only would the Government learn the view of the Irish constituencies, but also the English view.

Mr. HEALY said, that as one anxious to speak on the question he desired to make a suggestion which the Government might, perhaps, think valuable. The hon. Member (Mr. Shaw) complained that no time had been allowed to Irish Members to speak on the question, and that the time had been taken up by a number of English Members who, presumably, the hon. Member intended to insinuate, like a good many Irish Members, did not know anything about the matter. He would suggest a course for which the Government had a good precedent. The Bill, they were told, was very necessary for Ireland, and the same was said of the measure to enable the Executive to put Irishmen into prison. They must be as anxious to press forward a measure for the protection of the farmers as they were to press forward the other; therefore, to enable them to get out of the difficulty he would propose that they should take one or two All-night Sittings.

Sir PATRICK O'BRIEN said, that one reason why it occurred to him that this debate was not likely to close as early as the Premier seemed to anticipate was this—that at the beginning of the debate, judging from the Irish papers, the Land League Convention and meetings held in Ireland had granted permission to those Irish Members who sat on the Opposition side of the House to decide what course they should take on this measure. Having given to the Bill all the attention his capacity enabled him to do, he had been under the impression that its leading principle could be more fairly and properly discussed in Committee and, under such circumstances, that the second reading could be terminated in a short time. But, to-night, they had heard from the hon. Member (Mr. Shaw) that the old arrangement had been changed, and that, within a very short period, the ideas that had heretofore prevailed as to the manner of dealing with it had been set aside, and that an Amendment had been put upon the Paper—an Amendment not meeting the Bill with a direct negative, but which certainly would not contribute to its receiving such a good reception "elsewhere," when it passed out of this House, as he could have wished it to receive. Under the circumstances, he could not but suppose that the Resolution had been put forward as a mere *brutum fulmen*. He hoped hon. Members would not content themselves with putting crude ideas on paper, but would give that explanation which the House was anxious to have as to the reason why this Resolution had been brought forward. It seemed to him that if hon. Members were to explain that Resolution, and the House was to receive the benefit of their views on the measure of the Government, and on other matters connected with the subject, the second reading stage would not be likely to terminate so early as the Prime Minister anticipated.

Question put, and *agreed to*.

Debate *adjourned* till *Monday* next.

CUSTOMS AND INLAND REVENUE BILL.—[Bill 136.]

(*Mr. Playfair, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord Frederick Cavendish.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Committee on this Bill be deferred."—(*Lord Frederick Cavendish.*)

Mr. R. N. FOWLER wished to know whether the noble Lord (Lord Frederick Cavendish) could tell him when the Bill would really come on ?

LORD FREDERICK CAVENDISH: If the hon. Member will be good enough to tell me when the debate on the Land Law (Ireland) Bill will come to an end, I will give him the information he seeks.

MR. RITCHIE: Will it be the first Order of the Day?

LORD FREDERICK CAVENDISH: No doubt it will be the main Business of the Day on which it is taken.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Committee *deferred* till *Monday* next.

INDIA OFFICE AUDITOR (SUPERANNUATION) BILL.—[BILL 140.]

(*The Marquess of Hartington, Lord Frederick Cavendish.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*The Marquess of Hartington.*)

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he could not allow the Bill to go forward without offering one or two observations with regard to it. The Bill set forth that according to a previous Act provision was made for the appointment of an India Office Auditor, and that, although provision was made for the payment of an annual salary, no provision was made for the superannuation of that officer when his period of service had expired. That Bill was discussed in 1858, and in the course of the discussion an hon. Member said he did not know on what ground it was proposed to appoint a separate auditor, and the then Chancellor of the Exchequer replied that it would introduce great improvement and a better system of audit than then prevailed, and that it would not be necessary to incur serious expense. The Bill was finally agreed to. Well, how did this appointment result in an improvement of the audit service? There was no improvement of any kind or description; in fact, there was, practically, no reliable audit of the Indian accounts. He hardly liked to detain the House at this hour—1 o'clock a.m.—with lengthy extracts from the Blue Book bearing upon the appointment; but he did think that some of the evidence given before the Select Committee on Finance, in 1872, was so important that it ought to be laid before the House before it consented to the superannuation of the officer who for so many years had occupied the post of auditor. Mr. Harrison, who was examined before the Select Committee, was asked this question—

> "Then, is there any person in this Department who possesses any power of auditing the expenditure in the sense of being able to object to expenditure as contrary to law or contrary to the rules and orders of the Secretary of State?"

And the witness's answer was that it was the duty of the Department to check all expenditure which was not warranted by the Government of India. The question was then put—

> "The Department of Audit does not look beyond the fact, so that there is no audit authority in India which is able to exercise an independent check upon the expenditure of money by the Local Government in that country? If the Governor General in Council, therefore, orders any payment that is final as regards the Audit Department?"—A. "I consider that to be so."

In reply to a further question, he said—

> "It would be the duty of an officer of his Department to bring to notice any expenditure he had reason to believe not warranted."

Mr. Gay was also examined before the same Committee, and he said there was, practically, no audit whatever to be relied upon. What had been the consequence of the want of efficient audit control over the accounts of India? It had been the financial blunder and scandal which attracted so much attention recently. The Committee appointed to inquire into the system of keeping accounts, and into the relations between the military accounts and the Controller General, made a Report, which strongly bore out his contention. It traced the financial dilemma in India to the absence of anything like an official audit, and it was pointed out that the audit of the accounts in India was always lamentably in arrear. The House ought to pause before assenting to the second reading of the Bill, unless the Government could show them some very good reason for enlarging the provisions made in 1858.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON regretted that in consequence of the noise in the House he had been unable to catch the greater part of the remarks of the hon. Member for Queen's County (Mr. Arthur O'Connor). He was not aware from what Committee's proceedings the hon. Gentleman was reading;

but if the hon. Gentleman would communicate with him he would carefully examine the evidence, and, if necessary, he might be able to afford him some satisfactory explanation. As far as he was able to gather from the remarks of the hon. Gentleman, he complained of the inefficient audit in India. Under the Act of 1858 it was simply an audit of the accounts of the Government of India at home which was appointed. Whether the audit of the accounts in India was sufficient for the purpose was a subject altogether separate from the present Bill. The audit of the Home accounts was a subject which had not been neglected. It came under the consideration of the Public Accounts Committee, and some changes had been made. The last Report of that Committee stated that the auditor of the India Office had been, in consequence of the recommendations of the Committee, altogether relieved of the duties formerly imposed upon him, and was now enabled to carry out an entirely independent audit. He would not say that the subject of the accounts in India was not one worthy of consideration; but he would submit to the House that it was entirely separate from the present Bill, and it would be almost irregular to discuss it now. The object of the Bill was clearly set forth in the Preamble, and the House would see there was no reason why the Bill should not be passed.

Mr. ONSLOW said, he had given Notice of opposition to the Bill; but he did so when the Bill was not printed. Having seen the Bill, however, he hoped the House would allow it to pass. It did seem unfair that a body of officials should be precluded from any pension on account of what might very properly be called a technicality—on account of there being no mention of their offices in the Act of 1858.

Mr. DAWSON had no wish to oppose the Motion for the superannuation of these officials; but he thought the thanks of the House were due to his hon. Friend (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) for having called attention to the lamentable want of regularity in the keeping of accounts in India. It was evident the deficiencies which the taxpayers in this country were called upon to supply might have been prevented.

Mr. BIGGAR had no wish to delay Business; but it seemed to him the audit of the Indian accounts was performed in an absurd and inefficient manner. It would be well that the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) should have an opportunity of perusing the Reports which criticized unfavourably the conduct of the auditors to whom it was now proposed to make an allowance; and in order that such an opportunity should be afforded the noble Marquess, he begged to move that the debate be now adjourned.

Mr. HEALY seconded the Motion. He desired to point out the inconvenience of bringing on the Bill at this hour of the morning. No one thought it necessary to offer any remarks on the subject; and it appeared to him that if there was any desire on the part of the right hon. Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench to save the time of the House, they would not press Bills of this importance at this late hour. If the hon. Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar) persisted in his Motion he should certainly divide with him.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Biggar.*)

The Marquess of HARTINGTON hoped the hon. Member for Cavan would not press his Motion, for the Bill related to the audit of the Home accounts; and the hon. Member must see that it was impossible that the Indian accounts should be audited by the Auditor General. As matters stood, the auditors had no superannuation, because, although a few of them who had retired had received grants equal to superannuation by virtue of the authority in the Indian Council, they had no legal right to superannuation. It was desirable that superannuation should be established by law.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, the very thing he wished to elicit had been shown by the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India. For instance, there had already been several auditors in the position of the official whose case was being dealt with. The noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India had found the means of providing for them, and had placed a charge on the Revenue of India which was not just. The noble Marquess had himself admitted the fact. He said the system was not one to be recommended, and now he wanted the House to pass a Bill providing superannuation of an auditor, while stating that in previous instances such a step had not been considered necessary. It appeared to him that that fact alone was sufficient to show that the audit of Indian accounts in England was in an unsatisfactory condition. The Auditor General had not, he maintained, done what he ought to have done. He ought to be the Financial Adviser of the Secretary of State, to enlighten him upon any shortcomings in the system of audit in this country, or in India. The shortcomings in the system in India had been most flagrant, and had resulted in what was really little short of a public disgrace and a public scandal. The auditor had not done his duty in such a way as to warrant a special Bill being passed in his favour. It was, however, useless to disguise the fact that the sense of the House was in favour of the second reading of the Bill; and he would, therefore, appeal to the hon. Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar) to withdraw his Motion. At the same time, he trusted that the noble Marquess would favour the House in a short time with his views as to what steps should be taken for dealing with this subject.

MR. BIGGAR, on the appeal of his hon. Friend (Mr. Arthur O'Connor), who seemed to be the only Member of the House who understood the question, begged leave to withdraw the Motion.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Monday* next.

MOTIONS.

—⁂—

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (BRENTFORD UNION, &c.) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. HIBBERT, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to the Rural Sanitary District of the Brentford Union, the Bromley and Beckenham Joint Hospital District, the Local Government District of Burgess Hill, the Rural Sanitary District of the Cuckfield Union, the Local Government District of Houghton-le-Spring, the Special Drainage District of Hurstpierpoint, the Local Government District of Marple, the Stourbridge Main Drainage District, and the Rural Sanitary District of the Whitehaven Union, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. HIBBERT and Mr. DODSON.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 149.]

CUSTOMS (OUTPORT OFFICERS).

Select Committee *appointed*, "to inquire into the conditions of service and the rates of pay of the Customs Out-door Officers at the Outports, with power to send for persons, papers, and records, and to report to this House."—(*Mr. Norwood.*)

POST OFFICE (LAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. FAWCETT, Bill to amend the Law with respect to the acquisition of Land and the execution of Instruments for the purposes of the Post Office, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. FAWCETT and Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 150.]

House adjourned at half after One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 6th May, 1881.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILL—*Second Reading* — Municipal Franchise (Scotland) (55).

HIS IMPERIAL MAJESTY THE EMPEROR OF ALL THE RUSSIAS.

H.R.I.H. THE DUCHESS OF EDINBURGH'S ANSWER TO MESSAGE OF CONDOLENCE.

THE DUKE OF RICHMOND reported, That his Grace and the Duke of Bedford waited on Her Royal and Imperial Highness the Duchess of Edinburgh, Grand Duchess of Russia, with the message of the 15th of March last, and that Her Royal and Imperial Highness had returned the following answer; viz. :—

MY LORD DUKES,

I receive the message of condolence which the House of Lords has charged you to present to me with sincere gratitude.

May I ask you to have the goodness to offer to the House in return my heartfelt thanks, and to say that I am deeply sensible of the manner in which it has expressed its sympathy towards me in my heavy affliction.

FRANCE AND TUNIS—OCCUPATION OF KEF, &c.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

EARL DE LA WARR said, that with the permission of the noble Earl the

Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, he would put a Question to him relative to what was now passing in Tunis. He wished to know, Whether the noble Earl could give any information relative to affairs in the Regency of Tunis, more especially as regarded the occupation of Kef, Tabarca, and Bizerta by French troops, and the contemplated advance to Porto Farina, Beja, and other places in the interior of the country, in opposition to the protest of the Bey, and without any intimation of change in the previously existing friendly relations between France and Tunis? He feared, judging from imformation on which he could rely, that there would be further occupation unless there were some understanding or intervention in the case.

Earl GRANVILLE: My Lords, the information which reaches us from Tunis and Paris is frequently not in accord. There appears to be no doubt that the French have crossed the Frontier and occupied Kef and Tabarca, and I believe 3,000 men have been landed at Bizerta, in order, as is stated, to maintain a cordon of troops. I may mention incidentally that H.M.S. *Monarch* and a gunboat have been stationed opposite Tunis, in the interest of British subjects, in case there should be any popular disorder, of which I hope there is no chance. It does not appear unreasonable that the French should resent outrages within the Algerian Frontier, and should take measures to prevent the recurrence of such outrages. The French Government have constantly given us assurances that they have no intention to annex territory; and yesterday they formally and distinctly authorized Lord Lyons to assure Her Majesty's Government that there was no idea of conquest or annexation with regard to Tunis. My Lords, we are not jealous of the legitimate influence which a great country like France may exercise over a weak and much less civilized neighbour, as long as that influence is not exercised to the injury of our Treaty rights or the position of British subjects trading or residing in Tunis. I need not say that it will be the duty of Her Majesty's Government to carefully watch that any arrangements which may arise out of the operations now going on do not clash with those rights.

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL—THE SURRENDER OF POTCHEFSTROOM.—OBSERVATIONS.

Lord WAVENEY, seeing the Colonial Secretary in his place, wished to say a word with regard to the Transvaal, although he could hardly expect a reply. Whether or not, he could not refrain from making a suggestion to the noble Lord. After the defenders of Potchefstroom had surrendered, the Boers stated that they would return the arms taken, and allow the garrison to be replaced; but, although half a regiment had been detached for the purpose, it had not yet reached the citadel, the arms had not yet been restored, and there was an avowed determination—so far as popular rumour could justify the assertion—on the part of the Boers to prevent that restoration. He was aware of the unwillingness of Her Majesty's Government to interfere with the discretion of the Colonial officials; but he thought this was an occasion when the Government would do well to take steps to support the garrison by a strong column of troops.

The Earl of KIMBERLEY: My Lords, I must point out to my noble Friend that it is rather inconvenient to introduce a matter of considerable interest without regular Notice. I do not, at the present moment, feel disposed to enter into the subject further than to say that we have every confidence in Sir Evelyn Wood, who will take whatever military precautions may be necessary and adapted to the occasion.

MUNICIPAL FRANCHISE (SCOTLAND) BILL.—(No. 55.)

(*The Earl of Camperdown.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

The Earl of CAMPERDOWN, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, the Bill was another step in the direction of the emancipation of women. Its object would be found in the Preamble—

> "Whereas in the Act thirty-two and thirty-three Victoria, chapter fifty-five, it is provided that in that Act, and other Acts of Parliament therein recited, whenever words occur which import the masculine gender, the same shall be held to include females for all purposes con-

nected with and having reference to the right to vote in the election of Town Councillors in England; and whereas it is expedient that in this respect the municipal franchise in Scotland shall be assimilated to that of England."

He knew of no reason why the females of Scotland should be placed in an inferior position to the females of England; therefore he asked their Lordships to give the measure a second reading. He might add that there had been no opposition to the measure in the other House of Parliament.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a."—(*The Earl of Camperdown.*)

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2^a accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Monday* next.

NAVAL EDUCATION.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

Lord MONTEAGLE rose to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether Her Majesty's Government have considered the advisability of raising the limit of age for the admission of cadets to the Navy? He would also take occasion, as this was a naval matter, to ask if the Government possessed any further information with respect to the sad loss of Her Majesty's ship *Doterel?* With regard to the subject of the Question of which he had given Notice, it was stated that cadets should be taken at an early age because there was so much to learn, and further, because the service was so disagreeable and the pay was so bad that if the officers did not join at a very early age we should never get them at all. The latter argument was almost beneath the dignity of the House to consider. He hoped it had not come to this—that a great nation like England should have to decoy officers into one of the most important Services at an age when they did not know what they were doing, in the hope that they would perforce have to remain in the Service, because when they came to the years of discretion, and other men were entering into life and selecting their professions, they would be so handicapped that they would be unable to leave the Service and take any other path in life. In his opinion, the limit of age was at present too low, and the system of education after the admission of cadets was unsatisfactory. After their admission they were put on board the *Britannia* for two years, during which time they were instructed in the theoretical or scientific part of their naval education. Then they were sent afloat for five years for practical education, after which they were sent to the Naval College at Greenwich, where they had theoretical instruction, which was little more than a repetition of what they had received on board the *Britannia.* He thought it was a mistake not to have the theoretical and practical instruction combined in one educational course. If boys could enter the Navy at the age of 15 or 15½ years instead of between 12 and 13, they could go to public schools, and in them obtain a more liberal education before entering the Naval Service as cadets, and on their entry they could at once commence their practical education. He trusted that the matter would be taken into consideration by the First Lord of the Admiralty and his Colleagues.

Viscount SIDMOUTH, while thinking that the noble Lord who had brought forward this subject was entitled to the thanks of those who took an interest in the Naval Profession for having introduced this question, hoped the First Lord of the Admiralty would carefully consider the matter in consultation with his Naval Advisers before he adopted the suggestion of the noble Lord. He thought he spoke the opinion of all naval officers of high standing when he said that nothing tended to form the character of our naval officers more than the early age at which they entered the Service. Sending a lad afloat early inured him to the hardships of naval life, and enabled him to learn what was still more essential than scientific knowledge. It gave him habits of discipline, and afforded him an opportunity of acquiring a knowledge of the wants and wishes of the sailor. It was the opinion of the most distinguished naval officers that no one ever could become a thorough seaman unless he went to sea early. The Admiralty had proceeded in a wrong direction when they made cadets pass a long period in the Naval College at Greenwich, when they ought to be at sea. The proximity of Greenwich to London made a residence at that College pernicious to young men.

The Earl of DALHOUSIE: My Lords, this is not a Party question; and as, I believe, my noble Friend at the head of the Admiralty is anxious that it should be discussed, I will ask to be allowed to make a few observations. There are several things which ought to be borne in mind whenever this question is considered. One is, that the entire system of training young officers, to which we still adhere in the British Navy, is a thing by itself. It is totally unlike that of every other nation in the world. Of course, we may be wiser than the rest of the world. But when we find that America and Russia, France and Germany, Sweden and Denmark, have all of them adopted systems of naval education which in some degree resemble each other, and are all of them widely different from ours, I think we should best show our wisdom by carefully considering this matter. Another point is, that on two occasions, at least, within the last eight years, we have been seriously contemplating fundamental changes in it ourselves. If Mr. Goschen had remained longer at the Admiralty, I believe he would have dealt very thoroughly with this question. And I know that when the late Admiral Sir Hastings Yelverton held the Office of First Sea Lord of the Admiralty under Mr. Ward Hunt, he, too, came to the conclusion that the entire system of entering and training young naval officers ought to be recast. But his illness and retirement from Office postponed the question for the second time. Again, I think that when we find that our system, besides differing entirely from all others with which it can be compared, is in itself of so peculiar and anomalous a nature that any unprejudiced person approaching it for the first time would assuredly condemn it on general grounds, the presumption in favour of its modification is, at least, as strong as that in favour of its retention. Moreover, I believe that the officers of the Navy are themselves by no means generally satisfied with the present state of things. I know that the minds of some of our best officers, from Sir Thomas Symonds downwards, have been for years past considerably exercised on this subject. I frequently hear it said that, at all events, naval officers agree as to its cardinal feature—namely, that boys should be sent to sea as early as possible. But, my Lords, that is not the case. I have already mentioned the name of the late Sir Hastings Yelverton, who, I may say, is generally admitted by naval men to have been one of the most accomplished officers that the British Navy has produced in modern times, as disapproving the present system of naval education. Now, among other things, he was in favour of raising the age of entry. And he was not alone in his opinion. Admiral Sir Geoffrey Hornby, who only the other day, and at a very critical time, was Commander-in-Chief in the Mediterranean, and is now President of Greenwich College, holds, I believe, similar views. And Admiral Fanshaw, who for some time held the appointment of President of the Naval College at Greenwich, and was afterwards, only the other day, Commander-in-Chief at Portsmouth, has expressed himself very strongly on this point. I could mention other names, only that their owners might object to my doing so without permission. But I have said enough to show that I have good reason for asserting that our best officers are by no means unanimous as to the advisability of sending boys to sea as soon as possible. On other points opinions differ still more widely. Some officers think that cadets should not only be entered later, but that they should be systematically taught both the theoretical and practical parts of their Profession, as much, at least, as they require to know in order to perform its ordinary duties, before they are sent to do the work of officers in sea-going ships. I will presently endeavour to show your Lordships that this plan would be preferable to the present arrangement. But, first, I will describe what the present arrangement is. Cadets enter the *Britannia* by limited competitive examination between the ages of 12 and 13½. Many of them are then mere children. Some are almost babies. But all are far too young to choose a profession for themselves; and they are too young, also, for a competitive examination to be a satisfactory test of their intellectual ability. They enter the Navy, some because in their simplicity they fancy it offers the nearest escape from lessons and from school; others because their imaginations have been fired by *Peter Simple* and *Midshipman Easy;* but the greater number because their parents are anxious to get their children off their hands—and the Navy offers the earliest and cheapest opportunity of being rid of them. Having passed the examination, they go for two years to the *Britannia*, the training-ship at Dartmouth. I may say, in passing, that it is only by courtesy that the *Britannia* can be called a ship. It is not really a ship at all. It is only a hulk, or rather two hulks, securely moored in Dartmouth Harbour, and as steady as any house. There are no masts, except a jury foremast and bowsprit; and the internal fittings and arrangements do not resemble, in any way, those of a man-of-war. The course of instruction embraces elementary mathematics, French, navigation, and such seamanship as can be taught by books and models. All this could, of course, be better taught on shore. But that is a mere matter of detail, although I must say it is a very expensive one to the country. On passing out of the *Britannia*, cadets go to a sea-going ship as officers, for a time varying from 4½ to 5½ years. Now, I especially wish to call my noble Friend's attention to those five years of sea service as midshipman, because, next to the early age of entry, this point is, to my mind, the weakest in our present system. The life that a midshipman leads, although I myself thought it a very jolly life at the time, is a curiosity in its way. From an educational point of view, looking at it merely as a means of training young officers in the duties of their Profession, it seems to me now, now that I am able to look back upon it with more knowledge and experience, to involve a very great and unavoidable waste of time. It is about as ill-organized and as unprofitable, even from a purely professional point of view, as can well be conceived. It combines the maximum of hard work with the minimum of opportunity for acquiring professional knowledge and experience. And chiefly for this reason, that a midshipman is expected to do both the duties of an officer and the lessons of a schoolboy—two things which are absolutely incompatible with each other. He has to lead, as it were, a double life; and except in those ships where the naval instructor is a man of exceptional zeal and ability, or where the captain of the ship takes a great interest in the midshipmen, only the cleverest and most energetic boys succeed in performing that feat satisfactorily. The teaching staff of the British Navy is probably nearly equal in number to that of all the other Navies in the world; but it is impossible to expect that all the 72 naval instructors whose names are on *The Navy List* should be men of exceptional ability. Neither can every captain of a ship find time to look very closely after his midshipmen. I know that an average boy in an average ship finds it very up-hill work, and makes little progress in anything, partly because his time is so broken up, and partly because, owing to the age at which he left school, he has not, generally speaking, been sufficiently grounded in anything. First, as to his officer's duties. He is generally in four watches —that is to say, he has to be on deck for six hours out of the 24, and on three nights out of every four he has a four hours' night-watch, either from 8 to 12, 12 to 4, or 4 to 8. Then he has his quarters—I mean his division of guns—to attend to. The cleaning and inspection of these, and the inspection of the men belonging to them, together with their rifles and cutlasses, give him, on an average, another hour's work every day. He has also to keep lists of all the clothes of the men belonging to his division, and to help the lieutenant of the division to inspect periodically the men's kits and bedding. He has to attend all drills and evolutions aloft, and all the general drills of great guns and small-arm companies, besides being drilled himself for his own instruction. When on watch his duties, though useful and even necessary for the discipline and cleanliness of the ship, are, generally speaking, not very improving to himself. I might almost say that, unless the ship is at sea under sail, or under steam, and in company with other ships, these duties, so far as the acquirement of professional knowledge and experience go, are scarcely better than waste of time. There is little more to be learnt from them than habits of obedience and tact in the management of men—two things which, if he is made of the right sort of stuff, an English boy does not require five years to learn. He has, of course, at all times to see that the officer of the watch's orders are carried out, and sometimes, no doubt, he learns a good deal by doing so. Then at night he has to go the rounds periodically, generally once every half-hour, in company with the ship's corporal. In the day-time he has to see that the decks are properly swept and scrubbed, and the brasswork properly polished. When these performances are going on it is the midshipman of the watch's duty to act as a sort of house-maid superintendent. I should not object to his doing this if only he had already learnt the rudiments of his Profession instead of having them still to learn, and no time to learn them in. Some of your Lordships may, perhaps, have seen the burlesque called *H.M.S. Pinafore.* Well, the opening scene of that burlesque is really not much of a caricature. It is a tolerably accurate representation of what takes place on board a man-of-war every morning. I need not, therefore, describe in detail those bits of routine. Neither will I enlarge upon their educational value. I will leave your Lordships to judge of that; and I feel sure that when my noble Friend has time to look into this question of naval education, and to examine it for himself, he will agree that it is a mistake that young officers should be compelled to give so much time to the superintendence of mere details of routine, at a time of life when they ought to be employed in acquiring knowledge that would be of use to them afterwards. In addition to these duties, a midshipman is expected to study for a couple of hours, at least, every forenoon, and in some ships again in the afternoon as well, with the naval instructor. It is becoming more and more the custom to relieve midshipmen from their watch on deck, in order that they may attend school, as it is called; and to such an extent is this carried now-a-days, that a captain of a ship now in commission applied, not many weeks ago, to the Admiralty for some additional warrant officers to do midshipmen's duties, because his midshipmen were constantly down below with the naval instructor. I know that many officers think that this change is not for the better, though that is not, I believe, the general opinion, nor, under the circumstances, is it mine. But I admit that it is very possible that midshipmen may thus lose much of the practical experience which is the main object of their being sent to sea, and that it is equally possible that they may gain comparatively little theoretical knowledge to make up for that loss, owing to the many hindrances to study which are inseparable from ship life. As to the first of these two points, I am only stating a well-known fact when I say that it is the general complaint among officers in the higher ranks of the Navy that, whatever be the cause, midshipmen are less useful as officers, and that they learn less seamanship now-a-days than formerly. Here is a statement made by Admiral Ryder, who is now Commander-in-Chief at Portsmouth. He says—

> "I think that a change has come over our Service, and that lads from 16 to 19 learn much less seamanship than they used to do. For this reason I should have no objection to officers, who have passed an examination at 19 for the rank of sub-lieutenant in certain branches of seamanship, undergoing an examination of a more advanced description subsequently—say at 21 or 22—for the rank of lieutenant."

Well, my Lords, if there is any falling off in respect of seamanship, it is a serious thing. To my mind, no amount of theoretical and mathematical knowledge could make up for any falling off in the ready practical instinct which is supposed to be, and ought to be, characteristic of a naval officer. But how would the case stand, my Lords, if, instead of gaining a great deal of theoretical knowledge by this sacrifice, it should turn out that in the great majority of cases the gain is almost nothing, and in some cases even a minus quantity? What do the highest authorities say on this point? Admiral Sir Cooper Key says in evidence—

> "We know that the course of study at sea is very desultory and irregular, and that the midshipmen, therefore, lose a great deal of what they learnt in the *Britannia.*"

He also says, speaking as President of the Naval College, and referring to the six months' course through which midshipmen, or rather acting sub-lieutenants, have to go after completing their five years' service at sea—

> "All we teach, or nearly all we teach them, they ought to have known when they left the *Britannia.*"

Dr. Hurst, the Director of Studies, says that this examination for sub-lieutenants is almost, if not quite, as simple as the examination which they passed as naval cadets on leaving the *Britannia.* And one of the Naval Instructors of the College, Mr. Oborn, says—

> "Speaking in a very general way, they have forgotten everything nearly; but, of course, there are exceptions. I think you may say that they have forgotten everything."

Mr. Laughton, the senior Naval Instructor at Greenwich, says—

> "They have so utterly forgotten what they learnt in the *Britannia*, that it would be difficult to say that they had learnt anything."

The Committee, in their Report, commenting on this evidence, remark, with a simplicity which seems almost ironical—

> "It is unsatisfactory that these young officers, after having been six years at sea, mostly under naval instructors, and after the half-yearly examinations on board ship, should have to recover at the College the knowledge which they had carried with them when they left the *Britannia*."

Well, my Lords, this evidence, I think, proves pretty conclusively that a midshipman's studies in a sea-going ship—except, as I have already said, in the case of men of unusual energy and ability, or placed in exceptionally favourable circumstances—are a snare and a delusion. And this is precisely what any unprejudiced person acquainted with the internal economy of a man-of-war would expect. For what sort of a school do you suppose, my Lords, is it possible to set up on board of a man-of-war? Why, even under the most favourable circumstances, when the captain gives up his cabin, as he sometimes does, to be used as a school-room, it must still be vastly inferior to a school on shore. In bad weather it collapses altogether, and in fine weather it is impossible to escape from the noise of work on deck and from the word of command of the drill instructors. And apart from these hindrances there is not much work to be got out of an average boy of 16 or 17 who has had a four-hours' watch the night before. Therefore, I say that the attempt to set up a good school on board ship is futile, and ought to be discontinued. No regulations that my noble Friend may issue will enable an average boy to learn as much book work in three years on board a sea-going ship as he could learn in one year on shore. Why, then, persist in a system which involves so great a waste of power, and of which officers in the higher ranks of the Service complain that it costs too great a sacrifice of practical experience? Whether it be regarded as a means of acquiring practical knowledge of seamanship, or as a means of acquiring scientific and theoretical knowledge, I am convinced that these five years' sea service as half officer and half schoolboy are eminently unsatisfactory. And I must confess that for some time past it has been a mystery to me how it is that such evident and palpable waste of power and time should still go on. There is another point to which I should like to call my noble Friend's attention. In our present system of naval training there is no provision whatever for training officers in what I may call the A B C of practical seamanship. By practical seamanship I mean dexterity in the art of handling ships in every variety of circumstances, coupled with a certain faculty of judgment in such matters as wind and weather. Your Lordships will understand that it requires long experience at sea to make a really accomplished seaman; but there is a great deal in the beginning which can be taught and ought to be taught, and which is taught in every Navy except our own. Our midshipmen are expected to pick it up for themselves, even if the whole of their five years' sea service should be spent, as it sometimes is, in an iron-clad. Nothing, my Lords, can be more unreasonable than this. You might as well expect a boy to learn to swim on dry land as expect that he will become a seaman by serving in an iron-clad. Practically, seamanship can only be learnt at sea; and it would be learnt more thoroughly and quickly if it were systematically taught. But I complain not only that no pains are taken to teach young officers this branch of their Profession, but also that so many of them do not even get a fair chance of picking it up. For it is the custom now-a-days that midshipmen should be only appointed to ships which carry naval instructors, and a great many of these are iron-clads, which rarely move out of harbour, and never go on a long cruise. Other Navies have sea-going training ships for their young officers; but we only have them for our men. Perhaps my noble Friend will remind me that, not very long ago, we did have sea-going training ships for naval cadets, but that they were found a failure, and were given up in consequence. That is perfectly true. But there were reasons for that failure, with which I need not trouble your Lordships, but which fully accounted for it. I will only say that these training ships never had a chance. Under the circumstances they were bound to fail, and they did fail. My Lords, after having said so much, I feel that I am bound to make some suggestion.

I fear that I shall be thought presumptuous; but I must run the risk of that. The first thing to be done is to endeavour to make sure of getting the right sort of material for making good officers before going to the expense of working it into shape. That is one of the things that it is utterly impossible to do now owing to the age of entry. No human being can say what sort of a man a boy of 12 will grow into. I cannot say that I have any faith in nomination, because I know that during the two and a-half years that I served as commander on board the *Britannia* it did not exclude many unpromising boys. Nor have I much faith in competition either in the case of boys of 12 and 13. But, on the whole, I think it is the best of the two. In theory I grant that, in some respects, nomination is charming; but, in practice, boys are, for the most part, nominated by the First Lord of the Admiralty, who, however great his ability as an administrator may be, can have no personal knowledge of the boys nominated, and is, consequently, in ignorance of the important point as to whether or not they are likely to make good officers. The opinions of fathers and mothers, and relations and friends, are not to be trusted. For that reason, and for other reasons of a general and obvious character, I would abolish nomination entirely, and raise the age of entry to 15 or 16, when competition would be less objectionable. By that time a lad would be able to judge for himself whether the Navy was likely to suit him or not, and the Civil Service Examiners might then be fairly asked to select the ablest boys. Then, as personal fitness for the Service seems to me to be undoubtedly the most important point of all, the newly entered cadets should be tested at once. I would, therefore, send them straight to sea in a training ship for, say, five or six months, in order that they might get over their sea-sickness, see something of the ships of the Fleet, and generally make acquaintance with naval life. During that time they should be, as it were, on probation; and at the end of the cruise all those who find the life too hard or too irksome, or were evidently unfitted for it, should be allowed to go. The remainder should be sent to a College or naval school for 18 months or two years. During that time they should learn all the mathematics and theoretical navigation that they would require for the ordinary duties of a naval officer, together with such seamanship and knowledge of steam machinery as can be taught with the help of books, and models, and diagrams. They would learn far more book work during those two years than they now do during the five years' sea service as midshipmen. At the end of the College course they should go to sea for, say, one year in a sea-going training-ship. During the first half of that time they should work with the men; during the latter half they should perform officers' duties; and during the whole of that time they should receive practical instruction in the working of steam machinery. At the end of that year, after going through a short course of gunnery, in order to learn their drills, I would send them to sea-going ships as midshipmen. The youngest would then be over 17, the oldest under 19. After two years' service as midshipmen, during which time they should take a certain number of nautical observations, they should pass an examination in seamanship for the rank of sub-lieutenant. But they should be required to serve at least one more year at sea before being eligible for promotion to the rank of lieutenant. That is an outline of the course of training I should like to see adopted. It would not be any longer than the present course. It differs from it in that it would not begin almost in the nursery; and as it would only attempt to teach one thing at a time, it might fairly be hoped that something, if not everything, would be thoroughly well taught. It would avoid the unhappy and impossible combination which midshipmen now-a-days are made to attempt, and it would certainly provide for a far better practical training than is now given. Of course, it would require a great deal of careful consideration to put it into shape. Nevertheless, I am convinced that some such plan as I have indicated must be ultimately followed, if our naval officers are ever, as a body, to make full use of the ample opportunities for higher education which the Naval College at Greenwich affords, and are, at the same time, to regain the dexterity in practical seamanship which so many people think is gradually disappearing. I will even go farther, and say that if our officers are, in future years, to hold their own with the highly-trained officers of foreign Navies, some such changes as I have advocated must be introduced. But without making any radical change at all in the plan of our present system, the noble Earl would greatly improve its working if he could see his way to adopt, in some degree, the suggestion of my noble Friend. Suppose the age of entry were raised by a year and a-half, or even a year only. Surely that is not a very alarming suggestion. Its effect would be this—It would allow the standard of examination both for passing into and out of the *Britannia* to be slightly raised, and cadets would get a fair hold of mathematics, navigation, physics, and general book work, which the majority now do not get; they would afterwards require less study during their five years' sea service in order to keep them up to it, and would arrive at their sub-lieutenant's examination at Greenwich better prepared than they are now. In addition to this they would have more leisure when at sea in which to exercise their powers of observation, and to gain practical experience as officers, than they have now. No new machinery would be required, and no expense incurred. Of course, I know well what will be urged against even this change. In the first place, it will be said that the chief defect in young officers of the present day is want of experience in handling ships, and want of practical knowledge of the details of a seaman's duty, and that this defect is not to be put right by an additional year at school. In that I agree. But while I admit the defect, the remedy is not the one I propose. My remedy is to give young officers more actual sea experience than they have now by relieving them of some of their schoolboy work while they are at sea. Moreover, I would require every officer to serve a certain length of time as sub-lieutenant in addition to his five years' service as midshipman. I do not think that anyone should be allowed to reach the rank of lieutenant before the age of 22 or 23 at the very earliest. The average age would be a year or two later. It seems to me quite unreasonable to suppose that because in the days of Nelson a naval officer was considered qualified to hold that rank at the age of 19, he should, therefore, be considered equally qualified to do so now, when so much more is required of him. Those who object to the age of entry being raised invariably say the same thing—what is the use of entering boys at 14 or 15, instead of at 12 or 13, when all you want out of the majority of them is that they should become good practical seamen? Well, even admitting, which I, however, do not, that an average naval officer need be nothing more, I must point out that people who argue this assume, in an entirely arbitrary and unreasonable manner, that if officers are entered later than 12 or 13, they must necessarily have a less thorough practical training than they now have. But I have already disposed of that point. And I have shown, moreover, that, as matters stand, our young officers have scarcely any practical training at all. My Lords, I am as far as possible from wishing that all naval officers should be men of science rather than practical seamen. It is desirable that there should be a few here and there with high scientific attainments. But to my mind it is enough if the general run of them are thorough seamen, with sufficient scientific knowledge and intelligence to have a general understanding of the ships and the weapons with which they may have to fight, and whose general culture includes the knowledge of one modern language. It is one of the faults of our present system of naval education that, by attempting too much training, or rather too many things in too short a time, it achieves nothing satisfactorily. Another well-worn objection that is sure to be urged against my noble Friend's proposal is, that lads who are 16 years old when they pass out of the *Britannia* would be unprepared for the rough and uncomfortable life they would experience during their first few years at sea, and would not be able to stand it. Well, my Lords, judging from my own experience and my own recollection of what a midshipman's life was, I do not believe that. But the real answer to it is, that those who cannot stand a certain amount of hardship are not the sort of stuff out of which naval officers should be made. Men have gone to sea a great deal older than 16, and have done very well. The finest seaman that, perhaps, the Navy ever possessed—Lord Dundonald—was nearly 18 when first he went to sea, and in those days the hardships of a sea life were worth talking about, which now they are not. Far too much importance is attached to the supposed roughness and discomfort of a sea life. Things are very different now from what they were 50 years ago. But even supposing the hardships were as great as many people seem to fancy, I should still feel confident that in these days, when the sons of rich men, and even of noble Lords in this House, are seeking employment in the backwoods of Canada and in the Western States of America, we should be able to get an ample supply of young men willing enough to face the discomforts of ship life. Again, I have sometimes heard it said that it would be difficult to instil into lads of the age of 16 the habit of implicit and ready obedience to superiors, and the knowledge of the character of seamen, which are necessary to fit a man for command at sea. Well, my Lords, I cannot agree in that opinion. It is based on no reason that I can see. But as it is only an opinion, and not a fact, it is extremely difficult to disprove it. It is said, too, that the ways and habits of seafaring life can rarely be adopted except at a very early age. My Lords, I doubt that very much, and I certainly do not believe for a moment that one year or a year and a-half would make all the difference. Boys are not boys at 15, and old men at 16. If it be true that naval officers should begin so very young, how is it that every other nation on the face of the earth not only thinks, but acts differently in regard to this particular point? Is it that Englishmen have less aptitude for the sea than the men of other nations? I trust, my Lords, I have shown the reasonableness of my noble Friend's suggestion. I trust, too, that I have shown some reason for the dissatisfaction with which I regard the entire system of training young officers—if, indeed, that can be called a system which is so very unsystematic—and for the changes I have advocated. But my case will seem stronger, perhaps, if your Lordships will allow me to quote from a Report on this subject, presented to the Senate of the United States about a year ago by the Secretary of the United States Navy. It was drawn up by an American naval officer who was sent to Europe for the express purpose of examining into the systems of naval education pursued in England, France, Germany, and Italy. It is an exhaustive document, and I have it here bound in the shape of a book. After devoting no less than 88 pages to a minute examination into the details of naval education in the English Navy, he sums up his criticism in the following words:—

"In the English Service there seems to be a theory that a naval officer is a creature of a delicate and sensitive organization, whose regard for his Profession, and whose zeal for a high standard of professional attainment must be stimulated by surrounding him internally with all its minor details, to an extent unknown in any other walk of life. To make a sailor, he must begin at 12 or 13, even though he does not go to sea for two years, to accustom him early to his duties. During these two years he must live on board a ship, and be able to climb the rigging, to familiarize himself with details, though the ship lies at anchor in the river, a few yards from the shore, and carries no spars but her foremast and headbooms. He must sleep in a hammock to inure himself to hardship. In the opinion of a majority of officers, he must have his College for higher instruction in a naval port, or he will forget his duties, and he must pursue his scientific researches in a Dockyard, because he will be surrounded by officers engaged in the work of the Profession, with whom he can discuss articles in the professional magazines. If the Naval Profession has become what many enlightened officers of the present day would have us believe, an occupation involving accurate scientific knowledge, the system of training in England has a tendency to grasp the shadow while losing the substance. The expedients adopted with reference to the higher education of voluntary students, and the admirable courses of instruction for officers who have taken up one branch of the Service, notably in the *Excellent* and *Vernon*, do much to remedy the inherent defects of the system. And the promotion in two grades by selection excludes the most incompetent officers from positions of great responsibility. But it seems impossible that the injurious effects of the method of training pursued with young officers during the first eight years of their professional life should not be felt by the vast majority throughout their whole career. . . . The fatal defect of this system has been aptly set forth in a remark of one of the Greenwich Professors in his evidence before the Commission, where he says that the standard for sub-lieutenants is that for cadets in the *Britannia*; but the essential difference lies in the fact that at Greenwich the students actually reach the standard, while at Dartmouth they do not. No one who has had much experience in educational methods will deny that such a system must be productive of harmful results when applied rigorously to the training of a body of young men; and one is, therefore, led to the conclusion that the high scientific and professional attainments of many English officers are not in consequence, but in spite of their early education."

I have trespassed far too long on the indulgence of the House, and fear that I have sadly wearied your Lordships. My best and only excuse for doing so is that this question is one of the very greatest importance to the Navy, and I am deeply impressed with the conviction that, in regard to it, we have hitherto taken an entirely wrong road. I am aware that my noble Friend at the head of the Admiralty wished that this question should be fully ventilated and discussed. But I can assure your Lordships that nothing would have induced me to address this House at such length but a sincere and strong desire to do my duty to the Service.

Lord SUDELEY said, that the noble and gallant Earl who had just spoken had done so with so much weight, with such a clear and intimate knowledge of the subject, acquired from having been for two years and a-half commander of the *Britannia*, that it was impossible to follow him in this discussion without a considerable amount of diffidence. But having always taken great interest in the question, and having served for some years in the Navy, he trusted their Lordships would allow him to make a few remarks. The noble Earl had rightly said that the training of our young officers, and all matters connected with their age of entry and their subsequent education, were of the greatest possible importance —indeed, they could not overrate it. It was undoubtedly of the first consideration that they should get the most qualified officers and the best instructed it was possible to obtain at any cost. During the last 30 years our Navy had been quite revolutionized, and it was day by day becoming more and more imperative that our officers should be thoroughly educated, not only in seamanship, but that they should be well versed in every science and every art it was possible for them to acquire. When they remembered that they had ships like the *Inflexible*, with 30 or 40 steam engines on board, costing nearly £750,000; when they considered the complications of gunnery, with its hydraulic apparatus, together with the mysteries of torpedoes; and when they reflected on the greatly enhanced difficulty of managing these enormous mechanical ships, it was impossible not to recognize the fact that the officers who were to become the captains of these vessels must be highly trained and of great cultivation and capacity. So far, he was cordially with his noble Friend, and agreed with him that no pains ought to be spared in the training of our officers to fill these difficult posts. We had of late years made enormous strides in this direction, and, so far as the advanced education was concerned, for the older officers, they had in Greenwich College all that could be desired; but he quite concurred that there was very much to be done to improve the early training between the time of entry and the period of going to Greenwich College. He could not, however, agree with the noble Earl in his main contention, that the remedy was in altering the age of entry, and that anything would be gained by leaving the boys at the public schools until they were about 16. The idea was that they would thus acquire a more general knowledge and a higher moral standard, instead of being brought up in narrow professional subjects. The noble and gallant Earl believed that at that age their minds would be more developed, and that they would have a far greater guarantee of personal fitness than they now had. Now, he maintained that this supposed advantage of public-school training applied to the Navy was an utter fallacy. In the first place, he was convinced that they could not make a greater mistake than to postpone the age of entry to 16. Whatever might be the merits of a public school, it had hitherto been considered one of the greatest boons to the Service to obtain young cadets at an age when they were plastic and could easily be moulded into the shape they wished the raw material to take. It was an age when habits of strict discipline could easily be acquired, which was absolutely essential. In early boyhood they could train their lads to stand the roughness and encounter cheerfully the hardships which undoubtedly belonged to a naval life. Public-school training was, no doubt, of the greatest value in civil life, and boys obtained not only an amount of general knowledge, but by the time they reached 17 or 18 they acquired a high tone, and their character had been formed. But, however good this might be in civil life at the age of 18, surely he was right in saying that if they took the boy away at 16 from the public school, what he had gone through actually tended rather to unfit him for a naval life. During that time he had learnt to know how to make himself comfortable, if not luxurious, and to have an idea and opinion of his own position which must be unlearnt in the Navy. He might contrast the life of an Eton boy with that of a midshipman in the Navy. The Eton boy had his little room, his fires, his comforts, his all-night in, his constant holidays to a luxurious home; while the midshipman had his hammock, he had to wash on his chest, and to dress himself with the minimum of privacy, with night watches, long periods away from home, and with innumerable privations and disagreeables to encounter. His firm belief was that this discomfort would, at 16, be felt so intolerable that not one out of 10 would remain in the Service, and those that did would be discontented and unhappy. It was a well-known fact that very few naval officers would not admit that if they entered the Service at 16 they would in a very short time have tried to leave it. But, looking at this matter from another point of view, he would ask, was the education given at public schools up to the age of 16 such as they would select for a boy going into the Navy? Surely he was right in saying that, except in very rare instances, Latin and Greek were the main elements of knowledge at public schools, whereas mathematics and foreign languages, which they specially required a boy to be well grounded in in the Navy, were utterly neglected. In the Report of the Committee which sat in 1875 on the *Britannia* system this is stated very clearly—

> "At the principal schools in the country far more attention is paid to Latin and Greek than to geometry and algebra. For every hour given to the latter four or five are devoted to translations and composition; and Mr. Hayward, mathematical master at Harrow, when asked if Harrow boys at the age of 15 could work the mathematical paper set at the final examination in the *Britannia*, stated that only a very small proportion would be likely to obtain half marks in them."

He could not help thinking that these reasons were conclusive against the proposal; but, supposing for one moment they altered the age and brought the boy at 16 from a public school, how would they proceed? The noble and gallant Earl would send him to sea first for six months to test his fitness, and after that he would make him go through four or five years of College life, interspersed with cruises in training ships for obtaining the necessary knowledge in seamanship. That plan would dissociate the midshipman entirely from man-of-war life until he came on board finally as a trained officer, and would be of great harm, not only to the boy, but also to the Navy. It had been the bright spot in our Navy that the seamen had always looked up to their officers, knowing that they had learnt all the practical duties of the Profession from early childhood in the same school and ship life as themselves. Would there not be great danger of losing that, and also that practical eye for wind and weather, that ready resource, and that rapid and unerring judgment, which could only be acquired by a life spent constantly at sea? The system suggested might undoubtedly give well read, well cultivated, and highly scientific men; but they would be theoretical and not practical seamen. Seamanship was as necessary now as ever, and it would be an evil day when we allowed our officers to sink to so low an ebb in practical seamanship as he often heard it was in other countries. His noble and gallant Friend pointed to foreign Navies as a reason why we should adopt this system, and especially to the American Navy, and quoted some remarks made by Mr. Soley, an American gentleman, who had written a most admirable Report on the system pursued in other Navies. So far as America was concerned, he doubted very much if we ought to take it as an example. In the first place, he understood that of those who entered in America at 16 or 17, no less than two-thirds left in the first two or three years, and of those who remained he much doubted if they turned out as practical seamen as our officers became. He was lately informed by a distinguished naval officer, who had served in a high post on that station, but whose name for obvious reasons he could not give to the House, that constantly when he had discussed the rival systems with American naval officers, they had one and all stated their conviction that the fault of their system was that it gave them theory, but far too little practical seamanship, and that they preferred our plan of entering cadets young and letting them become practical water-rats. As to the opinion of Mr. Soley, it must not be forgotten that it was that of a professor and not of a sailor. But we had

had our own Committees, and we had two Reports, one in 1870 and the other in 1875. That of 1875 reported in the strongest way against any alteration of the system—

> "We are unable to approve of entering boys at 15 or 16 from schools, for the reason that the young officer should commence his active sea service at the earliest possible age. We concur in the necessity for a three years' course of training before going afloat, but, in our opinion, is a reason for entering even younger than at present."

And the Report of 1870 was, though not so strongly, to the same effect. Surely we need not go to foreign Navies to see what our officers ought to be. He had always thought that our Navy was a model to all foreign countries, and he was certain that our officers were equal in knowledge and experience to any they might come in contact with. Above all, it was an undoubted fact that our officers had the reputation of being thorough practical seamen. His noble and gallant Friend had alluded to *H.M.S. Pinafore.* If he was not afraid of offending against the dignity of their Lordships' House, he should be much inclined to remind his noble and gallant Friend of the jocular advice given in *H.M.S. Pinafore*—

> "Stick to your desks and never go to sea
> And you all may be rulers of the Queen's navie."

But while so opposed to altering the age of entering, he fully concurred with much that his noble and gallant Friend had stated as to improvements which ought to be effected. There were many recommendations in the Report of 1875 which ought to be carried out. In the first place, the *Britannia* system was not complete until they had proper training ships attached and the two years extended to three, so that the lads might have sea-cruizing and have seamanship properly taught them. Then, again, as to the four and a-half years' man-of-war life between this preliminary stage and the time when the young officers went to Greenwich, there was no doubt that there was much force in what had been said as to the little school work done with the naval instructor, though it must not be forgotten that the knowledge acquired in the *Britannia* was kept up. The remedy seemed to be to shorten this period, first by the extra year in sea cruising attached to the *Britannia*, and also by increasing the time a sub-lieutenant spent at Greenwich from six months to 12 months. "Naval instructors" might in this case be very well dispensed with, except in flag-ships for examination purposes, and the money should be applied to the training ships. He trusted that the noble Earl at the head of the Admiralty would say that he had no intention of radically altering our present system by altering the age, but that he would improve and amend it as he had ventured to suggest. His noble and gallant Friend deprecated the *Britannia* system in no measured terms. Now, he would bring forward the noble and gallant Earl as a living witness against himself. The noble and gallant Earl had gone through the whole course, and certainly the finished article was a credit to the system. Of this he was confident—that if the *Britannia* continued to produce officers so well trained, so polished, and so able as his noble and gallant Friend, no one would regret more than their Lordships that a change such as he desired should be made.

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK said, he would first answer the Question which had been asked by the noble Lord (Lord Monteagle) as to the sad loss of the *Doterel.* He had only to say that the whole of the information received by the Admiralty consisted of two telegrams, which had been communicated to the public Press. With respect to the question which had been under discussion, none could be of greater importance to Her Majesty's Naval Service than the entry and training of officers, and there was none which deserved more fully the candid consideration of their Lordships. He was, therefore, exceedingly glad that his noble Friends behind him had discussed the question so ably and fully. It struck him that those who criticized the present system of the entry and education of the officers of Her Majesty's Navy had omitted to lay the grounds which should be laid for that criticism, for they had not pointed out in what manner the officers who had entered and been trained under the present system had failed in performing the duties they were put to discharge, or were wanting in those high qualifications which were at present required in consequence of the vast improvements, if so they might be called, or, at all events, the vast alterations, in our men-of-war, and in the conditions of naval warfare. None of the noble Lords who had criticized the system had denied that we possessed officers at present in the Navy who were fit to hold their own in respect of scientific requirements with officers of the Royal Artillery and Engineers, though the latter entered at a later age by public competition, and had received a different class of training. If he might venture to express an opinion on such a subject, not being a professional man, but being in a position of responsibility with respect to the Navy, he would venture to assert that the system which now existed, if capable of improvements, had produced a body of most able scientific officers, among whom there were many who would compare favourably with the officers of any other Service in the world. He agreed with the noble Viscount opposite (Viscount Sidmouth) that it would be rash to make any changes in the training of the Cadets without consulting the constitutional advisers of the First Lord of the Admiralty. He might, therefore, state that the subject had been under the consideration of the Board of Admiralty, which consisted of men peculiarly well qualified to form an opinion upon it, and that all his three Naval Colleagues, Sir Cooper Key, Lord John Hay, and Admiral Hoskins, concurred in thinking it undesirable to raise the age of entering into the Service. There was probably no officer in the Service who was better qualified to express an opinion upon the subject than Sir Cooper Key, who, in addition to his distinguished services, was an officer of high scientific acquirements, and had constantly promoted the scientific instruction of naval officers. Other officers with whom he had communicated had expressed the same views. The arguments on either side had been plainly stated—on the one hand, that the suggested change would introduce to the Navy cadets of increased scholastic acquirements; and, on the other hand, that older boys would not so readily gain habits of discipline and a complete knowledge of the Service. The balance of professional opinion was decidedly in favour of the earlier as compared with the later age. It had been said by the noble and gallant Earl (the Earl of Dalhousie) that foreign nations, while they all differed from us, agreed among themselves in the adoption of another system. They certainly did differ from us; but he must demur to the statement that they were agreed among themselves as to the proper age of entry into the Naval Service. The fact was that there was every variety in foreign systems. In France boys were entered between the ages of 15 and 17; they were two years on board a stationary ship, and one in a sea-going ship. In Italy the age of entry was from 13 to 17 years, and the cadets spent three years in a naval school. In Germany the age of entry was 17, and the cadet first went to sea for six months, and then to a training ship for a like period, after which he went to sea in the ordinary course. In the United States boys were entered from 14 to 18, and spent four years at College, and three on board a training ship. The House would observe that there was every variety, both as to the age of entry and as to the subsequent system of training. But he did not think they were to be bound or guided by the action of any nation in the world in this particular matter, but should, from time to time, be guided by the experience and advice of the first officers of our own Service. His noble and gallant Friend had alluded to the American Professor Soley's Report, and had quoted it as condemnatory of our system of naval training. He fully admitted the ability of that Report, which, by the way, contained some words of praise for the results of our system; but he was informed that the American authorities were dissatisfied with the naval training in the United States, and were now proposing to send cadets to sea at the age of 16, which was about the same age at which they went afloat in our own Service. He believed those responsible for the training of naval officers were less satisfied with the training of young officers during the five years after they leave the *Britannia* than with any other part of our present system; and the House might rely that the possibility of remedying the defects would not be lost sight of. With regard to the criticisms that had been passed on the education of officers when they enter the Naval College at Greenwich, it was to be remembered that Sir Cooper Key, whose opinion had been quoted, had written seven years ago that since that time many improvements had been made, and that the gallant officer's words were not applicable to the existing state of things. He thought that Mr. Goschen had done wisely in promoting the establishment of the College, and he was heartily glad that the services of so distinguished an officer as Sir Geoffrey Hornby had been secured. Without entering particularly into the details of the various plans which had been suggested, he might state that he did not consider that a year or a year and a-half could make such a difference in the plan of education as his noble Friend suggested, nor was it, in his opinion, of the value which he attached to it; but, on the other hand, they might, by adopting that change, cause considerable practical deterioration in the quality of their Naval officers. The Board of Admiralty were not insensible to the necessity of making such changes in the regulation of the Service from time to time as were deemed most advisable; and in making such alterations they would be directed not only to the scientific attainments of the officers, which were necessary in a certain proportion, but more especially to the maintenance of those practical acquirements which could only be gained by the constant exercise of professional duties.

THE DUKE OF SOMERSET trusted that, as the two young Princes were receiving a Naval education, the system was a good one; but its merits had been questioned by the noble and gallant Earl, who differed from the authorities both as to the time of entry and as to the general method of education. As he understood the noble and gallant Earl, neither competition nor nomination was satisfactory, but a compromise between the two was preferable. There was a difference of opinion as to the comparative advantages of education in a ship in harbour and in a College on shore. They ought to give a lad an education proper for the profession which he was afterwards to follow; and it was no use to give him a smattering of Latin and Greek. It was far more important that he should have a knowledge of modern languages, and of the practical science specially required in the Navy. At all events, they ought not to begin by sending him to Eton or some other public school where classical subjects were taught, and scientific studies comparatively neglected. At such schools, too, he would get expensive habits and notions which were wholly inconsistent with service in the Navy. He did not wish to prolong this discussion; but he must express his belief that the First Lord of the Admiralty had decided rightly. It had been truly said that unless boys were sent to sea early they did not get web-footed. He should be glad to see an improvement in the education; but, at the same time, he trusted the minds of boys would not be strained too much by severe competitive examinations when they came to enter the Naval Service.

House adjourned at a quarter past Seven o'clock, to Monday next, Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 6th May, 1881.

MINUTES.]—SUPPLY—*considered in Committee*—Committee—R.P.

PUBLIC BILLS—*Motion for Bill*—Parliamentary Oaths, *debate further adjourned.*

Ordered—Land Drainage Provisional Orders *.

Ordered—First Reading—Merchant Shipping * [151].

Third Reading—Bridges (South Wales) * [129], and *passed.*

QUESTIONS.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—MR. BLAKE.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the language reported to have been used by Mr. Blake, paid resident magistrate at Tuam, when refusing an application for a licence under the Arms Act, to the effect that he would never grant a licence to a member of the Land League; whether the Government approve of this ground of refusal; whether he is aware of the habit of Mr. Blake when trying cases on the bench to put queries of a hurtful nature to supposed members of the Land League; and, whether this official's "Letters of Terence McGrath" have been brought under the notice of the Government?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: Sir, with respect to the first Question, I have been furnished with a report of the observation made by Mr. Blake on the occasion referred to; and he is the licensing officer appointed by law to grant the use of arms in the district. With the observations Mr. Blake is reported to have made I have no fault to find, and, so far, I think they were right under the circumstances. Mr. Blake informs me he has never made any observations offensive or hurtful to the Land League, or to any one of its members brought before him judicially. With regard to the third Question, I am not aware that an offender has been brought before Mr. Blake who has connection with the League. With regard to the last Question, I believe there is an amusing book which has the title described in the Question ; but, unfortunately, I have not had time to read it.

Mr. HEALY asked the right hon. Gentleman, whether it was not a fact that a very severe caution had been given to Mr. Blake by the late Government for having written articles of a political nature?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, that he had better ask the Question of a Member of the late Government.

MINES—MINING IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES — REPORT OF RESIDENTS ABROAD.

Mr. MACDONALD asked the First Lord of the Treasury, considering the great need there is (in order to lessen the sacrifice of life) for diminishing the risks to those engaged in and carrying on the coal, iron, and other mining industries, by obtaining all possible information bearing upon the scientific improvement in mining in all its branches from all mining Countries, as well as our Colonies, Whether he will direct the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to instruct our Embassies, Legations, and Consuls to Countries where mining operations are prosecuted, to embody in their Trade Reports any valuable improvements, and the cause or causes of explosions and other mining disasters, where such may have been ascertained, which may occur in the various Countries where they are situated, so that full and reliable knowledge may be obtained in furtherance of this object?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE : Sir, Earl Granville is willing to comply with my hon. Friend's request, and has given instructions that the information for which he asks respecting mines abroad shall be given in the Reports furnished annually by Her Majesty's Secretaries of Embassy and Legations and Consuls.

RELIEF OF DISTRESS (IRELAND) ACT—RELIEF WORKS AT ARKLOW.

Mr. W. J. CORBET asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has any objection to obtain from the Local Government Board (Ireland) a statement of the number of people employed daily on relief works in the vicinity of Arklow during the prevalence of distress in that town last winter ; how many in family each person so employed represented ; whether the majority, if not all, belonged to the class of fishermen ; what was the nature of the employment at which they were engaged ; and, what was the total sum expended on such relief works, and from what source derived?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, he had learnt from the Vice President of the Local Government Board in Ireland that no more relief works would be sanctioned in the neighbourhood to which the Question referred. The further information asked in the Question might be obtained from the Guardians of the Union ; but he could scarcely see that, when obtained, it would be of any practical value. He would suggest that the hon. Member should see him in private on the subject.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS ACT, 1868—THE SANDWICH ELECTION COMMISSION.

Mr. LEWIS asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether it is the intention of the Lord Chancellor, in the case of the Sandwich Election Commission, to take the course adopted by him in the case of the other Commissions, viz. to call on such of the scheduled bribers as hold the Commission of the Peace to show cause why their names should not be struck off the list of magistrates?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) : Sir, I understand that some time ago communications passed of the nature referred to in the Question of the hon. and learned Member.

PARLIAMENTARY REPRESENTATION—THE VACANT SEATS.

Mr. LEWIS asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether the Government has arrived at any, and what, decision as to the issue of new writs in the cases of any of the Boroughs now vacant owing to the decision of Election Petitions?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): Sir, I stated some time ago that it would be necessary for the Government to introduce a Bill to deal with the seven boroughs in which corrupt practices had prevailed. That Bill will be introduced at the first convenient opportunity, and it would, therefore, be premature for me now to state the intentions of the Government.

BANKRUPTCY BILL—ESTATES IN LIQUIDATION.

SIR EARDLEY WILMOT asked the President of the Board of Trade, If he would consider the expediency of extending the provisions of the Bankruptcy Bill to estates now in liquidation?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: Sir, the subject raised by the Question of the hon. Baronet is one of great importance, and it has already engaged my careful attention. I did not propose to deal with it in the Bankruptcy Bill, because I was afraid of overloading that measure. When, however, the Bill reaches the Committee stage, I shall be glad to consider any Amendments that may be proposed with this object.

ARMY (CHANGES IN ORGANIZATION)—REGIMENTAL ORGANIZATION.

SIR EARDLEY WILMOT asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether in the changes in regimental organisation which are to come into force on the 1st July next, all the captains who are now serving in regiments, and who will be at that date over forty years of age will, with the exceptions given in page 11 of the Memorandum presented to Parliament, be passed over in filling up the regimental ranks and be retired on pensions or on half-pay?

MR. CHILDERS: Sir, my hon. Friend has put to me a Question which I am not sure that I quite understand; but if he will speak to me privately, I shall, I hope, be able to give him a satisfactory answer.

CROSSED CHEQUES ACT, 1876—CORPORATION BONDS.

MR. JACKSON asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether the provisions of "The Crossed Cheques Act 1876," as regards the crossing of cheques, are applicable to the bearer coupons issued with the bonds of Corporations such as Leeds, Liverpool, Birmingham, and Nottingham?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, the hon. Member had only within the last few minutes furnished him with a copy of the coupon; and, as far as he was able to form an opinion at so short a notice, the coupon did not come within the Act, and would not be protected by the provision referred to.

PORTUGAL—THE LORENZO-MARQUES TREATY.

MR. W. CARTWRIGHT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If he could state when the promised Papers relating to the negotiations connected with the Lorenzo-Marques Treaty will be in the hands of Members?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, a Report upon this subject which Mr. Morier was called upon to furnish has just been received, and, with other recent Papers, will be added to the correspondence which is already in print and in a forward state. The Paper must be submitted to Mr. Morier before it can be laid on the Table, so that it is difficult to name any exact day for doing so; but no unnecessary delay will occur.

BANKRUPTCY AND INSOLVENCY (IRELAND) ACT, 1857—PAYMENT OF CLAIMS OF SERVANTS.

MR. HEALY asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether, under the 249th section of "The Irish Bankrupt and Insolvent Act, 1857," the servant, clerk, labourer, or workman of any bankrupt or insolvent is not entitled to have his debts (not exceeding six months' wages, and not exceeding £30, in the case of a servant or clerk, and not exceeding £5 in the case of a labourer or workman) paid to him in full by the Court of Bankruptcy out of the estate; whether, notwithstanding this section, the official assignees of the Court of Bankruptcy, in cases where an arranging debtor compounds with his creditors under the protection of the Court, do not refuse to allow the servant, &c. of such arranging debtor to prove for more than the amount of the composition offered to the other creditors; whether the official assignees so acting act legally; if so, whether it is not the fact that the Law puts the servants, &c. of an arranging debtor in a far worse position than the servants, &c. of an actual bankrupt; and, whether in that case the Government will take steps to redress this anomaly, by inserting a special Clause dealing with Ireland in the English Bankruptcy Bill, or otherwise?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. LAW): Under the Act in question, persons in the position referred to have no absolute right to payment of their claims in full, as the Question appears to suppose; but the Court has power to make an order to that effect if it thinks fit. The provisions of the Act do not apply to cases of arrangement, the terms of which are left to the parties themselves. I cannot promise any special legislation on the subject.

PUBLIC HEALTH—SMALL-POX (METROPOLIS)—HOSPITAL TENTS.

COLONEL MAKINS asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If he will give to the House the result of his inquiries on the subject of the Smallpox Tents in the Imperial Road, Fulham?

MR. DODSON: Sir, Dr. Bridges, one of the Inspectors of the Local Government Board, visited the place, and found that there are two tents, surrounded by a high wooden paling, placed on the river bank on a piece of waste land. The nearest buildings are the works of the Imperial Gas Company, nearly 300 yards distant. The Hospital is at the end of the Imperial Road, which, he believes, belongs to the Fulham Board of Works; but with the exception of the Hospital, there are no buildings whatever there. It is right to add that the tents have been erected to meet a pressing emergency, and the Inspector considers that there is not sufficient ground for the complaint against their position.

COLONIAL GOVERNORS.

MR. WARTON, who had the following Question on the Paper:—

> "To ask the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether there is any instance of a colony in which the appointment of its governor, even in those cases where that office had been hereditary or elective, has not been originally made by the Crown?"

said, that in the absence of the Prime Minister, from indisposition, he would postpone the Question until Monday.

MR. GRANT DUFF: In the absence of my right hon. Friend, I have been directed to answer the hon. and learned Gentleman's Question.

MR. WARTON: No, thank you; I would prefer to have it answered by the Prime Minister on Monday.

THE EXCISE—TRADING BY EXCISE OFFICERS.

MR. ELLIOT asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If he is aware that it is the practice of excise officials employed in breweries to solicit orders for saccharometers and the like from brewers; and, whether he considers such a practice conducive to the public interest, and will take steps to put an end to it should it be found to exist?

LORD FREDERICK CAVENDISH: Sir, such a practice as that described in the Question is distinctly prohibited by the printed instructions given to every Excise officer. I learn that the Board of Inland Revenue is unaware of any case in which a departure from this rule has occurred; and any such departure, if made known to the Board, would be visited with a very severe mark of their displeasure.

MONUMENT TO THE RIGHT HON. THE LATE EARL OF BEACONSFIELD, K.G.—THE INSCRIPTION.

MR. MACDONALD said, that, in the absence of the First Lord of the Treasury, he begged to ask the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India, If the inscription for the proposed monument to the late Earl of Beaconsfield for his services to the Country and its dependencies has yet been prepared; and, if so, will he inform the House the nature of the same, or the words thereof, or lay the words upon the Table of the House prior to the time when he moves his Resolution for the erection of the monument? He wished to add that his Question had been so mutilated that he scarcely recognized it. But no doubt the noble Marquess had seen it in the newspapers.

MR. RYLANDS also desired to ask, in reference to this subject, whether, in view of the importance of the Irish Land

Bill, the Government would be good enough to postpone the Motion relative to the Beaconsfield monument until after that Bill had been read a second time?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Sir, my right hon. Friend the First Lord of the Treasury being slightly unwell, and unable to be in his place today, has desired me to answer the Question of the hon. Member for Stafford (Mr. Macdonald). I must say, in the first place, that I have not seen any other version of the hon. Member's Question than that which stands on the Paper, and that I am not aware in what respect it has been altered. In reply to his Question, I have to state that the view of the Government is that the words of the inscription should very closely follow the terms of the Address which my right hon. Friend will move on Monday next. In reply to the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands), I have to state that it is impossible for me to answer his Question in the absence of my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister. I can only say that I believe that my right hon. Friend has fully considered the time when his Motion should be brought on, and I do not think that he will be disposed to adopt any suggestion for its postponement.

MR. MACDONALD wished to know, whether the inscription would contain any reference to the political services of the late Lord Beaconsfield as the head of a Party?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Sir, I can only refer the hon. Member to the terms of the Address of which my right hon. Friend gave Notice yesterday.

PEACE PRESERVATION (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—ARMS LICENCES.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that the magistrates at Ballineen, county Cork, have refused arms licences to all Catholic farmers and others even when the applications were supported by the local police constable; whether licences were granted to all Protestants; whether the local rector sat on the bench to back up the applications of his own people; whether all the magistrates on the bench are Protestants; and, whether a periodical Return can be laid upon the Table of the House showing the number of cases in which arms licences have been granted in the proclaimed districts, the number in which they have been refused, the reason of the refusal, and the religion of the applicant in each case?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, he was informed that all licences to Catholic farmers in the locality named had not been refused, but some of them had been postponed; nor was it true that all Protestant applications were granted. It was true that the Rector had a seat upon the Bench and bore witness in a few cases to the character of his parishioners. It was not true that all the magistrates were Protestants, because the Resident Magistrate, who had most influence in such matters, was a Catholic. He could not grant the Return asked for by the hon. Member.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman was to be understood as saying that all those who received licences were not Protestants?

MR. W. E. FORSTER said, he thought he had already answered that Question when he said it was not true that all the Catholic farmers were refused licences.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he will lay upon the Table of the House, a Return showing the value claimed, and the amount paid upon, arms surrendered in the proclaimed districts of Ireland up to the 30th April; and, whether there is any objection to furnish a similar Return periodically during the continuance of the Arms Act in Ireland?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: Sir, I think the information as to the value of arms surrendered in Ireland ought to be laid on the Table of the House, and I hope to be able to lay it on the Table when the Estimates are brought forward. I do not think that a periodical Return is necessary, or any Return, until the Act has been in operation for some time.

THE NEW HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE—ACCOMMODATION FOR THE BAR.

MR. GRANTHAM asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether the room intended for the use of the Bar at the new High Court of Justice is now to be devoted to another purpose; and, if so, if he will state what accommodation it is intended to devote for the use of the Bar in exchange for such room?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: Sir, a room will be provided for the accommodation of the Bar above that which was originally intended for them.

CONTROVERTED ELECTIONS — THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS ACT, 1868, THE PARLIAMENTARY AND CORRUPT PRACTICES ACT, 1879, AND THE PARLIAMENTARY AND CORRUPT PRACTICES ACT, 1880 — THE BOSTON ELECTION.

Mr. MELLOR asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether his attention has been called to another article of the "Boston Independent" newspaper, extensively circulated, in which the following passage appears:—

> "Let the Attorney General do even-handed justice, and do not let his victims be selected to gratify party spite or appease party passion;"

whether this is the same newspaper as that referred to in the evidence before the Boston Election Commissioners, page 599, given by Mr. R. W. Millington, as follows:—

> "On the day before the polling, or perhaps two days before, an intimation was made to my partner that the proprietor of the 'Independent' newspaper thought that a donation should be given to him for the support which had been and was about to be given to the Conservative cause. It was at once referred to Mr. Garfit. He asked our opinion about it. I myself was present with my partner on that occasion, and we thought the amount asked (£150) was a reasonable one. The grounds for the subscription alleged were that the proprietor had lately been the editor of the opposition paper, the Liberal newspaper, and that, in consequence of his having gone over with certain of his staff, he encountered a good deal of opposition, and that he was likely to lose possibly some appointments as agent for other newspapers, and, altogether, we thought it was a proper payment to make, and Mr. Garfit was advised to sanction it, that is, the promise of it. The money has not yet been paid. I distinctly swear that in advising Mr. Garfit to give the money I had not in view the buying of the vote of the proprietor of the paper. That vote we counted on as a certainty:
>
> "Question:—Then it was a pure gift. Did you during the election, whenever there were meetings, buy certain numbers of the newspaper and pay for them for the purpose of distribution?—Yes.
>
> "And you also paid for your advertisements?—Yes; we also paid for our advertisements.
>
> "In the ordinary way?—Yes."

and, whether he will direct inquiries to be made as to who the persons are who have found the money for and caused articles of this newspaper to be reprinted and circulated throughout Lincolnshire in a manner calculated to affect the course of justice? In putting the Question, he asked to be allowed to make a short personal statement. On Monday last, when he put a similar Question, the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) made a remark which he did not hear. He had, however, been told that the hon. and learned Gentleman had asked whether it was proper that such a Question should be put by a Gentleman who was counsel for the prosecution. As this suggestion had been made, he wished to say that he had nothing whatever to do with the prosecution. He simply put the Questions as the Representative of a Lincolnshire constituency which was interested in the subject.

Mr. WARTON said, he believed on Monday that the hon. Member was at that time retained for the prosecution; but he found he was mistaken. He wished to ask the Attorney General what was the date of the article referred to in the Question, and whether he was aware that the paper mentioned was very small and circulated in Boston only?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James), in reply, said, he believed the date was not a recent date, and the article had not been published since the hon. Member's previous Question. He knew nothing of the size or circulation of the paper; but the particular article had been widely circulated among the class from whom the jurymen would probably be drawn, and slip copies had been sent to himself and to other Members of the House. The paper was the paper referred to in evidence. It was painful to him to have to take such proceedings of the kind pending, and the only object of the Government was to uphold the administration of justice.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY ACT, 1881—KILMAINHAM PRISON.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is necessary for any of the purposes of the Irish Coercion Act that the following rules should be enforced in Kilmainham Prison:—1. The rule that no person detained on suspicion under Warrant of the Lord Lieutenant shall receive a visit anywhere but in the cell or "cage" crossed by the iron gratings, which intervene between the visitor and the prisoner; 2. The rule which, by prescribing this "cage" alone as the place for the reception of visits, precludes the general body of prisoners from seeing their friends and relatives while any one prisoner is receiving a visitor; whether these rules might not be relaxed so far as to allow the prisoners to receive visits in an ordinary cell or room; whether several such cells or rooms might not be provided for the purpose, so as to allow of several persons being visited at one time, and thereby relieve the friends and relatives of prisoners, who often come long distances to see them, from being obliged to stand for hours outside the door of the jail, exposed to the stares and comments of policemen; and, whether the purposes of the Coercion Act are not satisfied by detention without the infliction of any painful humiliation upon prisoners or any distressing inconvenience upon those who come to visit them?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: Sir, I only saw the Notice of the Question this morning, therefore I have not had time to inquire; but I have to-day received some information which, I think, will enable me to answer the Question. With respect to visiting rooms, there are two which are always available, and another one is being fitted up. Some modification will be made in the so-called "cage," which, I think, will be considered reasonable. There is no waiting-room for visitors, and the accommodation at the disposal of the Governor does not permit of a waiting-room being provided. Accommodation will probably be provided at the Court-house close by; and the Irish Government are at present in communication with the Grand Jury of the County of Dublin on the subject. Prisoners in the hospital are allowed to receive visitors subject to the approval of the medical officer.

NAVY—DESTRUCTION OF H.M.S. "DOTEREL."

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he should like to ask his hon. Friend the Secretary to the Admiralty a Question of which he had given him private Notice—namely, Whether there is any foundation for the suggestion contained in a letter in the "Standard" of to-day, that the accident to the "Doterel" might have been caused by a Whitehead torpedo lost by the "Shah" when practising at Sandy Point some time ago? He had no doubt about it in his own mind; but it would be satisfactory if they could hear from the Secretary to the Admiralty some information on the question.

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, the letter in *The Standard* of to-day from the late signalman of the *Shah* is, so far as the fact goes that a torpedo was lost from the *Shah* at Sandy Point in 1878, quite correct. But that torpedo was unloaded, and was only used for experimental practice, and being such it was picked up a short time ago by a man who was handsomely rewarded, and it was subsequently brought home in Her Majesty's ship *Opal.*

AFGHANISTAN—REPORTED RUSSIAN MISSION TO CABUL.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR begged to ask the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India a Question of which he had given him private Notice—namely, Whether it is true, as stated in the "Standard," that another Russian Mission has just been despatched from St. Petersburgh to Cabul; and, if so, whether the Government intend to take any steps in the matter?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: On seeing the statement in the newspapers to which the hon. Gentleman refers, I telegraphed to the Governor General of India asking him whether there was any foundation for it. As the hon. Gentleman has only just given me Notice of the Question, I cannot give him a full reply; but from the answer which I have received from the Governor General of India, I gather that he has not received any information which confirms the statement. I think it is also stated that the Government of India have received several communications from the Ameer, Abdurrahman, with reference to communications that had taken place between them and the Russian authorities on the subject of the return of the Ameer's son from Russia to Cabul. The Ameer, so far as they were aware, had asked the advice of the Government of India in regard to all these communications. So far as I am aware, no Russians have accompanied the Ameer's son beyond Mazar-i-Sheriff, in Afghan Turkestan. Further inquiries will be made; but the House will see that the substance of the reply of the

Governor General does not confirm the statement of the hon. Gentleman.

Mr. BOURKE: Can the noble Lord state whether there is there any British Agent now at Cabul, Native or otherwise?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: There is no accredited Agent.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: I may, perhaps, be allowed to supplement the statement of my noble Friend with some information which has been received at the Foreign Office from St. Petersburgh on the subject. On the 7th of February, Lord Dufferin was informed by the acting Minister for Foreign Affairs that General Kauffmann had given the ladies of the family of Abdurrahman an escort as far as the Russian Frontier, who had returned, by one of the Sirdars, an answer of simple compliment for the attention thus shown. That statement is inconsistent with what has since appeared in the newspapers, and, therefore, further inquiries will be made.

PUBLIC BUSINESS—MORNING SITTING FOR TUESDAY.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR gave Notice that in the event of the Prime Minister on Monday moving that there should be a Morning Sitting on Tuesday, he would oppose the Motion.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS' HABITATIONS (IRELAND).

RESOLUTION.

Mr. CALLAN, in rising to call attention to the condition of agricultural labourers in Ireland, and to the pressing necessity that existed for affording facilities for the erection of cottages and providing suitable garden plots for them, and to move—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, it is expedient and necessary that measures should be taken in the present Session of Parliament to improve the condition of agricultural labourers' habitations in Ireland;"

said, the question intimately concerned a large majority of the population of Ireland, and indirectly affected the whole nation. Therefore, it was unnecessary to dilate on its importance, which was, indeed, self-evident. As far back as 1843, on the representations of Mr. Sharman Crawford, a Royal Commission was issued to inquire into the subject. Major O'Reilly, a resident proprietor in County Down, gave evidence that nothing could be more distressing than the condition of the labourers, mainly in consequence of the landlords requiring that the cottier tenements should be got rid of, and wherever grazing farms were the condition of the labourers was most wretched. The evidence of Mr. Sharman Crawford, County Down, before the Devon Commission, and also that of Mr. William Smyth, County Limerick, showed that the condition of the labourers and their dwellings was wretched in the extreme. Upon the evidence the Devon Commission reported that the Irish labourers were "the worst fed, worst clothed, and worst housed in Europe." That was published in 1846 or 1847; and what had since then been done by the British Parliament to remedy the grievances of the Irish labourer? Nothing, until they came within a measurable distance, as the present Prime Minister expressed it, of civil war. In introducing the Land Act of 1870, the Prime Minister referred to the position of the Irish labourer, remarking that between the years 1849 and 1860 there was a great and general increase of wages throughout Ireland; but that from 1860 up to 1870 the rate of wages there had not advanced; and, alluding to the evictions which had occurred, the right hon. Gentleman said that some of those evictions were of the most painful, some of the most indefensible, and some even of the most guilty character. Another process, he explained, had been going on in Ireland —namely, the conversion of tillage land into pasturage, the result being a large increase in pauperism. At the present time all the labouring population of Ireland, if not in absolute receipt of poor relief, would be in receipt of such relief if the Irish Poor Laws were administered with something like the humanity and liberality which attended the English Poor Law system. The Prime Minister, in introducing the Act of 1870, however, said that the Government had done for the Irish labourer what the circumstances of the case would permit—

they allowed the tenant to divide and sub-let for cottages and gardens to be let to the labourers employed on the holding; and they offered from public funds facilities for the acquisition of land in small quantities. The Land Bill of 1870 emerged from that House with a clause in it affecting the labourer; but that clause was unwisely and uncharitably expunged by the House of Lords. The Bill came back to the House of Commons with a number of other clauses disagreed to by the Lords, and it became the duty of the Government to consider whether they should agree or disagree with the Lords' Amendments. They moved the House of Commons to disagree with several of the Lords' Amendments. Three or four Divisions were taken, but they threw a sop to Cerberus. They threw over the Irish labourers—the Government threw over the Irish labourers. He (Mr. Callan) wished very much they would make an example, and throw over somebody else now, and if they did so he might say they would confer an inestimable boon upon the country. The Lords' Amendment affecting the labourers came before the House on the 12th of July—a fated day for Ireland—and Mr. Chichester Fortescue said, he

> "Moved, That the House do agree to the Lords' Amendment, by which certain exceptions from the general effect of the clause which were intended to give the tenant the power of setting aside pieces of land for the purpose of building labourers' cottages, were struck out. If he were simply to consult his own wishes, he should prefer the Bill as it dealt with that point in its original shape; but the matter was one with regard to which he did not, for the reason stated by his right hon. Friend at the head of the Government, think it would be wise to insist by dissenting from the Amendment."—[3 *Hansard*, cciii. 125.]

The Government, however, promised that the following year a measure should be introduced dealing with the entire question of labourers. The House met late in 1871, and on March 24th, Sir William Henry Gregory moved—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, it is expedient that measures should be taken in the present Session of Parliament to improve the condition of the agricultural labourers' habitations in Ireland;"

and, in doing so, said—

> "He wished to bring under the notice of the House, and of the Government, the condition of the most helpless and most hopeless class in the United Kingdom—namely, the agricultural labourers in Ireland. Last year, during the passing of the Land Bill, he had been anxious to make some provisions for the encouragement of the erection of suitable habitations for these unfortunate people, but was unable to do so. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Chichester Fortescue) who had charge of the Bill, opposed the proposal made by him (Mr. W. H. Gregory), not on the merits or demerits of the proposal, but because the subject was too large to be fully and fairly entered into in a Land Bill. The right hon. Gentleman admitted that the subject deserved the fullest consideration, and gave the House to understand that it was the intention of the Government to legislate in the coming Session for the evils which he fully acknowledged."—[*Ibid.* ccv. 575.]

The Motion to which he had alluded was proposed by Sir William Henry Gregory, the hon. Member for Galway, and no Land Leaguer, which was seconded by Sir Frederick Heygate, a Conservative, the Representative of Londonderry County. He trusted the present Member for the constituency (the Attorney General for Ireland) would be quite as sensible of the interests of the Irish labourers as his Predecessor. The noble Lord the Secretary of State for India (the Marquess of Hartington) who had then been recently appointed Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, said—

> "Were it not for technical reasons he did not know that he should have thought it necessary to ask his hon. Friend to withdraw the Motion. However, as it had taken the form of an Amendment to the Motion that the Speaker do leave the Chair, he hoped, in the event of his being able to give a satisfactory assurance on the subject, his hon. Friend would withdraw the Amendment and be content to leave the matter in the hands of the Government." — [*Ibid.* 590.]

If he (Mr. Callan) to-day got across the floor of the House a similar assurance, he would withdraw his Motion; but if he did not get some such assurance, he should consider himself bound in honour to go to a division. But if that assurance were given, he hoped it would not be unfulfilled as on the previous occasion. He appealed to the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster to use his influence in the interest of the Irish labourer; and he would ask the noble Lord (the Marquess of Hartington) also to use his influence to have the promises which had been made on this question carried out, and the pledges which he had given redeemed. In May, 1871, Mr. M'Carthy Downing asked the Chief Secretary when he expected to be able to lay on the Table a Bill for the improvement of the condition and habitations of labourers in Ireland, which had been promised? The noble Lord said, in reply, that he had been in communication with the Board of Works in Ireland, and he would, as soon as possible, lay on the Table of the House a Bill for the improvement of the condition of labourers and their habitations. He could not promise that it should be done before Whitsuntide. Why, the name of the Board of Works was a byword in Ireland, and so it would remain until it was swept away. Nothing was done in 1871. Then they came to 1872, and no Bill was introduced. Mr. Maguire asked when a Bill on the subject of improving the condition of the Irish labourers would be brought in, and the Chief Secretary, in reply, said the subject was one which had long engaged the attention of the Government. That was true, for the subject had engaged attention for 30 years. ["Hear, hear!"] He heard an hon. Member opposite say "Hear, hear!" but nothing had been done. The noble Lord (the Marquess of Hartington), in 1872, added that he trusted to be able to bring in a Bill to extend the operation of Sir William Somerville's Act; but he was not able to say whether he would be able to introduce it, though he hoped the day would not be long. Formerly, when it was the practice to execute prisoners after sentence they used to cry out—"Give me a long day, my lord." If any such prisoners had had as long a day as the Irish labourers on this subject, they might be alive till now. Sir Frederick Heygate each Session renewed his questions and remonstrances. Early in the Session of 1863 Sir Frederick Heygate asked a question about the promised Bill, and the noble Lord said he hoped to bring in such a Bill; but before he did so it would be well that the House should be in possession of certain Returns. The Returns were duly forwarded, but no Bill was forthcoming. On the 16th of June the same year, Sir Frederick Heygate asked the Chief Secretary if he had given up the intention of bring in the Bill, and the noble Lord replied that he feared he should not have an opportunity of bringing in the Bill that Session. He must do the noble Lord the justice to say, while referring to these repeated promises which remained unfulfilled, that he did thoroughly sympathize with the Irish labourers in their wretched condition. But still nothing was done. The noble Lord had presided over a Select Committee which sat on the subject, and had thus become well acquainted with the condition and the wants of the Irish agricultural labourer. In 1873, on the 31st of July, Mr. Bruce, who was then Home Secretary, said that as soon as the Returns of the Inspectors had been received, they would be carefully considered by the Government, with a view to legislation. In the following year a Conservative Ministry was in Office, and he wished to do them the justice of acknowledging that they had broken no promises, for they made none, and, in fact, treated the question, as they treated every Irish question, with neglect. But there were ample Returns for the year 1869-70, upon which the Government might have acted. The Returns made by the Inspectors of many counties of Ireland were unanimous in describing the habitations and manner of living of the agricultural labourers as wretched beyond description, and the labourers as thoroughly discontented with their lot. Their condition was a standing disgrace to Christianity and civilization. But, notwithstanding the degrading circumstances in which the Irish poor were compelled to live, large families of both sexes and all ages huddled together night and day in one room, the modesty and purity of their lives were proverbial among the nations of Europe. Mr. Lane Joint, a gentleman of high authority on this subject, who was well known to many Members of the House, expressed a strong opinion that the farmers should be assisted in providing suitable cottages for the farm labourers; and his suggestion was that the assistance should come from the Board of Works in the shape of advances at a low rate of interest, the repayment to be extended over a long period. That opinion was expressed and that suggestion made in the year 1851, and since that time the condition of the agricultural labourer had changed for the worse. The Bessborough Commission, of which his hon. Friend the Member for the county of Cork (Mr. Shaw) was a Member, had given attention to this very important subject. Mr. Kavanagh, himself a large landed proprietor, was also a Member of the Commission, and the Commissioners, all of whom were landlords, reported that the subject of the condition of the agricultural labourer "demanded speedy consideration, for the sake of the country as well as for the sake of the labourers themselves." Between 40 and 50 witnesses were examined, and on their evidence the Report in question was founded. One witness, named Butler, who resided in the county of Kilkenny and stated that he had been a farm labourer, but was then a large farmer, replying to Mr. Kavanagh, stated that he considered the labourers' dwellings in his district to be unsuitable for human habitations, being badly lighted, badly ventilated, without out-houses or gardens. The witness added that the labourers were left without help from the landlord, and that there was no one to raise a voice on their behalf. The next witness was a Conservative landlord, lately a Member of that House, (Colonel King-Harman), who, replying to his hon. Friend (Mr. Shaw) stated that the farm labourers were badly housed and badly paid. Mr. Bolster, an extensive farmer, deposed that the labourers' question was one which pressed for immediate settlement. He also said the Irish labourers were the worst treated men in any part of the world. Slaves in South America were better off as far as food and lodging were concerned, while the slaves were better paid, better housed, and better clothed. Other witnesses—men who spoke from experience and with authority—stated that the labourers were being cleared from the land, and that the subject was one which the Government ought to take without delay into their serious consideration. He would not occupy the time of the House by going through the evidence, which he had merely skimmed, because he thought he had made out his case. On the introduction of the Land Bill he took occasion to express his regret that no provision was contained in it to improve the condition of the agricultural labourer. The Solicitor General for Ireland said that the Government had very much at heart the sufferings of a very large number of the population—sufferings borne with unexampled patience—but that, in the view of the Government, it would be inexpedient to overload the measure with a matter which could be dealt with separately; adding that he felt no doubt as to the fact that, if sufficient time were afforded, the Government would be very glad to deal with the question in a separate measure. There could be no doubt that the Solicitor General knew a great deal about the subject, and, as he was a rapid draftsman, there could be no doubt that, if leisure were afforded to him, he would in a fortnight produce a measure dealing in a satisfactory manner with the whole question. He hoped that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary would be content to disconnect himself from a small question of this kind, and leave it to the Solicitor General to deal with. He could not but think it a somewhat Machiavellian suggestion that to attempt to deal with this question in the Land Bill would be to overload the measu re The Chief Secretary for Ireland had said he sympathized with the labourers. No doubt he did, and perhaps he also sympathized with the "village ruffians," as his sympathies were of a very large character. Now, the Chief Secretary at the time stated that it would be for the House to consider most carefully how the condition of the agricultural labourers could be improved, and he (Mr. Callan) submitted that now was the time for the Government to take the matter in hand. He had just returned from his native country, and the 10 days he spent there had been the greater part of them absorbed in visiting the farmers and labourers. He saw how their hopes were excited by the promised Land Bill. He saw their miserable condition. He knew them, and he respected them. He would rather do something to serve the poor labourers of Ireland than any Prince or Nobleman in the land; and now, in the strict performance of his duty, and having stated his case without any attempt at exaggeration from official records, he asked the House, in view of the Report of the Devon Commission in 1843, the Report of the Royal Commission in 1871, and the Report of the Bessborough Commission, to accede to the Motion standing in his name.

Mr. DALY said, he had great pleasure in seconding the Resolution. The necessity for the speedy amelioration of the condition of the Irish agricultural labourers had been so fully placed before the House by his hon. Friend that he would not detain the House long with any remarks of his own. His hon.

Friend had contended, and with perfect correctness, that the Irish labourers were the worst housed and fed labourers not only in Europe, but in the civilized world. Stronger testimony as to their deplorable condition could not be afforded than that given by Colonel Gordon, better known as Chinese Gordon, who stated that during all his travels, even in the lowest condition of life in China and Africa, he had never met a human being in as barbarous and miserable a condition as the Irish labourer. These poor labourers had received a promise from the English Government in 1871 that their wants would be attended to and their grievances remedied; but that promise had never been fulfilled. These men were no isolated portion of Her Majesty's subjects, for they numbered nearly 500,000. Their condition had been aggravated by the fact that English Law had suppressed manufactories, and so compelled a large number to take to the fields or deport themselves to other countries. Many of these men could read, and many of them knew that £20,000,000 had been expended by the British Parliament for emancipating the Blacks; and they also knew that in more recent times over £17,000,000 had been spent for the rectification of the scientific Frontier in Afghanistan. And they knew that although money was spent in similar objects, and that although in the lowest depths of wretchedness, their crying wants were ignored, many of the sons of these labourers had swelled the ranks of the British Army, and had very materially helped to gain those victories of which Englishmen boasted. He would remind those who deplored the agitation in Ireland that the Irish labourers were the backbone and sinew of the agitation. There was no other class of labourers who had waited so patiently for justice as had these men and their families; and now were they to be told that their wants were not to be relieved, whilst millions were spent in emancipating the Blacks of another land? He had no hesitation in telling this House that no legislation ameliorating the relations between landlord and tenant would be complete which did not provide for the amelioration of the condition of the Irish labourers. That was as true as the Gospel of Almighty God. The Government might violate every law of political economy, in bringing forward a measure for the amelioration of the relations between landlord and tenant, and carry out their system to the fullest extreme; but the agitation by Irish labourers would not cease one jot or one iota unless their claims were attended, and they indeed required immediate attention, by Her Majesty's Government. There could be no subject more worthy of the attention of Her Majesty's Government than that which had been introduced to the notice of the House by the hon. Member for Louth.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the opinion of this House, it is expedient and necessary that measures should be taken in the present Session of Parliament to improve the condition of agricultural labourers' habitations in Ireland,"—(*Mr. Callan,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. A. MOORE remarked, that it was very refreshing to see the noble Lord the late Postmaster General in his place on that occasion. The position of the Tory Party in reference to the Irish question reminded him of the old lines—

"When the devil was sick, the devil a monk
would be;
When the devil got well, the devil a monk
was he."

If the Tory Party returned to power, they would do nothing on behalf of the Irish labourer. He (Mr. A. Moore) was sure they were all indebted to the hon. Member for Louth (Mr. Callan) for the very great care and study he had brought to bear upon this subject. There was no doubt that this was the moment to strike. They were now engaged in conferring great rights upon certain classes in Ireland—the farming classes—and this was the time to also deal with the condition of the Irish agricultural labourers. He would not dilate upon their condition, as that had already been sufficiently done by the hon. Member who had just spoken. He had only to say that nothing could be more deplorable than their condition, not only in the West of Ireland, but in the more prosperous districts. They lived in wretched cabins, without a foot of ground attached to them, and they paid extravagan rents for their dwellings. Numbers them only received about 6*s.* a-week; and he had lately come across a servant of a local politician in Ireland—who was probably engaged in denouncing landlords — who only received 3*s.* a-week and two meals a-day of sour milk and potatoes from his patriotic master. He denied that the labourers had approved the land agitation, for their indignation at the consequences which that agitation had brought upon them knew no bounds. They were starving. [*Cheers.*] Hon. Members might cheer that observation; but he was not going to join them in their Quixotic attempt to oppose the Bill which the Government had brought in at the express desire of the whole nation. He earnestly desired the amelioration of the Irish labourers; but he did not wish to leave them at the disposal of the Land League. He was of opinion that the Commission established by the Bill ought to have enlarged powers so as to deal with these labourers. If the tenant farmers were made secure in their holdings, without provision being made for the labourers, the latter would be placed at the mercy of the former. He questioned whether it would not be wise to put a stop to conacre by Act of Parliament, because there was not the slightest doubt that the poor labourer taking a quarter of land at the rate of £16 an acre, and expending his labour upon it, paid for his potatoes twice as much as he could get them for at the nearest town. The effect of such a prohibition would be to induce the farmers to grow an abundance of food supply. They could not hope to deal practically with the labourers' question unless they revised the Poor Law. There was no question that the Poor Law in Ireland was in a very unsatisfactory condition. In England, if a man left his home his wife and children were enabled to receive relief from the rates; but it was not so in Ireland. That House was well aware that a large number of Irish labourers came to England annually to save the harvest, and during their absence their wives and children were absolutely at the mercy of the winds. Then, again, they had to meet the important question of electoral rating. They should alter the law with regard to electoral rating, because the present incidence of that law afforded a direct inducement to the clearance of large estates. Upon the whole, the law as it stood at present very largely affected the labourers' question, and before they could hope to obtain a satisfactory settlement of the question they should remove the differences which existed between the English and the Irish Poor Law. There was not a single one of those fine patriotic maxims they had heard at Land League meetings throughout Ireland that did not apply *à fortiori* to the Irish labourer. They had seen upon platforms and banners the motto—"The land for the tiller of the soil." The legitimate outcome of that was that the labourer was entitled to the first consideration. St. Paul had been quoted as laying down that the husbandman must first be partaker of the fruits, and if the maxim had any application to Ireland at all it applied to the Irish labourer. He trusted that the Government would not neglect the great opportunity now afforded them of dealing thoroughly and satisfactorily with this vital question.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said, he was a Member of that House for seven years, and he never rose with greater pleasure to support any Motion than he did at present to support the Motion of the hon. Member for Louth. He believed that in the civilized world there was no class of people in so miserable a condition as the labourers of Ireland. It was a well-known fact that in place of having homes, as they should have, throughout the country, and as they had previous to 1847, they were driven into the towns and forced to live in crowded and ill-ventilated lodging-houses. Frequently 10 or 12 persons were huddled together in a miserable apartment for which they paid a most exorbitant rent. That state of things caused a loss to the farmers as well as to the unfortunate labourers themselves, because, if they were scattered throughout the country on the different farms, a sympathy would exist between them and the farmers; they would be always on the spot to perform their work, and their families ready to enter into service. In most cases there was no sympathy existing at present between the farmers and labourers in Ireland, in consequence of their separation, and of the residence of the latter in the towns and villages instead of on the different farms throughout the country. He need not tell the House that in addition to the other evil results the forced residence of these poor labourers in the towns injured their health, caused great demoralization and detriment to society, and to the welfare of the country. That system was commenced on a large scale in 1847, and was carried out largely by the landlords, because the Union rating in Ireland induced them to rid their estates as much as they could of the population. After giving them some trifling sum of money they tumbled down their houses, and the poor people were obliged to take refuge in the towns. According to the old divisional rating, they were not charged to the place where they lived all their lives, but to the small towns to which they had come, and in which they had lived for 12 or 18 months. He thought there were many defects in the Land Bill, particularly that which excluded leasehold, and also that which restricted the repayment of the money advanced to too short a period; but of all the defects, and of all the shortcomings of the Land Bill, there was none which showed so much want of sympathy with the bulk of the Irish people as the omission of any proposal to settle the labourers' question. He might tell the Government that no matter how much the Land Bill might serve the farmers of Ireland, there never would be peace, happiness, or contentment in Ireland until the grievances of the labourers were redressed as well. There was another great consideration in the settlement of the labourers' question. If the farmers had the labourers on their farms, they would be able to perform much more work than they did. At present, to his own knowledge, farmers had to walk three or four miles in the morning to employ labourers, and when they remembered that these men had to walk out two or three miles before they commenced work, and to walk back the same distance in the evening, it was quite impossible that they could perform a proper day's labour. During the winter he attended 15 or 16 public meetings throughout the counties of Limerick and Cork, and there was not a single meeting he attended at which resolutions were not passed urging a settlement of the labourers' question. He just happened to have with him a resolution passed at the Shanagolden land meeting in December, and it was in the following terms:—

> "That the labouring classes have as good a right to live by the land as the farmers and landlords, and that no settlement of the Land Question will bring either peace or satisfaction to Ireland until the labourers are placed as firmly on the soil as the farmers."

That was only one of hundreds of similar resolutions passed throughout the country. In the Report of the Devon Commission of 1845, he found that special attention was called to the miserable and disgraceful condition of the labourers; but, though nearly 40 years had elapsed since, he regretted to say that no steps had been taken by any of the various Governments to remedy the grievance. He knew the question was a very difficult one to deal with; but he would throw out a suggestion which might be made the basis of some settlement. He would make it compulsory that upon every farm valued at £50 per annum or upwards there should be one labourer's cottage. He mentioned £50, because he considered that any man holding a farm worth £50 per annum must require at least one labourer every day. Whether they made the landlord or the farmer, or both, jointly build the cottage, he thought that no farm valued at such a sum should be without it. Then, for every farm valued at £100 and upwards, he would suggest that there should be two cottages, and so on in proportion. He proposed that there should be attached to each cottage half a statute acre of land, which should be given to the labourer occupying it at the same rate as that paid by the tenant, or, if the tenant was owner, at the Government valuation. He proposed that the rent of the cottage should not exceed a sum of 5 per cent per annum on the capital sum which it cost to build the cottage. If such a plan were adopted it would diffuse new life into many parts of the country. In his own district, and in the midland grazing counties, whole tracts of land afforded employment only to a few herdsmen, and he believed that pernicious mode of dealing with the land was adopted because it was the easiest way for making money. But he maintained that if the fine lands of Limerick and Tipperary were devoted to ordinary agricultural purposes, it would pay the owners far better, it would give employment to the people, and it would bring peace and prosperity to the country. He trusted the House would not allow the Land Bill to pass without dealing with this question, because it was a fearful thing to contemplate that 500,000 or 600,000 persons were left in a condition more wretched and miserable than any class on the face of the earth.

MR. W. E. FORSTER: Sir, I do not think there is any difference of opinion about the condition of the agricultural labourer in Ireland. It is very bad. Still, notwithstanding what the hon. Member for Louth (Mr. Callan) has stated, I maintain it is not so bad as it was 25 years ago. It was then very bad indeed. I think it is the opinion of every Member of the House that what can be done should be done. The hon. Member for Louth thinks it would be an unpleasant task for me to have to do something to benefit the agricultural labourers of Ireland. If that were so, I should be an exception to every Member in the House, for I believe there can be no more pleasant task than to do everything for the Irish labourer that can be done. But this is not a very easy matter to deal with. The tenure of land will require amendment, and I hope that by an alteration of the law in that respect the position of the tenant will be greatly improved. The position of the labourer after all is very much owing to the smallness of his earnings. If the position of the tenant were improved, the labourer would get better employment. But there is another matter which has been discussed and which holds out rather more hope, and that is legislation with regard to labourers' dwellings. I am very careful about what I say, because I know the position of these poor people, and I do not wish to hold out hopes to them which may not be justified. Therefore, hon. Members must not do injustice to the Government because of my reticence, for if I do not speak as much as they expected, it is not to be imagined that we are not desirous to do what we can in the matter; but we must be guided by possibilities. The hon. Member for Louth has given me and the House some information with regard to the Land Act of 1870 which is very useful. I have looked at the Land Bill of 1870 as brought into the House of Commons, and I find there was a clause in it which was to this effect—that, as regards disturbance, the tenant should not lose the right to compensation on account of sub-letting, if that sub-letting provided a dwelling for a labourer. I cannot understand why that was struck out in the House of Lords, and the fact that such a proposal was made in 1870 proves that it is not intended to overlook the case of the labourers. I am sure my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister, if he were present, would agree with me in that. I understood my right hon. Friend the Member for Waterford (Mr. Villiers-Stuart) to say that he intended to raise the question also. I do not mean to say that we care so little about the matter that we intend to leave it to private Members to devise schemes; but it would be a help to us to see Amendments of that kind on the Notice Paper. We cannot do more than express our great anxiety to do what can be done both as regards labourers' dwellings and as regards allotments. I believe that allotments are of the greatest possible advantage; they have been found to be so in England, and no doubt it would be the same in Ireland; though how to arrive at allotments by law I do not exactly see. It is true that the Land Bill is a very difficult and complicated question, and it is undesirable that it should be overweighted more than can be helped. On the other hand, I admit that we ought not to allow the Land Bill to pass without provisions properly germane to it, if we can rightly insert them. More than that I can hardly say. My hon. Friend the Member for Clonmel (Mr. A. Moore) has alluded to the question of the Poor Law. I fear it is impossible for us to deal with that question this year. I confess I have not been personally as strong an advocate of outdoor relief as many other persons; but, after all, there is a very strong argument for it, and apparently a very great feeling in Ireland in favour of out-door relief. Then, with regard to Union rating, I see a great reason why we should have Union rating. That matter would, however, come more under the Local Government Department; and if it could be brought on this year we should be glad to do it. The indisposition of my right hon Friend is, I hope, slight; but the House will feel that in his absence I cannot pledge the Government as to the time of action, nor pledge him, as he has charge of the Land Bill, to Amendments. But I may say this much, that we shall look most carefully to the Land Bill itself and to what was proposed in the Land Act of 1870, as well as to the suggestions that have been made and the information that we have obtained, and we shall see whether we can propose anything ourselves in the Bill. In any case, we shall thoroughly consider Amendments which may be suggested. I think it may be expedient to pledge the House to the proposition that measures should be taken to improve the condition of the dwellings of agricultural labourers in Ireland, if the hon. Member for Louth would consent to leave out of his Resolution the words "in the present Session of Parliament." But I could not, in the absence of my right hon. Friend, pledge myself more positively.

Mr. CALLAN said, that, after the very candid and satisfactory answer he had received from the right hon. Gentleman and the explanation he had given of the reason why he proposed that the words "in the present Session of Parliament" should be struck out of the Resolution, he would not insist on retaining those words. As he had obtained substantially the end for which he had laboured, he felt himself fully justified in accepting the very fair proposition which the right hon. Gentleman had made; and he hoped that, although the Government was not pledged to bring forward the question this Session, it yet might be dealt with this Session, or, at all events, at the very first opportunity next year.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Question proposed,

"That the words 'in the opinion of this House, it is expedient and necessary that measures should be taken in the present Session of Parliament to improve the condition of agricultural labourers' habitations in Ireland,' be there added."

Amendment proposed to the said proposed Amendment, to leave out the words "in the present Session of Parliament."—(*Mr. William Edward Forster.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the proposed Amendment."

Mr. GIVAN was exceedingly glad that the discussion, which had been so ably conducted by the hon. Member for Louth, had resulted in a termination which he thought they should consider exceedingly creditable to the Chief Secretary. But, suppose the words "in the present Session, &c." were left out, and that the Land Bill was passed in its present shape, the land would be tied up in the hands of the tenants for 15 years, and there would be no power to take any land for the labourers. Then, if the Government refused to insert the provisions proposed respecting the leaseholders, the leaseholders, even if they wished it, would not have power to give land for the accommodation of labourers, because in most of the cases they were absolutely prevented by the terms of their leases from erecting labourers' dwellings. He felt very strongly on this question, because although residing in the North of Ireland, where the labourer was perhaps in a better condition than in the South or West, yet he knew from experience that even in the North of Ireland the labourers were in a most deplorable condition, having dwellings that were unfit for human habitation. He would, therefore, strongly suggest that some provision should be introduced into the present Land Bill to improve their condition. If the tenants were permitted to borrow money independently of the landlords, upon exceedingly low terms, to enable them to erect labourers' cottages, the expense of which the labourers themselves would be able to pay by a very, very small rent, he believed the farmers would be willing to take the money, and would themselves co-operate with the labourers in improving their condition. For these reasons he would suggest that, instead of putting off the matter till another Session, something should be done immediately, and that they should deal with the whole question during this Session.

Sir EARDLEY WILMOT expressed the satisfaction with which he had heard his right hon. Friend (Mr. Forster) state that this matter would receive at no very distant period the attention of the Government. He had hoped, however, that so pressing a subject might have been dealt with effectually in the present Session; and he earnestly trusted that it would be taken up by Her Majesty's Ministers at the earliest possible moment, and he suggested that if the words "in the present Session of Parliament" were to be omitted, there should be substituted for them "at the earliest possible moment." As to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, who had been depreciated by hon. Members below the Gangway. No man who had carefully watched the career of his right hon. Friend could deny that he had deserved well of his country for the efforts he was making to elevate the state of Ireland. He should probably not have an opportunity of giving expression to his views on the Land Bill; but there was one part of that measure to which he wished to refer.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member cannot on this Motion discuss the Land Bill.

Sir EARDLEY WILMOT said, as it was really so difficult to get an opportunity of speaking in that House, he thought he might take that opportunity of saying something about the Bill. As to the Irish labourers, there was no doubt that their condition was a disgrace not only to the civilization of England, but to that of Europe. It was the bounden duty of the Government to take the question of the Irish labourer into its serious consideration at the earliest possible moment. Our French neighbours expressed their astonishment that we so wealthy, and, as they themselves acknowledged, so liberal a nation, who had generously given £20,000,000 to emancipate our West India slaves, could not, in the day of her distress, contribute a few millions out of our superabundance to raise the prostrate and suffering condition of Ireland. It must be recollected that that country laboured under immense disadvantages. In England was the principal centre of expenditure, and the seat of Government with its necessary cost and outlay. What was the difference between the English and the Irish labourers? It was not that England had such a good soil or good climate, but it was because the Government, with its Dockyards, its arsenals, and its public works, opened out a field of employment to the English labourer which the Irish labourer did not possess. Let them consider the case of this unfortunate class, and let them act in a manner worthy of themselves and of the great country to which they belonged.

Mr. PARNELL said, he did not see why some attempt should not be made in the Land Bill to improve the condition of the labourers, although he did not suppose they could do much by direct legislation as regarded the labourers themselves. The fundamental reason why the condition of the labourers in Ireland and England was so bad was because it was quite impossible for them to become owners of land. The labourer had, practically speaking, under the territorial system in England and Ireland, nothing but the workhouse before him, and if he worked hard and made a little money he had nothing in which he could invest it. If he could hope that, as the result of his labour, he could obtain a piece of land, an incentive would be held out to the labourer which was not now in existence. If, therefore, the Land Bill was capable of being made to work to bring about a large number of small occupiers of land in Ireland, he would have thought the ultimate result of that Bill would be a great blessing to the Irish labourer. But, in the meanwhile, there was something which they could do for the labourer by direct legislation, and which, he submitted, the Irish labourer was entitled to. The Irish labourer was entitled to be placed, at all events, in an independent position as regarded his house and a small bit of land for growing vegetables and other food for his family. There was no reason why they could not provide for this matter in the Land Bill. If they gave the Commission power to buy land for the purpose of allotting it in small portions among the labourers, and to help in the building of little houses on the land, which the labourers could build themselves, under the system described by Professor Baldwin before the Royal Agricultural Commission — if they did this they would place the labourer in an independent position as regarded entering into contracts for labour with the farmer. As far as any immediate benefit by legislation, that was the only thing that appeared to him to hold out any hope of doing good. The labourers would also require to be in an independent position as regarded their houses, that the houses should be waterproof and tolerably habitable, and they should also be in an independent position as regarded a little bit of land for growing food for themselves and their families—say from half to three-quarters of an acre. They would then be independent of the farmers and landlords, and neither the farmers nor the landlords had shown in the past they deserved to have the future of the labourers under their control. Before he left home in Ireland to come to that House he had a visit from a labourer, who said to him—"The farmers are the worst men in the world as regards the labourers. They will grind them down and do nothing for them, and make them exist on starvation wages." He would suggest to the Government, if they wanted to prevent the uprising of another agitation in Ireland such as the present, to consider whether they could not give power to their Commissioner to buy land in suitable localities and allocate it in small portions to the labourers of the country. It would not be necessary to interfere with the tenant right of tenants. There was plenty of land from which the tenants had been cleared, and where the tenant right had been appropriated by the landlords, and he submitted it would be fair that the labourers should have some chance of getting an allotment of this land. In that way they would avoid any contact between the tenant farmers and the labourers; and the labourers would be placed in the independent position which was so necessary for their welfare.

Mr. JOHN BRIGHT: Sir, I must make an observation or two after the speech we have just heard from the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell). It has always been one of the misfortunes of discussions of this nature that hitherto no plan has been laid before the House which appeared practical, or, being practical, was likely to answer the purpose. Now, the hon. Gentleman has suggested a plan which is the only original scheme I have heard of; and I think the way he put it before the House was in itself sufficient to condemn it, because, if I understand him aright, the Commission to be appointed under the Land Bill is to be allowed to purchase or possess itself of plots of land here and there throughout the country—it may be any particular farm in a neighbourhood, or the junction of two or three farms —and build as many cottages as are wanted for the labourers of that immediate locality, and each house shall have its half-acre or acre—I do not remember that the hon. Member was exact as to the amount—of land attached for the purpose of growing vegetables, which is like a little garden allotment. The hon. Member says that then the labourer would thus be independent of the farmer and the landowner. [Mr. Parnell: So far as the allotment goes.] So far as the amount of food that he would grow on the plot of land which he had in his possession. Well, the House will see that this tends to bring back the condition of Ireland to that in which it was before the abolition of the 40*s.* freeholders. You now complain of the smallness of the holdings in the West. When a bad harvest comes the small farmers are in a state of suffering and ruin. If this plan were adopted, and you had another condition of things, which drove the small tenant of this allotment to endeavour to subsist upon his allotment rather than upon the wages which he might obtain from the neighbouring farmer, you would, it seems to me, have built up another state of things, another class, quite as bad as anything you already have in Ireland, and probably much worse. I am quite as anxious as anybody in this House for the improvement of the condition of the Irish labourers; but it is quite a mistake to suppose that the Irish labourer is the only labourer who is so badly off. The hon. Member for South Warwickshire (Sir Eardley Wilmot) says that the condition of the Irish labourer is a disgrace, not to this country alone, but in the eyes of Europe also. I believe that. I have seen labourers' cottages in the West of Scotland as bad as anything that can be found in Ireland. I recollect also that during the time we were endeavouring to carry the repeal of the Corn Laws it was proposed by the Council of the Anti Corn Law League that they should bring bodily a labourer's cottage from Wales and set it up in this City, and invite the people of London to come and see what sort of places the Welsh labourers' families lived in. I could tell some sorrowful and dreary stories of the state of things I have seen in Scotland. In Scotland labourers are not able to get plots of land. Ireland is far more favourable to the labourer than either England or Scotland in that particular, because in England and Scotland, as a rule, a labourer cannot obtain a piece of land for his own possession. He cannot even obtain a piece to rent, whereas in Ireland the farms are so small that a labourer who has saved a £10 note can compete for a farm, and in all probability obtain one. In England or Scotland it is 10 times more difficult for a labourer to obtain possession of a small farm than in Ireland. The fact is, there is no kind of conjuring by which you can improve the condition of the labourer except by stimulating the industry of the country. I would agree to any plan Irish Members may propose that would have even a probability of being useful to the Irish labourers. Labourers' wages, as everyone knows, have greatly increased within the last 30 or 40 years. The Irish labourer at this moment is obtaining, when he works, three times—I am sure, at least, more than double the wages he had when I first went to Ireland, 30 years ago. In England there has been no alteration in the law, no new mode by which the labourers could have better cottages or plots of land, yet the labourers' wages in England have nearly doubled since that time. I saw a letter the other day —it is a matter that excites feelings which one cannot express now — the letter published I think since the death of Lord Beaconsfield was one which he had written to Mr. Heath, who sent him a book he had written on the condition of the agricultural labourers, a book which I have the pleasure to possess myself, and Lord Beaconsfield said he thought that Mr. Heath took too much of a discouraging view of the condition of the labourers in the South and West of England, because in his own county of Buckingham wages in the time to which Mr. Heath referred had risen 40 per cent. The increase, I believe, has been greater than that, for I know that in Buckinghamshire 30 years ago labourers received only 7*s*. or 8*s*. a-week. I do not know what they are now; but I know that not long ago they were at least double that figure. Now, what has caused that increase of wages? The increased stimulus which has been given to the industry of the country, and farm labourers have taken advantage of it as other labourers have done. What you want in Ireland is a stimulus of the same kind. How is it to come? Not, I presume, from cotton or other factories, because you have not got them, and there seems to be nobody in Ireland who is able or willing to turn to account the great resources of water-power in that country. At Galway 30 years ago I recollect I was shown a run of water from Lough Corrib which would have been of extraordinary value for manufacturing purposes. Why, then, has no manufacturing industry been carried on in Ireland, I should like to know? We hear a good deal in this House of the destruction of the woollen manufacture in Ireland by laws which came to an end 100 years ago. I should like to know why, during that 100 years, no attempt has been made to establish or to revive that industry? Go to the North, to the river which separates us from Scotland—the Tweed. I do not know how long the manufactures have been going on there; but you have Hawick, Galashiels, and some other towns, among the most prosperous towns in Great Britain. You see that from the condition of the people, from their cottages, and the good houses built round about where the manufacturers live. Last October, at the station at Hawick, a gentleman connected with the manufactures of the town to whom I spoke told me that trade there was satisfactory and good; and I believe there is no part of Great Britain in which for many years past there has been greater prosperity than on the banks of the Tweed. What is it they work on the banks of the Tweed? Wool. I do not know whether the wool is chiefly home-grown or imported. If it be imported, Ireland can import wool quite as well as England or Scotland. If it be home-grown, Ireland is not very far from Scotland, and Ireland itself grows a good deal of wool. I do not see why, if there was that spirit amongst the Irish people—I am not speaking of the poor labourer, but of the middle classes —why, in the name of common sense, is it that during the last 100 years there has not been a single manufacture of any importance established and sustained in Ireland? Why is nothing done with the water that runs from Lough Corrib into Galway harbour? If it were in America it would be used. If it were in Great Britain it would be used. Why is it not used in Ireland? It is no answer to say that the Land Laws in Ireland have been bad. Our Land Laws have been bad also. What has been done in England has been done in the teeth of our Land Laws, which have been as bad, and in some respects worse than yours. I think Irishmen ought to ask themselves why something is not done to utilize the vast stores of water and the many other advantages they have. I do not know of any disadvantage they have, except that they have not so good a supply of coals as we have. [Mr. DAWSON: Or capital.] Capital! Do you suppose that the people of Great Britain, who have invested scores, if not hundreds, of their capital all over the world and lost millions of it, would not invest it in Ireland if there was any disposition on the part of the Irish people to utilize it, and, at the same time, to convince them that it would be secure? I am only telling you what I have observed in Ireland. I recollect very well the first time I went to Ireland it was said that if a man had £100 a-year he thought it necessary to keep a jaunting car, and there was the least possible disposition on the part of the people for trade or industry. Wherever I went there was not a mother who did not expect her son to get into the Constabulary, the Customs, the Excise, or some other Government appointment. It was an old habit I suppose; but there seemed to be none of that anxiety to get into business and to succeed in business which is universal with the middle-class in Great Britain. I do not know how it is. It is not for me to find fault with the Irish people. They are, if anything, I think, rather cleverer than the English or the Scotch. They beat us in many things; but in their own country they do not appear to be interested very much in business. It is only fair to say, at the same time, that the Irish labourers who come to this country—and I suppose we have 1,000,000 of them—work pretty well. I recollect a gentleman, engaged in manufacture in Ireland, telling me not long ago that owing to the prevalence of, as he thought, unnecessary Saints' days, his firm lost £500 a-year from the idleness to which their machinery was condemned. That is a disadvantage which the Irish people, if they liked, could get rid of. [Mr. DAWSON: What about fast days?] I am glad that the hon. Member for the City of Cork has made the speech that he has, because he has approached the subject with a proposition which we can discuss and understand; but if hon. Members wish the Government to introduce some clauses affecting this question, I would recommend them to give them careful consideration, and try whether it is possible to put into two or three clauses some mode by which the condition of the labourers can be improved in Ireland. Hon. Members from Ireland have not said much about the labourers until lately. I do not know that they said anything until there was a meeting of labourers somewhere in the South of Ireland complaining that the Land League was not doing much for them. Now, if I understood the hon. Gentleman aright, he seemed to think that the worst friends of the labourers were the farmers. According to his theory, the landowners are the great oppressors of the tenants, and the tenants are the oppressors of the labourers. I suppose that the labourers have nobody below them, or they would be oppressors to somebody else. Now, is there any possibility of approaching the condition of the labourers except through the tenant farmers? The farmers are the employers of the labourers, who, if there is no manufacturing industry in the country, must work on the land; and if the farmers are harsh, severe, and unjust, what is to be done? You ask, in what I should call the extreme extravagance of your views, that something should be taken from the landlord and conferred upon the tenant. Well, someone may say, Why should not something that belongs to the farmer be conferred on the labourer? The question, therefore, is one of extreme difficulty; but I think hon. Members who come to this House from Ireland—I will not say for the first time, but for the first time in great force—and speak on behalf of the Irish labourers, should be able to show some scheme by which the Government can aid the labourers. I should recommend the House, however, not to agree to any plan which would withdraw the labourer from employment to give him a patch of land which would be fit only to raise a few potatoes for his family, and which would consign him to a condition even worse than that in which he is at present. I admit frankly that in travelling through the South of Ireland many years ago, I saw scenes affecting enough to make any man weep; and as I look back now I can see some of the cottages, as they are called, but are no better than Indian wigwams, and which, in my opinion, are a disgrace to the country. I do not know whether this is the fault of the Government or not. We may, perhaps, divide the blame between the Government and the people; but if the Irish Members can suggest any plan which does not rob anybody else, any honest and practicable plan, by which the condition of the Irish labourer can be improved, depend upon it they will find none more anxious than Her Majesty's Government, and no Member of that Government more anxious than myself, to aid them in promoting that object.

Mr. CRAIG said, the hon. Member for County Louth, in his speech, had described a state of things which was precisely similar to that with which he (Mr. Craig) was acquainted in the North of Northumberland 30 years ago. It was not at all unusual then for a whole family of 10 or 12 to live in one room, and often behind the box beds a cow had quarters in the same cottage house. That was the case both in the mining and in the agricultural districts. Such a state of things had happily given place to arrangements which were more conducive to the moral, intellectual, and physical health of the people. He had had a very long experience in the establishment of cottage homes for labourers in connection with large industrial establishments—at least extending over a period of upwards of 25 years—and the result of his experience was the conviction that there was nothing more conducive to morality, industry, and sobriety than good homes for the labouring population. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster had objected to the views of the hon. Member for Cork City (Mr. Parnell), who advocated independent cottages and gardens for the labourers, giving them an acre of ground or more, and a good cottage as an allotment. He (Mr. Craig) thought the right hon. Gentleman was perfectly correct in his objection; because it would not be conducive to the general interests of the community to make the labourers independent of both the landlords and the farmers. The fruits of their labour ought to make them independent of everything, except the labour itself. He (Mr. Craig) found from experience in Staffordshire that those colliers who possessed their own house and a piece of land, although they were industrious and sober and thrifty, nevertheless absented themselves from their employment frequently, and occasionally at very inconvenient times. He thought also that one acre of land was too much for a labourer's garden. What he required was sufficient to occupy his time during leisure hours, and to afford him a beneficial pastime, which would be the case if he had a quarter of an acre, in connection with a good five-roomed cottage. He was, however, disappointed in hearing the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster describe the case as a difficult one, and say that there was not a probability of its being settled in connection with the Land Bill. His (Mr. Craig's) own opinion was that it was not so difficult, and it was certainly a matter which would not involve a very large amount of money, having regard to the enormous good which would be produced. The right hon. Gentleman said, in comparing Ireland with England, that there was a want of will and determination among the Irish which prevailed in England, and which was the cause, to a great extent, of England's superior prosperity. The fact was, however, that the will and determination did not exist owing to the demoralized condition of the people, in consequence of the deplorable homes in which they were compelled to live. It was one of those cases where the assistance of a superior power was required, and it was incumbent upon the State to give a start—at least, to set an example—to the erection of superior dwellings. Now, he could state as a fact—because he had built many hundreds of cottages—that in their manufacturing districts a five-roomed house could be erected for £120. He did not think it would take half that amount in many districts in Ireland; but even supposing it took the whole of that sum, they could erect 50,000 cottages of five rooms each for the total amount of £6,000,000, and that would be sufficient to accommodate 500,000 people with homes which would be sufficient for health of both body and mind. Let the Government, therefore, put a clause into the Bill, making it compulsory upon tenants who purchased their own holdings, under the clause of the Bill, to borrow, in addition to that required for the payment of the price of the holding, a sum of money on the same conditions, to establish, under proper inspection, good five-roomed cottages for the labourers who cultivated the land. And let the Government also offer, upon easy terms, the amount necessary to build cottages upon holdings where the present relation of landlord and tenant continued to exist. This amount of £6,000,000, in his opinion, would bring about a state of things in Ireland which would result in greater intelligence among the people and a higher state of morality, which were the necessary causes of commercial prosperity. He should not be surprised if the Government took this step and settled this important question in connection with the Land Law (Ireland) Bill, to see a similar condition of prosperity introduced to Ireland to that which had prevailed in England during the last 40 years.

Mr. O'DONNELL said, he was sorry to find the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster speaking in the same anti-Irish spirit that evening as he had done 26 years ago, and taunting the Irish Members with never bringing forward any proposal of a practical nature. The right hon. Gentleman, too, he regretted to see, could not refrain from displaying somewhat of a sectarian feeling against the religious observances of the Roman Catholics in Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman had a varnish of religious toleration, but real toleration was far from his heart and from his lips; and now a gratuitous sneer was wantonly flung at the Roman Catholics by "the illustrious friend of Ireland." At the same time, the right hon. Gentleman's sense of toleration was extremely delicate with regard to some people. He could make excuses for forms of belief, which need not be more particularly referred to in a Christian Assembly; but, dealing with the Catholics of Ireland, he did not hesitate to suggest that the progress of civilization might lead them to give up the holy days of their Church, forgetting, apparently, that more time was wasted by drunkenness and debauchery in other parts of the world than by strict adherence to the requirements of a religious creed. But these were some of the idiosyncrasies of the right hon. Gentleman, and he was not disposed to deal hardly with them. The right hon. Gentleman had once more displayed his utter ignorance of those rural questions upon which he was so fond of dilating. The right hon. Gentleman might, however, have recollected the work of Professor Kaye, which was full of statements illustrating the advantages of enabling labourers to secure possession of their homes and gardens. Speaking of Prussia, Professor Kaye stated that in 1858 there were 800,000 day labourers working for wages who owned small plots of land; and he also spoke of the French system, and that which existed in Norway. After alluding to the position of single labourers, Professor Kaye described the married labourers as living on the outskirts of the farm in cottages of their own, containing generally four rooms and glass windows. The leases were for their lives, and attached to each cottage was a piece of land capable of producing enough corn and potatoes to supply the wants of the occupant. Considering that men were in many parts of Europe in this comfortable position, it was indeed strange that the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster should have declared that the scheme of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) was one which must be at once condemned by the House. The presence of the right hon. Gentleman in the Cabinet was anything but a guarantee that the Irish people would again know the blessing of prosperity while a British Government existed to blast their prospects. The action of England had strangled the national industries of Ireland; and yet the right hon. Gentleman dared to read the people of that country a lecture upon the absence among them of manufacturing industries! Having heard such language from a distinguished and eminent Liberal, he had, at any rate, the satisfaction of knowing that the great sham of Liberalism had that night exploded for ever. No longer would the Irish people be in danger of being turned away from its own attempts to free itself from the injustice of centuries by the pro-Irish sympathies of the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. The right hon. Gentleman had cast aside the mask, which it had not been difficult to see through in any case; and, for his part, he was glad of it. The proposition of his hon. Friend the Member for the City of Cork could easily be carried out by a National Government, though the execution of the plan might be beyond the intelligence and capacity, as it seemed certainly to be beyond the good will, of the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. The right hon.

Gentleman's confession of incapacity and ill-will would go to swell the number of the many existing proofs that the Imperial Parliament would never promote the welfare of the Irish people.

MR. LITTON said, that when the hon. Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell) charged the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster with showing sectarian feeling in his speech, the hon. Member must have forgotten there was no Member in the House who himself indulged in "sectarian flings" so often as he did. The hon. Member who did not sit for Northampton could bear testimony to that fact, and the hon. Member for Dungarvan possessed a monopoly in that style of argument. The warmth and energy the hon. Member for Dungarvan had shown were misplaced. The question they were discussing was one of the greatest interest and importance, and it was one of eminent difficulty. He had failed to see any practical way whereby the condition of the labourer could be improved without inflicting an injustice on the very class of persons for whom a struggle was being made to free them from the incubus of excessive rents, and enable them to manage their own holdings uncontrolled and unfettered. If the proposal of the hon. Member for Dungarvan was carried out it should be necessary to enact that the labourers of Ireland should be put in possession of sufficient plots of land for comfort, and to this extent deprive the peasant proprietors of so much of their holding—against their will, and when they, perhaps, did not require labourers at all. If that was done by an Act of Parliament it would be regarded by the tenant farmers as the most oppressive Act that this or any Government could inflict. What would be said by the tenant farmers who were now seeking to be freed from the incubus of heavy rents if they found an Act of Parliament or a clause of an Act insisting that they should employ a labourer, whether they wanted him or not; and also be told that their dealings with the labourers were to be regulated by the Act. It appeared to him that this sympathy for the labourers was quite a new-born zeal on the part of the Land League. It was now the fashion to take up the cause of the labourer. But the labourers were never thought of until they had broken up a Land League meeting at Shanagarry in the county of Cork last autumn. The landlords had also made advances to the labourers, and it was but a day or two ago the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis) had given Notice of a Resolution on their behalf.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

MR. LITTON, resuming, said, that the subject ought not to be made a stalking horse by either the Conservative or the Home Rule Party. It appeared to him that a practical remedy for the evils complained of had not been suggested; and he thought that they could not deal with them by the insertion of clauses in the Land Law (Ireland) Bill. In conclusion, he must enter his protest against the attempts made from the Benches opposite to lead the country to imagine that hon. Members on his side of the House were indifferent to the welfare and happiness of the Irish labourers.

MR. SEXTON desired to give a most direct contradiction to the statement that the interest felt by the Irish Members in Irish labourers arose from a new-born zeal. The question had been the subject of many speeches and resolutions at meetings held in Ireland; but it appeared to be obvious that the improvement of the condition of the labourers depended largely upon the previous improvement of the condition of the farmers, and that one would follow the other.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

MR. SEXTON said, the hon. and learned Member for Tyrone (Mr. Litton) had ineffectually attempted to defend the speech of the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster against the attack of the hon. Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell), which betrayed the vehemence of just anger. From either a religious or a political point of view the speech of the right hon. Gentleman was equally deserving of condemnation; and the Government must by this time regret that the discussion, so far as they were concerned, was not allowed to close with the speech of the Chief Secretary, who approached the question in a calm, practical spirit, and professed his desire to avail himself of any useful suggestion. The speech of his Colleague offered a most painful contrast, and was devoid of the humanity and the friendliness towards Ireland with which the right hon. Gentleman had always been credited. Why did the right hon. Gentleman go out of his way to sneer at the religion of the Irish nation? He spoke of the number of Saints' days observed in Ireland. Why, the wisest observers and soundest critics of modern civilization were of opinion that if holidays were increased it would be well for this country. No doubt, there were more religious holidays in Ireland than in England; and, perhaps, if the Irish people were less devoted to their religion—if they had less of the patience and hope which ranked so high among the Christian virtues — the English method of rule in Ireland, but for the influence of that religion, would have been treated by the people in such a way as even the intellect and the resources of the right hon. Gentleman would have found it difficult to contend against. The right hon. Gentleman had been eloquent on the subject of manufactures; but he altogether ignored the fatal system of English legislation which in former days crushed out the manufactures of Ireland. Manufacture was a plant that did not grow in a single day. The interests of the English people in manufactures, as in every other regard, had been carefully cherished by the Legislature; but in Ireland an opposite course had been followed, and the life of Irish manufactures had been crushed out with such completeness as to render impossible any chance of their reviving. How could manufactures revive, and how could the necessary funds be applied, in a country where society was dislocated? In Ireland society consisted of two classes—the one embarrassed and needy, descendants of a race of spendthrifts, seeking only to draw the last penny, were the miserable tillers of the soil. How could such a class find money for manufactures? They could not find money enough for their own miserable wants and extravagances. As to the other class, the poor tenant farmers, the fruit of their labour went to the landlords. How, then, in this condition of society, could they expect manufacturing capitalists to spring into life? It was impossible, and the right hon. Gentleman, while he talked so eloquently of the growth of manufactures in England, and while he pandered to England's nationality and vanity, quoted only the primer history, and entirely ignored its philosophy. His hon. Friend the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) had attempted to point out how the condition of the Irish labourer could be improved, and he had no doubt that such a plan was well within the reach of human ingenuity. But if there were any defects in the plan, it did not lie in the mouth of the right hon. Gentleman to emphasize them as he had done in his tart and severe speech of that evening. They were there as Representatives of the people, to explain the wants of the people, and to insist upon the direction in which remedy should proceed. The obligation did not lie upon them to prepare schemes of reform in the fulness of detail. It was enough for them to point out the particulars in which the Government had failed; and when the right hon. Gentleman criticized the scheme of his hon. Friend the Member for the City of Cork, he felt entitled to reply to him that when the State appointed a Government, when the State selected the best ability at its disposal, and when the State offered large practical inducements to the men whom it took into its service, to employ their ability for the good and advantage of the people, it was for them, and not for private Members, to elaborate schemes of reform and progress. But it did not well become experienced statesmen to endeavour to give only the cold shoulder to such schemes of reform and progress as might be introduced by private Members. Therefore, he had heard the speech of the right hon. Gentleman with regret. He believed the unfortunate condition of Ireland with regard to the farmers, labourers, and in many other particulars, could be traced to causes bearing directly or indirectly upon the government of the country by England, and not to any cause that was prejudicial or disgraceful to the character of the Irish people. He was extremely sorry that when the subject had been already wisely and patiently dealt with by one of his Colleagues (Mr. W. E. Forster), the right hon. Gentleman thought fit to interfere without improving the condition of the question, to injure his own character in Ireland, and to add to the discredit of a Government whose character was already irretrievably damaged. If he were to live for 50 years, and were at the end of that time to look for an example of the spirit of British Philistinism, he would refer to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman. It was a speech which was singularly marked by an unperceptive spirit—it was singularly deficient in the dramatic sympathy which should be one of the first attributes of a statesman, and it was singularly distinguished by the spirit of arrogance and self-sufficiency which was very frequently to be found displayed in the British character, and which, while, perhaps, it supplied the secret of the success of the English people in attending to their own interests, also suggested the explanation of the opinion with which English rule had been regarded since ever it began to have sway over Ireland.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD thought the hon. Member who had just spoken had somewhat misunderstood the speech of the right hon. Gentleman. [An hon. MEMBER: But you did not hear it all.] The Land Bill, as a great measure for the benefit of agriculture, must improve the condition of the labourers. The proposition of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) was obviously open to the objection that it might import a large quantity of labour where it was not wanted. At the same time, he hoped conditions would arise under the Land Bill which would be taken advantage of for the benefit of the Irish labourer. Where large or small areas of land were reclaimed by the agency of Companies or under baronial guarantees, there was nothing to prevent the Land Commission entering into engagements for allotments to labourers. He reminded the hon. Gentlemen opposite that it was impossible to separate the welfare of the people of Ireland generally from the Bill of the Government. He had noticed lately that the value of shares in certain Irish banks had increased—which was probably due to the introduction of the Land Bill, and might be held to prove that the greater security given to the property of the people of Ireland would naturally be followed by an increase in the value of capital in that country. With regard to the observations of his right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, they had been misrepresented. He understood his right hon. Friend to refer simply to a fact, but to draw no inference from it. If hon. Gentlemen opposite would set themselves, might he say, dutifully to support the Land Bill and to introduce Amendments, they would not only promote the welfare of the Irish farmers, but would bring a large amount of happiness to the labouring class, which had hitherto been greatly neglected.

MR. DAWSON said, his opinion was that if they improved the social condition of things in Ireland each class would benefit of necessity the class below it. Therefore, without any fictitious bolstering up, when they improved the state of one class they would improve that of the other. Every attempt had been made to draw away the labourers from the side of the farmers in the present agitation; but, as the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) had shown, the labourers had too much acumen to be led astray. They saw that if the number of employers was increased the demand for labour would be also increased, and the labourers would be able to make their own terms. It appeared from evidence taken by the Devon Commission that at that time there was a waste land society, which bought up half the side of a country, and settled upon it labourers who were before periodically in a state of famine, giving them 31 years' leases. The families so treated emerged from their poverty, and before half the term was over they had a smiling in place of a barren land. If, therefore, they were to plant Ireland again, he must protest against its being planted by Englishmen, or any others than Irishmen, who were both willing and able to work. Indeed, the cause of the labourers, whether English or Irish, ought to appeal to their hearts. The English labourer was not a bit better off than the Irish labourer. Mr. G. F. Heath had written a book in which he told us that the honeysuckled cottages of the English labourers were but whited sepulchres. It could be seen, too, from the correspondence in *The Times* and other papers, that the labouring population of England was in a fearful state. Coming now to the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham

(Mr. John Bright), whom Irishmen had looked upon as a friend, upon what grounds had he thrown in the face of Ireland that it had no capital and no manufactures? Was not that like the robber upbraiding the man he had robbed? Then the right hon. Gentleman, in his reference to Saints' days, had made another most unfortunate remark—a remark which he was compelled to describe as of the lowest and most unworthy character. He protested against such sneers at the holy days of the Church, and preferred days consecrated by religious customs to holidays appointed by Act of Parliament. For himself, if the inconvenience of solemn days was to be discussed, he might observe, as an Irish trader, that the fast days in Scotland occasionally delayed his mercantile transactions. However, he would refrain from criticisms on such matters, and only hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would regret his suggestion that the nine days observed as holy in Ireland were a hindrance to the prosperity of the country. The speech of the right hon. Gentleman exhibited in a striking manner his utter want of knowledge and sympathy in dealing with the Irish people.

Mr. SHAW said, when he had left the House a couple of hours ago, he thought the discussion was about to come to an amicable conclusion; but, on entering again, he found that it had taken rather an unpleasant turn. He could gather from hon. Gentlemen opposite that his right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster had said something that Irish Members seemed to have a right to complain of. Well, he must say that if he had done so it was the first time during his long political life that he had ever said anything in reference to Ireland that had not been for the benefit of Ireland. He always felt that when a friend of long standing, of venerable years, whose sympathies and feelings he knew to be good, said anything severe, it was wrong to lose one's temper over it; but that one should take it home and think over it. He believed it came from the fact of a man speaking during the dinner hour, when the House was empty. He might, perhaps, be allowed to say one or two words as to the employment of labourers in Ireland, and as to the conditions under which he carried on his industry there. Something had been said about Saints' days and holidays. He could not tell exactly the number of Saints' days and holidays, he was sorry to say—[Mr. Sexton: Nine altogether in the year.] At all events, he could say that they had a very large number in their employment, 99 per cent of whom were Catholics, and he believed they never lost an hour on ordinary working days owing to their absence on those holidays. They had in the City of Cork a Prelate of great wisdom, and a clergy of great experience and great piety, and they had come to them and told them that they knew very well the immense loss that would be caused to their business establishment by a cessation of work on those days, and they had special services in their churches for the workers in their mill. The workers went there, and, as a matter of fact, they could do their business as well and as successfully in their mill as in any mill in Belfast, and they were as little interfered with by these Saints' days and holidays. As to the aptitude of the Irish people for manufactures, that was a very different question. Manufacturing aptitude, like other habits, became localized, and he believed the habit of industry must be born with a people. Unfortunately, industry had been interfered with, and he could speak with practical experience of the almost insuperable difficulty of starting a new industry in a country. He felt himself this Land Question would do an immense deal of good to the labourers of Ireland. But he believed it was only one of the means that they should look to for elevating the working classes. If they gave the tenant farmer a hold of his farm, enabled him to drain his land and make improvements, and let him feel that those improvements were his own, he believed that in two years they would not have a single able-bodied man in Ireland in want of employment. In the South and West of Ireland there was a great want of industrial establishments, and if they could only get these, employment would be found for thousands of persons, and they would be spared the necessity of emigrating. If they could get some industrial manufactures and less oratory by slow degrees and by patience the very greatest good would be done to the country. He had more respect for the man who laboured day after day to plant some industry in Ireland than for all the eloquence and writings about the progress of the country. He knew of cases of extraordinary success attending men who had striven to establish some small industry in the South of Ireland. He knew of instances of working mechanics amassing small fortunes by patience, thrift, and sobriety. They required more industries, and if they could settle down they would very soon get them. As to the agricultural labourers, the experience of the Land Commission taught him there was nothing more disgraceful than the condition of three-fourths of these people. Their houses, pay, food, and prospects were wretched; their children were a burden to them, and soon as they got old enough for service they left home, and it was miserable to see the poor men, with hardly any prospect before them in their old age but the poor house. He believed they could, if not in this Bill, by another Bill, make it obligatory on country sanitary authorities to see that where labourers were employed they should be well housed. The people of the South of Ireland could engage in industrial occupations as well as the inhabitants of any part of the world; and if some rich persons would come over there and plant their industries—["No, no!"]—No! that was certainly an interruption he did not expect. He repeated, if some persons could be induced to come over to Ireland with their hundreds of thousands of pounds, and plant their industries in the country, they would find as good workers and as honest workers, and they would make as much money, as in any part of the Three Kingdoms. As to any people interfering with or injuring their capital, the investor would find his capital as safe in Cork as in Manchester.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, that he had risen to address the House more than two hours ago, when his remarks would have occupied only a very few minutes; but since the speech of the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, the debate, which had been businesslike and conciliatory, had been less strictly confined to the question before the House. He would first make one or two observations on what had fallen from his hon. Friend the Member for County Cork (Mr. Shaw). His hon. Friend had referred to the great amount of effort which had been diverted from practical work to political questions. The feeling of every Irishman was that every talent and all the energy of thousands of Irishmen must be thrown into the work of bringing Ireland into competition with the other civilized countries of the world. Why was so much energy wasted in political struggles? Because this country, already overburdened with its own responsibilities, insisted upon managing the affairs of Ireland, with which it was not competent to deal. His hon. Friend had referred to the majority of the sanitary authorities exerting themselves on behalf of the poor in their dwellings. The fact was, the sanitary authorities did nothing. Beggars went from village to village, carrying often with them the germs of disease, which were scattered broadcast over the country, and the sanitary authorities did nothing to prevent it. The police, instead of preventing such things happening, were engaged in looking after imaginary political offenders. He would next refer to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, which was an extremely offensive speech. In a calm discussion he had got up and had gone off into one of his general sermons upon the faults of the Irish character and the virtues of the English, sermons which were more easy to deliver than they were agreeable to listen to. The right hon. Gentleman had referred to the Saints' days in Ireland; he apparently did not know that there were only nine altogether, and that as the four Bank Holidays were scarcely observed at all there, this left only five days more of holidays in Ireland than there were in England. But he believed that in Lancashire, and particularly in Rochdale, a general cessation of manufacturing operations took place in Whit week. When the right hon. Gentleman attributed the holidays of the Irish people to their religion, it was simply because the bigotry in his nature must find some expression. Ever since he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) had thought upon political subjects, he had conceived a great contempt for the views of the middle classes in England upon political questions, which were narrow and insular. The right hon. Gentleman was an extremely good representative of the middle classes. He had the highest respect for the right hon. Gentleman, and had carefully read his speeches; and in reading the speeches which he delivered 30 years ago with his recent ones, he found that the right hon. Gentleman's mind had not widened one inch. There was not a single new idea, and they too often expressed prejudices in which he had been brought up, instead of statesmanlike breadth of thought. It was too often the case that the right hon. Gentleman's words were the result of temper instead of the expression of the workings of his own clear intelligence. One of the most frequently-quoted passages from the right hon. Gentleman had once been his remark that "the Irish people were idle because they were Catholic, and were poor because they were idle." If, however, the Irish Representatives would only consent to represent English opinions and not Irish, he thought that the right hon. Gentleman would forget all the unkind things he had ever said about Ireland, and would give them what they did not desire, a patronizing benediction, which, no doubt, would make them all very happy. The right hon. Gentleman had asked how it was that there was no commerce in Ireland, while there was commerce in America, and also why English capital did not find its way into Ireland? He would answer the last question first. There was a mistaken idea abroad that capital was insecure in Ireland. Capital was certainly much safer invested in Ireland than in Turkey or in the South American Republics. Certainly property in Ireland was much safer from robbery than it was in England. It was thought, too, that public peace and security were not so well established in Ireland as in England. Such peace and security could never be established till the present system of government was altered root and branch, and the Irish were enabled to exercise self-government. And if commerce did not flourish in that country, whose fault was it? In America the Irish were as successful in commerce as any people. The fault, therefore, lay with England. The mis-government of England had compelled the Irish to devote energies to political questions which could more profitably be directed to commercial pursuits. He could quote the right hon. Gentleman himself in support of what he said; for the right hon. Gentleman had himself drawn a powerful contrast between the Irish in Ireland with the Irish in America, showing the energy and industry which they could display when a fair field was opened. He understood the proposal of the Chief Secretary for Ireland to be to advance money to Companies for the reclamation of waste lands; but that plan had been condemned by Professor Baldwin, who instanced the failure of the Galtee experiment.

MR. SPEAKER pointed out that the hon. Member was travelling beyond the Question before the House.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he was endeavouring to show the true way of benefiting the material condition of the labourers of Ireland, and he was going on to show that was by the reclamation of waste land. If they wanted waste land reclaimed, they must trust to labour for it, and not to capital. The proposal of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) had been misunderstood. What he would like would be that the Commission should have the power to buy up waste or semi-waste land, and that it should be given rent free for some years to a certain number of labourers. An important experiment of that kind had been made by Mr. Pitt Kennedy, who had charged 1*s.* per annum per acre to the labourers for the first year, adding 1*s.* per acre each year up to 21 years. They were now paying 14*s.* per acre for the land, and it was flourishing and valuable. He believed that was the true solution of the difficulty for getting rid of the surplus agricultural population; but with regard to the other portions of the population, he was not prepared to make any suggestions.

SIR PATRICK O'BRIEN regretted that so much time should have been wasted by hon. Members from Ireland in attacking the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, instead of informing the House of their views upon the question of the agricultural labourer, whose hopes they had been instrumental in exciting. He rose, however, in order to ask the Chief Secretary for Ireland not to postpone to another year, as had been suggested, the subject raised by this Motion. The expectations of the labourers of Ireland had been raised by the promises which had been made; and they would suffer bitter disappointment if they found that, after the part they had taken in the agitation in favour of the tenant farmers, they were told that nothing could be proposed at present for the benefit of the agricultural labourers. They were told by hon. Gentlemen opposite that they were to trust to economic laws! But that was because it was a difficult question that was to be faced. It would be amusing, were it not so sad, to observe how the labourers had been imposed upon by the members of the Land League—at every meeting an unmeaning resolution, embodying no statement of intended action, was passed *sub silentio* at the end of the proceedings, somewhat in the same manner as the toast of "The Press" was proposed, as a matter of form, at the tail end of public dinners; and now, after strong hopes had been excited, they were told by Gentlemen opposite that one thing only could be done at a time; that they should wait till the tenant question was settled before their case could be considered—a kind of "live horse, and you will get grass" sort of advice, as it occurred to him (Sir Patrick O'Brien). The hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) had said that the landlord "sat" on the tenant, and the tenant performed the same operation on the agricultural labourers; but he made suggestions which required attention, although he thought the hon. Gentleman's plan would be somewhat inadequate. For his own part, he thought some plan might be devised for carrying out the capital suggestion of the hon. Member (Mr. Craig), as regards the building of cottages, and also of, in certain cases, granting small gardens to the labourer. Where so much was proposed to be done for the tenant, he could not object to making this small concession to the labourer who tilled his farm. Whatever was done for the labourers, at all events, would, he trusted, be done without delay. He would only add that although, no doubt, there were blots upon the Land Bill, it would confer great benefits upon the tenant farmers, and he hoped the Prime Minister would not relinquish any of its provisions.

MR. NEWDEGATE said, he was sorry to say that the condition of the agricultural labourer in Ireland had been entirely overlooked in the legislation of that House; and would suggest that in the improvement of the Poor Law, and the making it more in accordance with the system which prevailed in England, the most practical remedy for the recurrence of famine in the case of that class of the population was to be found. He should like to point out, he might add, to the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster that the late Lord Mayo, in a debate on the milling trade in Ireland in 1851, showed that since the legislation of 1846, for which the right hon. Gentleman was mainly responsible, that trade had rapidly decreased. He was surprised, therefore, to hear the language with respect to the promotion of manufactures in Ireland in which the right hon. Gentleman had indulged. He did not know, he might add, any specific for all the ills of Ireland; but he might observe that they seemed to be somewhat analogous to those which prevailed in the Pontifical States before their emancipation.

MR. LAING said, that he had recently spent some time in the South-West of Ireland, and must state that the condition of the labouring classes there had impressed him with a feeling of most profound and intense pity. No words could exaggerate the lamentable and deplorable condition in which the great mass of the population existed. That part of the country contrasted strongly with the respectable and comfortable circumstances of the peasantry in the North-West of Sutherlandshire—a district that greatly resembled the South-West of Ireland in physical conformation. He must confess that he came away from Ireland with a much larger feeling of toleration towards the excesses of the Land League, and the gentleman who might go to excesses of agitation in that direction. He had met men in Ireland who were glad to dig in most difficult ground and to remove boulder stones for 1*s*. a-day. According to a reasonable calculation, the earnings of such men could not exceed 200*s*. a-year. The things that were wanted for the labourers were constant employment and better wages. The Land Bill, he thought, would, in a measure, supply these wants. It would cause an increase in the demand for labour; and, consequently, more labourers would obtain employment, and their remuneration would be greater. If the condition of the stratum of society next above the labourer—namely, the farmer—were improved, there must, he maintained, be more demand for agricultural labour. But in over-populated districts no remedy would be effectual unless the demand for labour could be increased and the supply diminished. He must express his convictions. The best means of reducing the supply was by establishing a well-organized scheme of emigration, which would also be a boon to the female population. In America and elsewhere, girls could find employment without difficulty at remunerative wages, and their chances of matrimony were greater than at home. It seemed to him almost inhuman to interpose any obstacle in the way of emigration. At the same time, he was quite of opinion that it ought to be voluntary. He would conclude with one appeal to the Irish Members, and another to the Government. He appealed to the former to co-operate with the Liberal Party in facilitating the progress of the Irish Land Bill. There was far more sympathy with their cause on the Ministerial side of the House than the Irish Members had any idea of; and, therefore, he hoped that they would not throw any obstacles in the way of the Government by pursuing a policy of exasperation. He would also appeal to the Government, and ask them to throw a little more energy into their proceedings for the passing of the Bill. A good many days had already been wasted in skirmishing upon the second reading; and no little dissatisfaction was caused by the fact that measures of minor importance should be allowed to impede the progress of a Bill of so vital a character. He must also condemn the bringing on of the Motion, of which Notice had been given for next Monday. ["Question!"]

MR. SPEAKER intimated to the hon. Member that he was not discussing the Question before the House.

MR. LAING said, he regretted having inadvertently trangressed the Rules, and begged to apologize.

MR. LEWIS desired to call attention to the action of the Government in reference to the Resolution before the House. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant had stated on behalf of the Government that they were prepared to accept the Resolution, save as to that part of it which said that the subject should be dealt with during the present Session of Parliament. Well, he had been in the House long enough to remember the objections which Members of Her Majesty's Government had taken to the passing of abstract Resolutions; and he thought nothing could be more improper than that they should bind themselves down to the acceptance and carrying out of the abstract Resolution before them. The fact should be borne in mind that the House had not yet had any statement on the part of the Government as to their entire policy with respect to the Land Question in Ireland. But the present Resolution was only a part of the Land Question, affecting, as it did, a large class of the agricultural population of Ireland, whose existence had been, so far as the Land Bill was concerned, totally ignored by the Government, and of whom, indeed, nothing had been heard until a certain great meeting had been held in their interest. Now, however, the new-born zeal of hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway had, like an epidemic, spread to the Treasury Bench. The hon. Member for Louth (Mr. Callan) sought to bind the House to a proposal as to the practical details or results of which neither the Government nor the House had had any explanation afforded to them. They were asked to assent to two propositions, the first of which was that it was matter of pressing necessity that facilities should be afforded for the erection of cottages and the providing of garden plots for agricultural labourers. At whose expense was that to be done? Had the Government the least idea how the proposal thus made, and to which they had assented, was to be carried out? Was the cost to come out of the property remaining to the landlord after the passing of the Land Bill, or was it to be borne out of the property of the landlord which was to be conferred upon the tenant under the proposed legislation? The second portion of the Resolution pledged the Government to take steps to improve the condition of the agricultural labourer, a duty which would very soon come home to roost. He could not help thinking that there had been a great deal of sound and a great deal of hollowness in the speeches which had been made upon this question. When, he asked, did this zeal on behalf of the Irish agricultural labourer begin? When the Land League agitation commenced nothing was heard of the agricultural labourer. The only questions raised were how injury could be inflicted upon the landlords, and how the tenants could become proprietors of the soil. But the labourer caught the prevailing spirit, thinking that if the farmer could possess himself of a portion of his landlord's property he might fairly try to become possessed of a slice of that which belonged to the farmer. Then the great meeting of which they had heard was held, and the Land League thought it prudent to take up the cause of the labourer. Her Majesty's Government, however, had no notion of the sort in their minds when they issued their Land Commission, or, if they had, why did it not form part of the scheme of the Commission or of their Bill? Were they to deal with this question of the Irish land piecemeal, and, if not, why had not the Government possessed the House of their entire policy? In his opinion, the Government did not know their own land policy. What was likely to be the effect of the present debate when it became known all over Ireland that the House of Commons had passed a Resolution that agricultural labourers were to have cottages built for them and allotments of land made to them? Was it right to give rise in the minds of an excitable people to hopes, which more or less must prove delusive, unless the Government were prepared to follow up the passing of the Resolution by the proposal of a practical measure to give it effect? The hon. Member for the County of Cork (Mr. Shaw), with an amount of complacency which, under the circumstances, was almost astounding, asked why rich English manufacturers did not set up manufactories in Ireland? His answer was that they were not so foolish to do so under the patronage and protection of a Liberal Government. They had had the painful experience of knowing that for months together life and property were at the mercy of men whose conduct appeared to be patronized for the time being by the Government, which allowed the reign of the law to be subdued and overridden by the reign of the mob. Everyone who knew Ireland knew that, save in a few counties in the North of Ireland, there was no protection for English capital in Ireland. They had heard from the hon. Member for Galway (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) that "no public peace would there be in Ireland until the entire system of government was uprooted." What encouragement, then, he asked the hon. Member for the County of Cork, was there for the investment of English capital in Irish industries? A discussion like the present merely presented a false and delusive aspect of a great social question to a large portion of the ignorant population of Ireland. If the Government did not intend to give effect to the Resolution, they would only be adding another serious difficulty to the pacification of Ireland. While he thought it was advisable on the part of owners of land in Ireland to make great concessions in order to prevent their property entirely passing away from them, yet he hoped that, after their property was reduced, they were not to be called upon to build cottages for the labourers upon the farms of their tenants.

MR. W. E. FORSTER: There is one remark of the hon. Member with which I entirely concur. [*Cries of* "Spoken!"] I have not spoken on the present Motion. [*Cries of* "Chair!"]

THE SPEAKER: I must remind the right hon. Gentleman that, having already addressed the House, he cannot speak again on this question.

MR. HEALY remarked, that the speech of the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis) had the usual port wine flavour. The hon. Member had endeavoured to answer the question of the hon. Member for the County of Cork (Mr. Shaw) as to the reason why English capitalists did not carry their capital to Ireland. He would ask why rich English solicitors endeavoured to obtain Parliamentary seats in Ireland for the purpose of vilifying the country from which they obtained some share of distinction? The condition of the Irish labourers was most deplorable. On the Devonshire estate they were paid only 8*s.* a-week, and he trusted the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India would duly read and digest the Resolution which was about to be acceded to by the House.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Main Question, as amended, put.

Resolved, That, in the opinion of this House, it is expedient and necessary that measures should be taken to improve the condition of agricultural labourers' habitations in Ireland.

SUPPLY.—COMMITTEE.

Resolved, That this House will immediately resolve itself in the Committee of Supply.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

AFFAIRS OF GREECE.—RESOLUTION.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT, in rising to call attention to the action of the Government in connection with the affairs of Greece, and to move—

> "That Her Majesty's Government, by their encouragement to the Greeks to mobilize their Army, by their injustice to Turkey, and by their refusal to publicly advise Greece to moderate her excessive demands, have alienated the Mussulman feeling of the East, have imposed overwhelming burdens upon the Greek Nation, and have tended to disturb the peace of Europe,"

said: Sir, at the outset, I wish to protest against the character of the Papers on the Greek Question issued by the present Government. They are of a singularly meagre character, and from the end of January to April there is not a despatch of any kind whatever among them. This is without precedent. I also wish to protest against the manner in which the hon. Baronet the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs replies to Questions addressed to him. His style and language is certainly more endurable than the vacillating and helpless answers of the Chief Secretary for Ireland, than the verbose, confusing, and incomprehensible replies of the Prime Minister, or than the turgid prolixity of the Postmaster General. The language is unobjectionable, but the matter is invariably inaccurate. My charge against the Government is briefly this—that by their unwarrantable encouragement to Greece, official and unofficial, they have raised hopes that could not be fulfilled, that they have been the means of involving that misguided State in tremendous military preparations and a crushing expenditure, and all to no purpose; that they have alienated Turkey by their unjust and unprovoked persecution; and that they have disturbed the whole East of Europe, and rendered a general war, if not imminent, at all events possible, and perhaps even probable. They have run this terrible risk out of sheer wantonness and without any necessity. They wished to reverse the policy of Lord Beaconsfield, and to discredit the action of the late Government; so they took up the cause of Greece as a stalking-horse, without reflection and without discretion, and they have ended by producing there, as everywhere else, general confusion. They have effectually got rid of old allies, and they have disgusted and acquired the hatred of the people whose cause they affected to espouse. For what is the fact about the negotiations between Greece and Turkey? That now in the month of May, 1881, they are pressing upon a reluctant Greek Ministry the very terms which might have been obtained from Turkey six months ago—yes, and 10 months ago—without cost or risk of war. They are now obliged to do what every sensible and impartial politician in Europe has been predicting for the last eight months they would have to do—urge upon Greece to moderate her demands and to be contented with the very generous offers of the Porte. Let hon. Members read the despatch of the Porte of October 3rd, in Blue Book No. 2, and see what Greece might then have had without trouble. How much has Greece gained by the delay? Advantages, if any, not appreciable. What has she lost by the month after month of war-fever and expense? £6,000,000 at least of money, an amount as great for her scanty population as £250,000,000 would be for England; 80,000 men taken from their natural industries, and kept in enforced idleness while they are being drilled into combatant machines. Other Powers warned Greece and warned Her Majesty's Government, months ago, that the line suggested by the Berlin Conference could not be carried out. Yet the British Cabinet adhered to it with pernicious obstinacy through thick and thin, and refused to advise Greece to be moderate, until at last, brought face to face with the almost certainty of war, they have hurriedly beaten a retreat, reversed all their previous advice, and done what France did four or five months earlier. Why had not Her Majesty's Government followed the praiseworthy example of M. St. Hilaire, the French Foreign Minister, whose admirable Note to Greece of December 28, 1880, conveyed such sound warnings, and made such a profound impression upon Europe? Simply because they were so wedded to the monstrous offspring of their injustice, the line of their ridiculous Conference of Berlin, that they could listen to neither reason nor justice. In August last the British Government formally withdrew the advice of the late Ministry against Greek mobilization. It was said that Great Britain was the last to take that most foolish and disastrous step; but what evidence could the hon. Baronet allege in support of this statement beyond the statement of M. Tricoupi, the Greek Minister? Even if it were so, to withdraw advice against mobilization was a most unfortunate step. For what did it mean? It was a practical incentive to war, and so it had acted. Governments do not say—"Arm and attack your enemy." That is too gross and outspoken a method for modern diplomacy. But when one Government says to another, "We no longer advise you not to mobilize your army," its practical effect is—"We do not object to your going to war;" and so the Greeks understood it. Even in so serious an act as this the British Government appear to have allowed themselves to get into some confusion, for they seem to have believed M. Tricoupi, that "mobilization meant the training of untrained men." At all events, from this moment the Greek Question assumed a new and menacing aspect, as such questions always do when inflammable material in the shape of large bodies of hostile and armed men are brought face to face. This encouragement of Greek mobilization was the chief blunder of the British Government. Now, at last, they were literally compelled to menace Greece with all sorts of penalties, unless she accepted about three-fifths of the Berlin line, after they had all along urged her to take nothing less than that line. Was it any wonder then that the feeling in Greece now should be, as one of her most ecstatic friends, the Correspondent of *The Standard*, had written on April 5th—

> "European diplomacy has worked Greece up to fever heat, and Greece refuses to swallow the palliatives Europe, for its own convenience, now proposes to administer?"

What had the conduct of Her Majesty's Government cost the other party to this dispute, the long-suffering, reviled, much-abused people of Turkey? What preparations had they been compelled to make? What cost had their exhausted Treasury been put to in consequence of the inflammatory policy of the English Cabinet? It would be too much to expect the right hon. Gentleman to consider any sufferings of Turkey in this or any other matter; but when they wanted an Ally in Europe or in Asia, they would realize their folly. First, there was their boasted concert of Europe. This is a plausible phrase invented to satisfy those timid people who never had the courage to have a policy of their own. It originated in the attempts of the Liberal Party, in 1878, to suggest some counter policy to the manly and successful action of Lord Beaconsfield in checking the aggression of Russia. It has also been very useful to the hon. Baronet the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, as a shield behind which to hide the policy, or want of policy, of the Government, and to avoid giving plain answers to inconvenient Questions. Any real "concert of Europe" could not exist at present, and never had existed. When the nations of Europe were all armed to the last man, watching each other with the utmost keenness and anxiety, and ready, as the past 25 years had shown, to take advantage of each other's weakness or perplexity for individual aggrandizement, what likelihood was there of any practical "concert" to accomplish any really important results? A perusal of the Blue Books would show that there never was any real concert, that independent action was being constantly taken, and, what was most curious, that the British Government had almost invariably been the principal obstacle in the way of "concert." Once, and once only, had there been something approaching to concerted action. The famous Naval Demonstration, that never dared to demonstrate, had united the Powers in a brief appearance of a common movement. Their only achievement was the conspicuous *fiasco* of Dulcigno. After six months of despatch-writing, 10 weeks of demonstration by 20 great ships and 135 enormous guns, some 8,000 Albanians were transferred from the rule of a Sovereign they preferred to that of a Prince they detested. That was, perhaps, the most signal instance of disproportion between the means adopted and the results achieved. But what was the truth about this flash in the pan of a "concert," which rendered its participators, and especially its originators, ridiculous from one end of the world to the other? Not that it was a means to an end, and that end the settlement of the Montenegrin Frontier, as it professed to be, but that it was an end in itself, or rather the means of keeping up the pretence of a concert which did not exist. This is made clear in a despatch of Sir Henry Elliot to Lord Granville, of November 5th, in which Baron Haymerle, the Austrain Minister, is reported to have said that the "Dulcigno Demonstration was only necessary for the maintenance of the concert." In other words, it was to gratify the caprice of the Prime Minister of England that Turkey could be bullied with impunity, and always yielded to force. The negotiations relative to the Dulcigno Demonstration showed long ago the hopelessness of the "concert." The process by which the appearance of union was established has been laid bare by the Austrain Red Book. First, Russia and England put their heads together and agreed to try to bring the rest of the Powers into their net. The British Cabinet, for the first time in history, played the dishonourable *rôle* of henchman to the cruel despotism of St. Petersburg. Then they got Italy with them, only too glad to air her spick-and-span men-of-war in such big company. The relations between the hon. Baronet the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and M. Gambetta secured the support of France, for moral coercion at all events; though, as the sequel showed, when it came to action, the French Government showed a most desperate reluctance to move. This very nearly upset the Demonstration at starting. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister and Russia thus got two other Powers more or less with them, and so put Austria and Germany in a minority. What happened is worth particular notice. The British Cabinet declared itself prepared to go on with its demonstration with Russia and Italy alone, France being friendly, but not joining. Such a course would have been fatal to European peace. Russia would have, by hook or by crook, succeeded in doing what she so much wished—putting the torch to the magazine of mischief she had so carefully prepared throughout South-Eastern Europe. Italy was by no means averse, for she has always hoped, in a fresh scramble, to pick up some of those titbits which, to her bitter and unconcealed chagrin, did not fall to her lot at Berlin. Once start this conflagration, and Austria and Germany knew perfectly well it would never end without a struggle of nations such as Europe has, happily, not seen since the wars of the First Napoleon. So, not being able to prevent the follies of the British Cabinet, they joined in the Demonstration, to control and moderate it. That there never was any real concert is perfectly plain from the disclosures of the Austrian Red Book, and from the tone of the whole German and Austrian Press right through the crisis. First of all, Austria distinctly refused to assent to the Fleets appearing off Dulcigno, or to armed ships' boats going up the Boyana river. These proposals might fairly have been construed by Turkey as acts of war. They were simply, as proposed by the British Cabinet, the most detestable of all modern artifices—unofficial warfare. In them the Prime Minister took another leaf out of the book of his favourite Russian instructors. Austria further limited the number of each Squadron to two ships; and both Austria and Germany made a distinct declaration that they would consent to no active measures, either to place the Montenegrins in Dulcigno, or to keep them there when once they were in occupation. Then followed the courageous refusal of Turkey, last October, to be bullied. The friendly intervention of the German Powers, assisted by France, was a *Deus ex machinâ* to the British Cabinet in the forlorn plight to which this open resistance of Turkey reduced them. There was no longer any question of demanding the immediate surrender of Dulcigno. The Turkish Government were to have unlimited time. They were not to be pressed in the least. And so it came about that even after the concession made by Turkey, owing to the separate action of two Powers, five or six weeks elapsed before the completion of the transfer. Let this be marked by those who are disposed to crow over the success of a coercion policy, that it was only after six months of diplomatic pressure, three months of actual demonstration, and volumes of Notes, remonstrances, and counter-pleas, that "the concert" of six Powers extracted from Turkey—what? Not a cession of territory to Greece, not reform in Armenia, not Constitutional Government, not a purified Administration at Constantinople—none of these things; but the surrender of a small Albanian village on the Adriatic, with a few thousand inhabitants, to the satellite and instrument of Russia! Then they made the Smyrna proposals, about which so little has been made known. Austria, Germany, and France absolutely refused to have anything to do with the monstrous piracy and robbery suggested. Russia was most anxious to go on with her promising game, which was to bring about a war with England on the wrong side, and so to destroy, in a single campaign, the fruits of three generations of English statesmanship. Then came, as I have said, the private and separate influence of Germany and Austria at Constantinople, supported by France in the interests of peace. There was no nonsense of "the concert" about it. It was simply friendly and diplomatic pressure, exerted in the old-fashioned and accustomed way, independent of the Triumvirate who were in favour of reckless coercion. If the Porte gave up Dulcigno unconditionally, the interceding Powers engaged to give up the Demonstration, and to allow ample time for the settlement of the Greek Question. These Greek Papers illustrated further proofs of absence of "concert." First, the proposal of England to extend the Demonstration to the case of Greece was promptly declined; and even the ingenious proposition that the squadrons "should arrange a place for call" was refused. In October, Austria, Germany, and France were urging Greece to be prudent, and to suspend her military operations. Lord Granville was in a state of the greatest surprise, almost of indignation. He hastily saw all the Ambassadors of Foreign States, and wished to know the exact tenour of the advice given to the Hellenic Government, and reminded Prince Bismarck and Baron Haymerle that they were pledged to the Berlin Conference. In a very humble-minded interview with General Menabrea on November 11th, Lord Granville denied that "the European Concert" was broken up, "although it was possible that it might at any moment terminate." All of the Powers, meanwhile, had given Greece sound advice. On November 3, Prince Bismarck sent Herr Radowitz as Special Envoy to Athens—

> "To explain to the Greek Government his views as to the necessity of abstaining from precipitate action."

On November 8, Baron Haymerle insisted—

> "That the tension in which Europe had been kept should come to an end. . : . . After the experience we had had of the resistance of Turkey to the most trifling territorial cession, he would deprecate insisting upon further sacrifices. . . . What now was most required was breathing time, which would allow the excited feeling throughout the East to calm down."

And the Austrian Envoy made strong representations to this effect at Athens. On November 8, Lord Lyons informs Lord Granville that M. St. Hilaire, the French Foreign Minister, had said to him—

> "That a Naval Demonstration would be wholly inadequate to the Greek case, and that the French Government could not consent to any such measure;"

and, further on, that—

> "The Greeks were trying to force the hand of Europe by crossing the Frontier. . . . . That the French Government had sent instructions to their Representative at Athens to urge the Greeks in the strongest terms to be patient and quiet."

Italy also gave like advice on December 15th; and even Russia, who all through these Blue Books acted as the warm admirer of Gladstonian policy in the East, felt bound to warn Greece of her folly. M. de Giers hoped all the

> "Powers would impress on Greece the absolute necessity for prudence. Any rash step might promote a conflagration the limits of which no man could foresee."

All this was six months ago. Had England joined this concert of remonstrance, it would have been effectual. It is not surprising that the British Government was agitated at finding that the other Powers were making pacific remonstrances at Athens, when we read in a despatch of November 18, from Mr. Corbett, the British Minister at Athens, that—

> "In accordance with your Lordship's instructions, I have scrupulously abstained from giving the Greek Government any advice as to the employment of force by Greece to obtain possession of the Frontier recommended by the Conference of Berlin, though both M. Tricoupi and M. Coumoundouros were anxious to ascertain the views of Her Majesty's Government on the subject, and both showed a disposition to be guided by their advice."

Here is the British Representative at Athens actually forbidden to give Greece the peaceful advice she almost craves, and which Greek Ministers "were anxious to be guided by." When, reluctantly, Lord Granville affected to concur in the general peacefulness, it was with this strange proviso—which altogether nullified the good intentions and neutralized the value of the efforts of the other Powers—that

> "Greece was to be placed in no worse position by such advice than she had held under the Conference of Berlin."

This begged the whole question. The object of Germany, France, and Austria was to get the Hellenic Government to take less than was so foolishly there suggested for her. The Prime Minister's Cabinet, blindly wedded to their pet Conference and its scheme, held out to the last minute; and now, in May, 1881, are obliged ignominiously to recommend Greece with threats to accept three-fifths. Her Majesty's Government stated over and over again that they would not withdraw from what they called the decision—there really was no decision at all—of the Conference at Berlin. In a Note of last October, the Ottoman Government declared that it would evacuate Dulcigno only on the following conditions:—First, that the Naval Demonstration was not to be repeated; secondly, that Janina and Metzovo were excluded from the territory demanded for Greece; and, further, that the Porte should be assured that the Powers renounced definitely the application then and for the future of all forcible pressure on the Empire. That pressure has been renounced, and I do not think it will be again repeated. All these points have been since conceded by Her Majesty's Government and by the Powers. They might have been obtained with ease six months ago, but for the opposition of the British Government. Greece and Turkey would have been saved great expense, and Europe much alarm, and imminent danger of war. Then there was the arbitration proposal of the French Government in December last, a very sensible and promising plan for bringing both parties to refer their differences to the five Powers of Europe, and agree to be bound by their decision. This was immediately accepted by the other Powers. England alone held aloof. Three times had the French Minister in London to beg Lord Granville to join in the "Concert of Europe" on this subject. Week after week was Mr. Corbett left without instructions; and then, finally, when he was allowed to join the other Envoys in their advice, it was with the same reservation that nothing less than the Conference Frontier should be recommended. Lord Granville's first observation regarding the Arbitration proposal was "that there was not much likelihood of the Powers" agreeing to it. Then, when the remarkable Circular of M. St. Hilaire, of January 7th, to the European Governments was made known to the British Cabinet, Lord Granville sent a despatch all over Europe, and in it actually denounced the arguments of the French Government as "Turkish reasons," without at all answering them. M. St. Hilaire, the French Foreign Minister, very properly replied that, whether they were Turkish reasons or not, they were sound and valid, and he adhered to them. That was a sample of the fairness of Her Majesty's Government towards Turkey. Finally, when arbitration failed, owing to the obstinate refusal of the Greek Government, encouraged by the action of the British Government, to make any concessions, Lord Granville could not conceal his joy. He informed the French Minister, on being told that it had failed, that "they were not premature in abandoning the scheme." So much for the "Concert of Europe," and the part played by Her Majesty's Government in that notable farce. In the next four months, we have no information whatever afforded by Her Majesty's Government. There is the unique and unprecedented fact that between the early part of January, 1881, and the end of April, 1881, not a single Paper has been issued. The reason is not far to see. Doubtless the gradual increase of the peril, the warnings of the Powers, the obstinacy of Greece, the ruin and cost of the warlike preparations, the slow and painful process by which the Prime Minister of England and the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and the President of the Board of Trade were brought to acquiesce in the opinions expressed by the other Powers five months before and even longer, are too awkward and unpleasant reading for Her Majesty's Government to lay before Parliament. The suppression of 70 pages of the Austrian Red Book—to effect which Sir Henry Elliot had been sent post haste to Pesth—was not more necessary for the reputation of the British Cabinet than the silence of their new Blue Books. They would not confess the absolute failure of their Conference at Berlin. The first effort of the new Government was that as Lord Beaconsfield had held a Congress, so they must hold a Conference. It was to settle everything off-hand, and do that in a fortnight which the late Government had failed to do in as many years. All went smoothly enough at first. By intriguing with "Republican France and free Italy," the Prime Minister's Cabinet got an unusual majority for its boundary line. Austria and Germany opposed it, but did not long resist, feeling sure that their time would come, and that the ridiculous failure of the exorbitant demands of the British Government would soon be made manifest. Lord Granville's piteous despatch of April, 1881, is their practical confession of failure. Read between the lines, it is the last moan over the blighted offspring of their hopes, the Berlin Conference, "the Concert of Europe," and the Naval Demonstration. "The Turkish reasons," so derided, have prevailed. The confession of failure is embodied in a despatch of April 6th from Lord Granville to Mr. Corbett—

> "The course of events have shown that these anticipations were of a sanguine character. The feeling of the Albanians created a difficulty which would in us be overlooked."

This is a valuable concession, for it is the first time Her Majesty's Government have admitted that Mussulmans have any feelings at all, or that, having them, such feelings are entitled to the slightest respect; but this very Albanian resistance was what every impartial critic inside and outside of Parliament had been predicting for 12 months. The cruel *fiasco* of Dulcigno has aroused a spirit of indignation throughout Albania which has lately culminated in open rebellion and serious bloodshed. The Dulcigno Demonstration did not settle, it only aggravated, the Albanian difficulty. Again, the despatch goes—"The opposition of the Porte became more marked." Another important admission. Formerly, Turkish opposition counted for less than nothing. It only existed to give the British Premier a chance of bringing the Porte down on its marrow-bones by main force.

> "It soon became evident that all Europe was not prepared to insist on the line laid down at the Berlin Conference. . . . . . This line could only be acquired under present circumstances to Greece as the result of a successful war against Turkey. This would be ruinous to Turkey, and scarcely less fatal to Greece. . . . Her Majesty's Government, though they would have preferred a line more nearly approaching that of the Conference, yet they feel it their duty to press upon Greece in the strongest manner the acceptance of the present arrangement."

Precisely so. But why did they not make this discovery and press this advice four, six, or eight months before, when they might have saved their *protégé* untold troubles and expense. The indisposition of the Powers of Europe to go to extremities was perfectly evident in October, November, and December of last year. It is remarkable to notice how closely the arguments used by Lord Granville on April 6th, 1881, resemble those used by M. St. Hilaire in December, 1880, and January, 1881, which arguments the British Cabinet denounced as "Turkish reasons." The French Minister well retorted that they were all the same "sound reasons;" and so sound were they that they won the victory in the end. In this and a preceding Note of April 6th, there is an attempt made to show that the terms finally offered to Greece were "decided upon by the Powers," and given as "an award." The Collective Note, however, of the Ambassadors at the Porte, dated April 19th, disproves this. It says—

> "After a full examination, the Representatives of the Powers at Constantinople unanimously concluded that the last proposals of the Ottoman Delegates might supply the basis of a solution. . . . . . These conclusions are henceforward formerly substituted by the Powers for those of the Conference of Berlin."

The truth being that the proposal of the Porte last January to re-open the negotiations by a Conference of the Ambassadors at Constantinople—and denied at the time by the hon. Baronet the Under Secretary of State for Foreigh Affairs for fear its admission should seem to throw a doubt on the infallibility and irrevocability of his favourite Berlin Conference—had been carried into effect, and, after long negotiations, the latest offer of Turkey had proved acceptable. Europe and England thus formally urged Greece to take two-fifths less than the Berlin Conference had suggested. The efforts of the British Foreign Office to substitute the words "award" and "decision" for those of "mediation" and "suggestions," and that with regard to both the Congress and Conference, are very amusing. In this respect they closely followed the example of the ingenious, but not ingenuous, Government of Greece, who always spoke and wrote of the conclusions of the two Assemblies as if they were "final awards." The Turkish Government, however, alive to its rights, and to the facts of the case, have never accepted these assumptions, and have always repudiated, quietly and with dignity, the attempt to get in the thin edge of the wedge of authoritative interference. The hon. Baronet the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and his Friends were always trying to assume the right of perpetual interference. But no such power was conferred by the Treaty of Berlin. This was made perfectly evident by the masterly argument with which M. St. Hilaire exposed the fallacies of the Greek claims in his Circular Despatch of January 7th, and in his Letter of December 28th :—

> "In both Assemblies, that is, the Congress and Conference of Berlin, the Powers neither wished to be, nor were, anything but mediators; their intention was to facilitate negotiations between the interested parties; they had no wish to go and they had not gone beyond this. They had not, as the Greek Government assumed, a sentence to be executed, for they had no right to take by force that which had not been conceded by the legitimate proprietor. Europe could not dispose of Crete, of Epirus, and of Thessaly, because Europe does not possess them, It had simply counselled Greece and Turkey to arrange a rectification of frontiers, and she had indicated what seemed a practical line."

Then, quoting *Vattel*, M. St. Hilaire says—

> "A mediator is not a judge. He is a conciliator. He must observe an exact impartiality. His vocation is to procure peace. This is exactly what the Conference of Berlin did, and as mediator it could not do more."

He then proceeds to point out how

> "Greece has interpreted matters quite differently, and persisted in this erroneous interpretation."

He adds—

> "Greece has not right on her side, and the aggression which she meditates is nothing but a gratuitous attack on the Law of Nations. She is not even menaced by Turkey, for the Porte only puts itself on the defensive against the attack which Greece announces."

Further on, M. St. Hilaire, after warning Greece of the fatal consequences that will result from her folly, ruin to herself, and in all probability a general war, says—

> "The mediating Powers have never accorded to Greece the right to seize by open force the territories which have not been legitimately conceded to it. Nations must guard themselves no less than individuals against these egotistic illusions."

In the Circular of January 7th, after quoting in detail the phraseology of the Congress and Conferences, M. St. Hilaire says of Protocol 13 of the Berlin Treaty, which offered mediation to facilitate negotiations—

> "Nothing is clearer than the different texts; their sense is not susceptible of the slightest equivocation. Europe never had any intention of regulating the property in territories which did not belong to it."

Of the Conference he writes—

> "It had no title to change nor to modify any of the intentions and stipulations of the Congress. But in effect the Conference absolutely did nothing more than execute the benevolent mediation offered by the Congress."

It suggested a

> "Fresh line on the advice of the International Commission, which might prove more acceptable to the two parties."

And so and so forth. I recommend every Member of the Greek Committee —and particularly the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold)—to read these two despatches of the Foreign Minister, and to answer them if they can. Nor does M. St. Hilaire stand alone. Baron Haymerle, on November 4th, said that the Austrian Government—

> "Had never assumed the responsibility of acquiring for her the new frontier which had been laid down, not as a line to be enforced, but as one upon which to mediate, and for the carrying out of which the Powers were as little pledged as to any of the other provisions of the Treaty of Berlin."

In this view Prince Bismarck concurred. This large cession of what Lord Granville calls "very fertile territory" to Greece, so long offered by the Porte, and now at last accepted, is, in fact, an act of pure grace on the part of Turkey, and one for which, as made by a stronger to a weaker Power, without a war, and without any compensating advantage, Turkey deserves the gratitude of Europe, as made in the interests of public peace. The Under Secretary of State for

Foreign Affairs is distinguished for the inaccuracy of his replies in this House. There is his famous statement as to the recall of General Skobeleff, introduced to point his arguments in a critical debate, which has been disproved. The hon. Gentleman made a speech at Chelsea in December last, every statement of which relative to this question was inaccurate. First, he said that the French proposed the Berlin Conference. A reference to these Papers will show that the British Government on May 4th, 1880, proposed an Identic Note to the Porte, and on May 11th proposed the Conference, before France had made any mention of it. It might be that France had over a year before, and to a different English Government, made some mention of a Conference; but there was no continuity in the proposal. This was an entirely fresh proposition on the part of Her Majesty's Government. Then there is the statement of the hon. Gentleman that the initiative properly belonged to France, and that she, rather than England, was responsible for what had happened owing to "the Concert" and the Demonstration. What was the opinion of the two French Foreign Ministers upon this extraordinary assumption? On August 4th, M. de Freycinet, in refusing to draw up the Collective Note to the Porte proposed by Great Britain, said—

> "With respect to the Greek Frontier Question he could not admit that the initiative remained with France. Her initiation entirely ceased from the period of the Berlin Conference."

And M. St. Hilaire, on November 8th, in objecting to the continuance of the Naval Demonstration, writes—

> "A Naval Demonstration would be utterly inadequate in the Greek case, and the French Government could not consent to any means which could be construed as pledging them to use their naval forces for settling the question of the Greek Frontier."

Yet, in spite of these emphatic declarations, the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs did not shrink from telling the English public that the chief responsibility rested with France, a sentiment which was re-echoed by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Leeds (Mr. Herbert Gladstone). It was true that Lord Granville himself, and through his agents abroad, made frantic efforts to get the French Government to assume the lead and the responsibility. Mr. Adams, the Chargé d'Affaires in Paris, after stating what an elaborate argument he had entered into to persuade M. de Freycinet to take the lead, says—

> "I then made a strong appeal to M. de Freycinet in favour of your Lordship's request, and I expressed the earnest hope that the French Government should draw up the collective rejoinder."

Subsequent attempts to entrap the French Ministers proved equally unfortunate, and the Collective Note, which met with such an effectual rebuff from the Porte, was drawn in London. Then there are the repeated inaccuracies of the hon. Gentleman with regard to the proportions of the Christian and Mussulman populations in the district proposed to be ceded by the Berlin Conference. On one occasion he stated that only one-seventh were Mussulmans. As a matter of fact, at least three-sevenths of the total are Mussulmans, and of the remaining four-sevenths, by no means all are anxious for union with Greece. The assertion seemed to be made on the authority of Mr. Kirby Green, who was a sort of stalking-horse for the hon. Baronet.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE denied that he had ever quoted Mr. Kirby Green as an authority. He had quoted others —Sir Lintorn Simmons and Captain Sale —but he had not quoted Mr. Green.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: I will accept the statement; but the hon. Baronet, who has spent his political life in denouncing the civil and military servants of the Crown, has gone out of his way no less than three times to eulogize Mr. Kirby Green, and that is enough to make others suspicious. What personal acquaintance has Sir Lintorn Simmons with these countries? It is like the hon. Baronet's (Sir Charles W. Dilke's) famous statement that most of the people of Dulcigno were Christians, whereas there is hardly a Christian in that district. When challenged to give details as to the population of certain of the chief cities, the hon. Baronet had egregiously failed, alleging as his excuse that he had the details for the whole districts, but not for the principal towns. But that was clearly inconsistent, and showed the unreliability of all the hon. Gentleman's figures. If any estimates would be accurate, they might be expected to be those for the large centres of the population whose amounts could be readily ascertained and checked. The hon. Baronet was, however, too wise to give details. I can, however, help the hon. Baronet. Taking Larissa as one of the chief towns in which the hon. Baronet stated the Greek population is in a majority, I find a Return of Mr. Consul Longworth, which states that there are 9,000 Mussulmans, 4,000 Christians, and 5,000 Jews — figures which are totally opposed to the estimates of the Government. Again, the hon. Baronet found grave fault in his Chelsea speech with Lord Salisbury, for stating that the *entente cordiale* with Austria and Germany had been broken by the present Government, and that the paramount influence of Russia and of France had been substituted. This is a notorious fact. The Government of Lord Beaconsfield had, in order to secure the carrying out of the Treaty of Berlin, and to preserve the balance of power in Europe, and to check the aggression of Russia, formed an alliance with the only two stable Powers of Europe—the great German States of Central Europe. This was an effectual guarantee for the peace of Europe; for no counter combination could be strong enough to defy such an alliance. But no sooner had the present Government come into Power than, in their anxiety to overthrow everything done by their Predecessors, they at once set to work to make fresh alliances. The admiration of the right hon. Gentleman the present Prime Minister for Russia, her Rulers, and everything connected with her despotism, is notorious. Then there are subsidiary preferences, such as that of the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs for an eminent French statesman. The hon. Baronet has, indeed, avowed his desire of carrying out a fresh policy in conjunction with what he calls "Free Italy and Republican France"—the old Republican tendencies of the hon. Gentleman once more asserting themselves even as a Minister of the Crown. The influence of Russia has been but too evident. The British Government wished to deal with the Greek Question first of all; but, in deference to the strong wishes of the Czar on behalf of his interesting *protegé*, the Prince of Montenegro, the least important clause of the Berlin Treaty had been put in the forefront, and the painful and absurd blunder of Dulcigno had been perpetrated. In the course of the Greek negotiations, the only Power that displays any cordiality towards the British Government was Russia. They have managed by their weakness and injustice to alienate "Republican France." "Free Italy," with much judgment, holds aloof from the complications their folly engendered. Russia alone is bursting over with affection. "She rejoices to accede to the British proposals." M. de Giers expresses "the warmest feelings of cordiality towards Her Majesty's Government." "The Russian Government are most anxious to do all in their power to act with the British Ministry;" and so forth. As to the changed feelings of Austria and Germany towards England, since the change of Government here, they are perfectly well-known. They are evident from the tone of the whole German Press, which was enthusiastic in its admiration of Lord Beaconsfield, and which is as unanimous in its condemnation of his Successors. Nor is it in Germany alone such a feeling prevails. In East or West—in America, in Asia, as well as in Europe, a similar estimate of the two Ministries is expressed. It is clear from these Papers, that the statement of the hon. Baronet that the Government is on perfectly good terms with Germany and Austria, is not supported by any evidence. Austria and Germany have, in a manner which alarmed Lord Granville, taken the initiative in advising Greece to moderate her demands. There is not a cordial word from Austria or Germany to be found in the Blue Books. The poor opinion Prince Bismarck holds of the present Government is a matter of notoriety; that estimate has steadily got lower and lower as he knows more of their incapacity. He has made it the subject of his common talk. I challenge the hon. Baronet to show a single instance in which the Austrian or German Government have shown any feeling of cordiality towards Her Majesty's Government. I charge the Government with having needlessly alienated the Turkish nation and the whole Mussulman feeling of the East. Hon. Members opposite do not regret this much. What have they got in exchange, however, for "the 500,000 of Ottoman warriors, who fought without pay and without reward?" Do they expect the wily and commercial Greek, the savage and truculent Bulgarian, the soft-hearted Servian, the wild Montenegrin, to be their allies in the future? If so, they will be grievously disappointed. The British people have not now a single Ally on whom they can depend in the troubles of the future. The name of Gladstone is associated throughout the whole East with persecution of the Mahometan religion and people. The course of the Government with regard to the Berlin Treaty has not tended to dissipate previous impressions. Of all the unfulfilled clauses of the Berlin Treaty, they have fixed upon those only which are to the loss of Turkey, and have totally neglected those which are in her favour. The Danubian fortresses are still standing; Russo-Bulgarian gunboats are still on the Danube; no tribute has been paid to the Porte by the Vassal Principalities; the Balkan line is still unoccupied by Ottoman troops; the Mussulman population is still oppressed and kept out of the enjoyment of its property. The mischief of this injustice is not only felt in Turkey alone, but it is working throughout the whole East. Do not let the Government imagine that in these days of rapid communication all these facts are not known to the Mahometans of India. The policy of the Government is having an evil effect among the 60,000,000 of Mussulman subjects of the Queen, and that is not a matter lightly to be disregarded. The Greek people, also, are most indignant at having been so grievously misled. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister is now as unpopular in Greece as he is in Ireland. The feeling among the Greeks is much what the feeling of the Danes was in 1864 after a similar betrayal by a Liberal Ministry. As to the claims of Greece, and the policy of the Government with regard to Greece, I ask on what grounds they are based? They are based on the pretended right of Nationality, and on the fact that the majority of the population of the district are said to be anxious to transfer their allegiance to the King of Greece. The principle of Nationality is often an extremely dangerous principle. It is one which has received much mischievous development of late years, and has largely supplanted an older and more important principle, the principle of liberty. It often proves to be not only injurious to the public peace, but subversive of liberty. I am disposed to ask what has Greece done to show herself worthy of the immense claims she is now making? How has she used her 60 years of freedom? Greece incurred a Debt 40 or 50 years ago; why has she not paid her Debt? Why do the Greeks abroad, though rolling in wealth, not contribute to the satisfaction of her honour by paying their country's liabilities? The Greek Governments are little to be relied upon. No Ministry exists in Greece more than six months, if it lasts so long. Greek politicians are all dishonest and corrupt. Only four good roads exist in the whole of Greece. The country has been drained to make a beautiful capital. I have sympathies with the Greek people, and should be glad to see them get a moderate accession of territory; but why should gross injustice be done to Turkey in order to satisfy the extreme demands of Greece? The only hope for the future of the Greeks is the preservation of the Ottoman Empire in Europe. If Turkey is destroyed, it will not be the Greek people who will succeed her; but it will be the more virile Sclavonian races. No policy could have been more disastrous to the Greek race than that of encouraging Russia. The events of 1876, 1877, 1878, have been fatal to the progress of Greece. Previous to their occurrence Greeks occupied the highest position in the Ottoman Empire, and their intellectual superiority would soon have given them dominant influence throughout the Empire. But that influence has been destroyed, and the Russians and the Bulgarians have persecuted the Greek people, and driven them out of the Balkan Provinces. The Blue Books of the last three years are full of the complaints of the Greeks against the Russians and the Bulgarians. The Greeks, with all their intellectual refinement and commercial ability, are deficient in the virile qualities found in the Turkish and even in the Bulgarian people. The Turkish peasantry are, perhaps, the finest peasantry in the world; no people are so courageous, honest, and truthful, and religious; but I am speaking of the people, and not of the Government. The noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India laughs at that statement. [The Marquess of HARTINGTON: I did not hear it.] It is to be regretted that the noble Marquess pays as little attention to important statements—[*Laughter*]—as he does to the speeches of his own Colleagues. I challenge anyone to controvert my statement as to the good qualities of the Turkish people, the possession of which is affirmed by all who have had dealings with them. If the Greeks succeed in annihilating the Ottoman Empire in the present struggle, I warn them that they will do away with the only people who can assist them in resisting Sclavonian aggression in the future. It is only by a cordial alliance with Turkey that the Greek people can hope to survive the dangerous and difficult position in which they now find themselves. I am afraid that I have detained the House much too long; and I thank it for the patient and attentive hearing I have received. I regret that I have not been able, owing to the late hour of the evening, to do justice to the Blue Books. I could make a very large number of quotations which would be exceedingly awkward hearing for Her Majesty's Government; but I will not abuse the indulgence of the House. The policy of Her Majesty's Government has been unfortunate and disturbing, not only in Greece, but in every quarter of the globe, has alienated our Allies, has not obtained for us a single friend, and has tended to disturb the balance of power in Europe. The Greek Minister has, in public speech in the Parliament at Athens, given evidence of the disturbing effect which the advent to power of the present Ministry has had—

> "The Party which came into power in England has publicly assumed obligations towards the English nation to work on behalf of the Greek Question. At once we set ourselves to work. . . . . We gave orders for war material, and we commenced then to negotiate a loan."

So it is throughout the whole world. In Central Asia, the hasty retreat from Cabul and the weakening of the garrison of Candahar encouraged Ayoub's march, and led to the terrible disaster of Maiwand. In South Africa, the Boers, incited to rebellion by the reckless harangues of Members of the present Ministry, broke out into rebellion, and inflicted painful reverses upon the British arms. A war conducted with discredit has been concluded with dishonour. Even at home the same warlike and injurious effects have been produced. Ireland has been allowed to arm, and that country has, by the weakness, and worse, of the Ministry, been converted from "a state of unusual peace and prosperity" into a "condition that is a shame and disgrace to England in the eyes of the civilized world." The whole of the East has been stirred into action. From Kurdistan to Albania armed men have sprung into existence like Deucalion's crop; and no one can foresee the end of the present complications. The policy of Her Majesty's Government has produced anarchy at home and disturbance abroad; and if European war has been averted, it is in no way due to their action, but to the moderating influence of Austria and Germany. I beg to move the Resolution of which I have given Notice.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "Her Majesty's Government, by their encouragement to the Greeks to mobilise their army, by their injustice to Turkey, and by their refusal to publicly advise Greece to moderate her excessive demands, have alienated the Mussulman feeling of the East, have imposed overwhelming burdens upon the Greek Nation, and have tended to disturb the peace of Europe,"—(*Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE said, he was much astonished when the hon. Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) originally gave Notice of his Amendment; but he was still more amazed when he found the hon. Gentleman intended to bring it forward that night, because the statements of the Amendment were, he was sorry to say, of a piece with the hon. Member's speech—that was to say, they were statements which most undoubtedly could not be borne out in fact. The speech of the hon. Member had been, indeed, very wide of the Amendment, because he not only discussed the transfer of Dulcigno, which was not mentioned in the Amendment, but he had alluded to the affairs of Central Asia, of the Transvaal, of Ireland, and other portions of the world. No one could obtain the slightest information as to the nature of his speech from the words placed upon the Paper. Neither was it possible for him to understand that the hon. Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) intended to devote a great part of his remarks to a speech which he (Sir Charles W. Dilke) made in Kensington in December last. The hon. Member did not inform him that he intended to refer to that speech; otherwise, he (Sir Charles W. Dilke) would have refreshed his memory. He was the more astonished that the hon. Member should have brought forward that Amendment to-night, because, a few days ago, the country was addressed through the Press by the Leader of the Opposition in that House; and, although the right hon. Gentleman made a most elaborate and lengthy attack on the conduct of the Government, he refrained from saying a single word upon their conduct of foreign affairs. He rather gathered from the tone of the right hon. Gentleman's speech, which embraced not only Colonial, Home, and Irish, but other questions, that he did not omit foreign affairs from any desire to omit them, but because he found no criticism which he could justly apply to them.

CAPTAIN PRICE said, he must beg the hon. Baronet's pardon. He (Captain Price) was present at the meeting, and the right hon. Baronet made the most distinct allusions to the affairs of South Africa.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that the Department he represented had no responsibility for South Africa. The hon. Member for Eye, in referring to the speech to which he had alluded, ascribed to him words which certainly he had never used. The hon. Member, speaking of what he said with respect to Germany and Austria and our relations with those Powers, told the House that we were entirely out of harmony with them and received no friendly assurances from them.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, he disputed the accuracy of the hon. Baronet's representation of his remarks, and would like him to state what the words were which he (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) had quoted from the hon. Baronet's speech. He had merely stated that there were no friendly assurances from the Powers contained in the Blue Books.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he was unable to write down all the hon. Member's words; but the words in which he undoubtedly misrepresented him were when he said that he (Sir Charles W. Dilke) desired to substitute an alliance with Italy and France for the general concord with the European Powers. The hon. Member had not given the reference, and he confessed that he was unable to follow him.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, he had not referred to that particular speech. He could not state the exact date on which the words were used, but they were quoted by the correspondent of a Hungarian newspaper, and also appeared in all the English papers. The words of the hon. Baronet amounted to an announcement that the Government intended to pursue a policy "in accord with Free Italy and Republican France."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he had never had any communication with the correspondent of a Hungarian newspaper, and had never seen anything purporting to be a report of anything of the kind. The hon. Member had forgotten the mode in which the last phase of the Greek Question had been approached. The present settlement of the Greek Question had, according to the opinion of all the Powers, been reached by an agreement at Berlin between Mr. Goschen and Prince Bismarck, which led to the united action of Germany and England. [MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: When?] That was when Mr. Goschen returned to Constantinople and visited Berlin in the course of his journey. In the closing words of his speech, the hon. Member had used very unjust and ungenerous language with regard to the Greeks—language that was out of harmony with that of the Leaders of the Conservative Party, and at variance with the declarations of several Members of the late Government, including the late Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, the late President of the Board of Trade, the late Postmaster General, and the present Leader of the Opposition in that House. The statements of the hon. Member did not coincide with what those hon. and right hon. Gentlemen had said. When the hon. Member had compared the conduct of Greece to that of a burglar or a footpad—[MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT dissented.] He had quoted the words of the hon.

Gentleman, which he had taken down at the time.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT rose, amid loud cries of "Order!" and said, that the hon. Baronet was misrepresenting him. He, therefore, felt bound to correct him, and explain what it was he really had said. He had said that the arguments of those who defended the Greek claims on certain grounds were arguments that might have been used by burglars or footpads.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE replied, that those were arguments that had been used by the late Government, who had maintained that Greece deserved the consideration of her territorial claims on account of her conduct during the late war. The hon. Member had also spoken of Greece in a disparaging manner, on the ground that brigandage was still rife in that country; but the fact was that, on the contrary, Greece had earned credit for having purged herself of that curse. ["Oh, oh!"] At any rate, no case of brigandage had occurred in Greece during the political recollection of the hon. Member. Again, the arguments of the hon. Member as to the present position of Greece were at variance with the view taken by Baron Haymerle, the Minister of Austria, his favourite Power, whose language was wholly inconsistent with that of the hon. Member. Then, to pass on to another point. The hon. Member had, in more than one part of his speech, made merry over the statistics of the Foreign Office, while his own figures were far less trustworthy. He had spoken, for instance, of the massacre of 1,000,000 of innocent people in Bulgaria—a statement wholly contrary to fact, but on a par with the romantic character of many passages in his speech. He was sorry that his criticisms on the speech of the hon. Member were necessarily so discursive; but that was unavoidable, as the hon. Member had not kept to the terms of his Motion, but had delivered all the speeches that he ought to have made on the four occasions on which he had had Notices in the Order Book. It was to be borne in mind, however, that the hon. Member had not always been fortunate enough to find an opportunity of bringing on his Motion, and had, therefore, been compelled, during the hour in which he had given unmixed amusement to those who sat opposite him and pain to his own Friends, to compress all his speeches into one. Then the hon. Member told the House that the result of our policy would be the destruction of the Turkish Empire, and that the destruction of the Turkish Empire would be the annihilation of the Turkish race.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT, interposing, remarked that he did not say it was their policy.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE said, he took down the words at the time the hon. Member uttered them. The hon. Member shook his head when he told him that he had spoken at considerable length of the Dulcigno incident. The House was informed by the hon. Member that there was a ridiculous disproportion between the force displayed and the result achieved. In point of fact, however, the transfer had been successfully accomplished and carried into effect. And when the desired result had been achieved, we ought not to be too much disposed to talk about the disproportion of means to ends. The hon. Member had stated that many thousands of Albanians had been transferred from the Government which they preferred to the rule of a Government which they detested. There was no shadow of a foundation for that statement. Her Majesty's Government were officially informed that there was now no portion of the population of Dulcigno that had permanently left the town or the district in consequence of the transfer. The few families—under 20 in number—who left the town in order to avoid the transfer had now returned, and nothing could be more popular than the Montenegrin rule in the district of Dulcigno at the present time. Again, the hon. Gentleman told the House that the concert of Europe had broken down, and that the result was obtained by Austria and Germany, and not by the other Powers. It was on record, however, that it was the proposal with regard to the Smyrna scheme that induced the Porte to consent to the Dulcigno proposition. The hon. Member's account of the transactions with regard to the Greek Frontier was as romantic as his account of the Dulcigno affair. In one portion of his speech the hon. Member attacked Her Majesty's Government for having promoted the concert of Europe, and in another for having destroyed it. In regard to the charge that Her

Majesty's Government encouraged the Greeks to mobilize their Army and went beyond the other Powers in this direction, he must once more place the real facts before the House. Her Majesty's Government having been informed that the Greek Government intended to mobilize their forces, Mr. Corbett was instructed on the 7th of July last to inform the Greek Government that Her Majesty's Government considered such a step to be premature. On the 28th of July, as it appeared that all the other Powers except England had withdrawn their objections, Her Majesty's Government were unwilling to incur the responsibility of imposing their advice on the Greek Government, and they then ceased to press them any further to abstain from issuing the proclamation, if they thought it necessary to do so. The Greek Minister so informed the Greek Chamber on the 29th of July. The same statement was repeated to Mr. Corbett on the 30th of July and the 3rd of August. M. Tricoupi stated in the Greek Chamber on November 10, that—

> "All the Powers one after another ceased to represent to the Greek Government that they were opposed to the issue of the mobilization decree, and, last of all, England gave up its representation concerning the postponement of the mobilization."

On January 1, 1881, Mr. Corbett was instructed to support the arbitration scheme, not only on the ground of the general objections of Her Majesty's Government to a war,

> "The necessity for which might be avoided by peaceable means, but on the particular risk and danger both of war and even of preparations for war in the present case."

On February 17, 1881, Mr. Corbett told the Prime Minister, in reply to his statement that the King was advised to call out the Reserves at once, that the proceeding appeared very ill-timed, and pressed upon M. Coumoundouros the importance of explaining clearly to the country and to the Powers that the step contemplated was not meant as a menace against Turkey. M. Coumoundouros assured Mr. Corbett that explanations should be given in that sense, which was done. [MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: That is not published.] It would be published. So much for the statement that Her Majesty's Government pressed Greece to mobilize her forces. He thought, however, it would be impossible to convince the hon. Gentleman by any argument. It was not easy, perhaps, to keep up the concert of six European Powers; but when it was maintained its action was as valuable as it was difficult to secure. Her Majesty's Government had succeeded in saving Europe from war, both immediately and in the future. The hon. Member had taunted the Government with having failed in obtaining a sufficiently advanced frontier for Greece. At any rate, Her Majesty's Government had obtained a far better frontier for her than the hon. Member and those who thought with him would have done. They had secured for Greece 14-20ths of the population she sought to obtain, and the most fertile of the Provinces she had asked for. The hon. Member had raised the question of the accuracy of the Foreign Office statistics, and had been peculiarly severe upon Mr. Kirby Green; but it must be recollected that that gentleman had the confidence not only of the present Government, but of the late Government, and that he never had any connection whatever with the Greek Frontier Question. The figures on this subject, to which the hon. Member had objected, were supplied by the late Government. The hon. Member had also attacked Sir Lintorn Simmons, who certainly knew more on this subject than any other man in Europe. The hon. Member had taunted the Government with having brought about universal war, whereas, in fact, they had brought about universal peace. It was true that the area of freedom secured was less than the Government had expected to obtain; nevertheless, Her Majesty's Government had constantly been on the side of the greatest possible extension. They had prevented war, and had done so by means that he was satisfied did not deserve the censure of that House.

MR. O'DONNELL could not but regret that the hon. Baronet (Sir Charles W. Dilke) had marred the general effect of his speech by commenting upon the supposed ignorance of his adversary of that French language of which he intimated that he himself was such a proficient. On the whole, he (Mr. O'Donnell) considered it was at least open to the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to suppose that the hon. Member for Eye was of opinion that a document in the French language, though quite open to the comprehension of the Liberal Party of the House, might not be equally clear to the electors of the country, and, consequently, that where Blue Books in the French language professing to explain the general policy of the Government were put in circulation by them, there was a certain difficulty among true-born Britons in following that policy. He would admit that if they kept an eye on only one of the policies offered by Her Majesty's Government on Eastern Affairs, the explanation offered by the Under Secretary was cogent and convincing ; but the fact was, that the Government had at least two policies with regard to Grecian matters. There was the official, above board, behind the Table, which was always observable in the able and convincing statements of the Under Secretary when Questions were put from that (the Conservative) side of the House; but, then, alongside of this policy on Grecian affairs was what he might call the Greek Committee policy. The Under Secretary, whose dexterity in dealing with foreign affairs he himself had had some reason to admire, doubtless had convinced the House that the Government never encouraged the Greeks to expect extensive concessions from Turkey, and had never encouraged the armament of Greece. Strictly speaking, in an official manner, this could be proved; but there was the awkward fact that, at this moment, the popular Press in Greece was complaining that the "Gladstone" policy had misled them—that, owing to that policy, as explained by such credited Representatives as Lord Rosebery, for instance, the Greeks had been led to mortgage their remaining resources, to plunge themselves in debt, and to call out all their male population, the result being that they only obtained about half that which Her Majesty's Government—if not officially, at least unofficially—gave them to understand they would secure by agitation. In the manipulation of diplomatic documents by the Government, everything had depended upon the position of a comma ; but it was not by the position of a comma that the world at large would judge the policy of Her Majesty's Government with regard to Eastern affairs. It so happened that the Greek Government believed that Her Majesty's Government were prepared at one time to back them up through thick and thin ; and he strongly suspected that Her Majesty's Government would have done so, only for that inconvenient default of the French Government just in the nick of time. When Her Majesty's Government thought they were going to begin a crusade against the Turks, France said that not a shot should be fired by her in support of the belligerent policy of England. Undoubtedly, as the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock had said, there had been other declarations besides those of Lord Rosebery which had misled the Greeks. He did not refer to the utterances of that all-important Member of the Liberal Party, the Member for Salford, but there had been the speeches of the Colleague of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. No one who had read in the magazines statements as to the part the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Chamberlain) had taken in obtaining the success of the Liberal Party through his marvellous caucus organization could doubt that, when the President of the Board of Trade addressed the men of Birmingham, and assured them of what England was going to do for Greece, the Greeks who read his sentiments must have believed that one of the most important Members of the Liberal camp was giving them the pledge of Liberalism —and, of course, the Greeks were not supposed to be as fully acquainted as hon. Members were of the value of the pledges of Liberalism. Of course, it was not necessary to follow the discursive reply of the hon. Baronet the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs too closely ; but he might point out to him that it really was hardly an argument to lay before the House of Commons, even at this advanced hour of the night, to say that the people of Dulcigno were in favour of being transferred to Montenegro, because so very few of them had consented to be torn from the land of their birth and take up a settlement in some other part of the Ottoman Empire. If the Under Secretary was capable of that argument he might, with equal justice, argue that because the Irish population did not emigrate to America *en masse*, therefore, the policy the Government of that country represented was in the highest possible favour in Ireland. The hon. Member for Eye might not have been able to pin down Her Majesty's Government to official statements, especially when it could be easily shown that even when official statements had been forthcoming, and when attempts had been made to pin them down to those statements, they had replied on another tack. The general belief in Europe was that Her Majesty's Government had directly encouraged the Greeks to expect more than they got; and that after promising mountains, Her Majesty's Government had been obliged to agree to a policy in which the Greeks had obtained only little more than mole-hills. It was said that England and Germany had taken the initiative—had gone hand-in-hand in arriving at a triumphant settlement. But there was more than one way in which two persons could take the initiative. For instance, there was this way—Prince Bismarck, seeing the difficulty Her Majesty's Government were in, put out his strong arm and tucked under it the Representative of British Foreign policy, and carried him in the way the German Chancellor was going. That might be described as "England and Germany taking the initiative;" but he was afraid that, beyond being an official explanation, the statement would not be of much value. With the few trifling exceptions that he had ventured to point out, he agreed, generally, with the explanations of the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question," put, and *agreed to.*

Mr. SPEAKER: The Question is "That I do now leave the Chair." As many as are of that opinion say "Aye;" contrary, "No."

Mr. GORST: "No."

Mr. SPEAKER: I think the "Ayes" have it.

Mr. GORST: The "Noes" have it.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not know whether the hon. and learned Member who challenges the division wishes to keep me in the Chair.

Mr. GORST: I rise to Order, Mr. Speaker. I do not wish to keep you in the Chair; but I submit that the Motion should not be allowed to be withdrawn.

Mr. SPEAKER: If the hon. and learned Member desires a division on the Question, that is another matter. The Question is "That I do now leave the Chair."

Earl PERCY: I should like to ask you, Sir, what position are we now in? As I understand it, the Motion of the hon. Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) has been negatived, and the present Question before us is "That you do now leave the Chair."

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Supply—*considered* in Committee.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Monday* next.

PARLIAMENTARY OATHS (MOTION FOR BILL).

ADJOURNED DEBATE.

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [2nd May], "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair" for Committee on the Parliamentary Oaths (Motion for Bill).

Question again proposed.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be further adjourned till Tuesday next, at Two of the clock."—(*Lord Frederick Cavendish.*)

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, he objected to the Motion. He, for one, at all events, had no wish that the Bill the Government had to introduce should not be, as soon as possible, in the hands of Members. He was anxious that not only the House but the country should be able to proceed to judgment on the Bill; therefore, it was not with the view of preventing the Government from making progress that he made the present objection, but it was because he altogether rejected the proposal for a Morning Sitting on a Tuesday early in May, without a much stronger reason being alleged by the Government than any which had yet been offered, or than he was able to imagine. It seemed to him that the Government had attempted this Session to reverse every tradition that had hitherto governed the House. They began the Session a month earlier than usual. No sooner had they begun it than an entirely new engine was devised for managing their debates. Before Easter the rights of private Members were entirely sacrificed—he admitted for a great public object—and they met after Easter on a most unusual day for the transaction of Business. And now the Government intended to add to this long list of innovations the innovation of taking a Morning Sitting as early as the 10th of May. He would like to know what the justification for this course was? The Government, they knew, intended to bring in a Bill. Was this Bill for the relief of any large class of Her Majesty's subjects? Was it to carry out any principle of reform? He was perfectly aware that in its provisions the Bill was general, that it dealt with a class in form and not with an individual. But he apprehended there was no man in the House who doubted for a moment that the whole object of the Bill was to deal with an individual and not with a class. The Bill was general in form, but it was particular in substance—it dealt with an individual as truly as a Bill of Attainder and a Bill of Indemnity did. Everyone knew that it was simply brought in to meet a difficulty which one single individual, by his own conduct, created. He had nothing more to put before the House; but he wanted to ask the Government this one question. Were they prepared to state that the measure they were laying before the House was one of great public importance—were they prepared to state that they were going to confer a benefit upon any large class of Her Majesty's subjects? If they were prepared to make these statements, the House would know exactly on what ground it was that Ministers wished to take away the rights of private Members who had Bills on the Paper for Tuesday, and to introduce a most dangerous innovation in Parliament. It was most important for them not to assent to any precedent rashly. If their debates were governed by precedents, next year, or the year after, the Government then in power might wish to trespass upon the rights of private Members, and might wish to bring forward some measure which a large section of the House might think of small importance. They might wish to have a Morning Sitting soon after Easter; and if the House assented to the Motion now made, a future Government would be able to refer to the precedent established this year and to say—"How can you refuse what you granted in 1881?" For these reasons, he hoped the House would refuse to pass the extraordinary Motion now made; and he begged to move as an Amendment that the words "Two of the clock" be omitted from the Motion.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the words "at Two of the clock."—(*Mr. Arthur Balfour.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'at Two of the clock' stand part of the Question."

Sir JOHN HAY asked, whether this was not an opposed Motion, which, owing to the half-past 12 o'clock Rule, could not be taken, due Notice of the opposition having been given?

Mr. SPEAKER: This is an Order of the Day, and the House cannot do otherwise than postpone it. It is the duty of the hon. Member in charge of the Bill to state what he proposes to do with the Order of the Day—either to proceed with it at once, or to postpone it. I do not consider the Rule with regard to opposed Business applies in this case.

Mr. GORST rose to another point of Order. He wished to ask whether it was open to any Member of the House to postpone an Order of the Day to a time which, in the ordinary course, the House would not be sitting? The House had never resolved that it would sit on Tuesday at 2 o'clock, and, according to the Standing Orders and Rules by which Business was conducted, the time of sitting on Tuesday was 4 o'clock. The House having made no other different Resolution, the time at which they might be expected to meet on Tuesday was therefore 4 o'clock. In illustration, he might ask whether it was competent for an hon. Member to propose the postponement of an Order of the Day until Sunday? If the House had already resolved to sit on Tuesday at 2 o'clock, he could understand the Motion.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have to say that, according to the ordinary practice of the House, the House fixes the hour at which it will sit. If no particular hour is specified at which the House will meet on a given day, the House will sit at the usual time. It is competent for the House to fix any particular hour it thinks fit.

Sir HENRY SELWIN-IBBETSON said, he should be the last person probably in the House, with the experience he had had of the difficulty of conducting the Business, to interpose any objection to the course proposed by the Government on this occasion except for one particular reason. The House ought to consider very carefully the question of the rights of private Members. Now, Tuesday next, in the ordinary course of things, would be devoted to the consideration of a question which affected a very large class of people in the country, whose interests had long been in abeyance, and whose case it was very anxiously expected would be brought under the notice of the House on Tuesday. He need hardly remind the House how difficult it was after a Sitting had been taken to get in the evening that attention directed to any particular subject which the subject might very properly deserve. The hon. and gallant Member for South Ayrshire (Colonel Alexander) had, on more than one occasion, obtained the first place for the consideration of the question of police superannuation throughout the country; and on two occasions already this Session, when he had so obtained the first place, he had been obliged to forego it for the convenience of the Government. And now, again, with fortune which was perhaps unequalled, he had obtained the first place for Tuesday next; and it did seem hard that a large class of people, whose case the hon. and gallant Gentleman hoped to bring before the House on Tuesday, should have, for the third time this Session, to submit, in consequence of the appeal of the Government, to a postponement of the consideration of their claims to a time which might never arise during the present Session. It was scarcely necessary to say how difficult it was for private Members to obtain opportunities for the discussion in this House of questions in which they were particularly interested; and it was hard if they were, at an early period like the present, to lose the opportunities they had gained after much labour and waiting. But it was doubly hard if they were required to sacrifice for the third time during a Session the opportunities so obtained. He did not like, from the experience he had gained in the House, to offer any opposition to the Motion of the Government; but he thought the House ought to consider that, in agreeing to the Motion, they would be dealing almost unfairly with a class of men who had long and anxiously been wishing for their grievance to be brought before the House, and who had at last obtained an opportunity, which, however, they seemed on the point of losing.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON gathered from the tone of the few speeches delivered that there would not be any reason for any very great difference of opinion between the two sides of the House upon this occasion. The hon. Baronet the Member for West Essex (Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson) had based his objection upon the importance of the Business which was already on the Paper for Tuesday next. He (the Marquess of Hartington) thought he was in the recollection of the House when he said that many most animated and important debates had taken place at an Evening Sitting. Of course, if the House agreed to the Motion which had been made by the Government to give a Morning Sitting to the consideration of the introduction of the Parliamentary Oaths Bill, the Government would feel bound to do whatever was in their power to make a House in the evening. It, moreover, seemed to him that if the subject to be discussed first thing on Tuesday was, as he had no doubt it was, of that importance to deserve attention, there would be, apart from any undertaking on the part of the Government, a sufficient attendance to insure its adequate consideration. His hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Courtney) informed him, though he did not wish to put it forward as a matter of much importance, that the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Ayr must be under no apprehension that the subject of police superannuation would escape the attention of the Government; in fact, matters had proceeded so far that a Bill had been drafted by the Government authorities on the subject. The hon. Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour) had said he was extremely anxious to see the measure of the Government brought in, and to see what the Government proposals were on the subject. [Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: No!] He understood the hon. Member to say he was anxious to see the Bill, but that he required very strong reasons to justify him in assenting to a departure from the ordinary practice of the House in taking a Morning Sitting at so early a period of the Session. The hon. Member need not be alarmed that they would establish any dangerous precedent if they agreed to the present Motion, for he was informed that in

1879 the late Government asked for and obtained from the House a Morning Sitting on the 6th of May for the purpose of considering a Valuation Bill, to which they attached so little importance that it was abandoned before the close of the Session. But the hon. Member wanted strong reasons to persuade him of the importance of the Bill, and he asked whether it was intended to relieve a very large class of persons? He (the Marquess of Hartington) thought there was very little difference of opinion that the Bill was one of a most important character, and that whether it affected a large class of persons or not, or whether it be for the relief of Mr. Bradlaugh, or a large number of Her Majesty's subjects, it was undoubtedly a Bill which was pressing, inasmuch as it would relieve the House itself. As was pointed out by the Attorney General the other night, the suggestion that this difficulty ought to be met, and could only be met by legislation, came last year from the Front Opposition Bench—from the right hon. Gentleman the late Home Secretary (Sir R. Assheton Cross). During the present Session the suggestion had been made on both sides of the House. The House had undoubtedly found itself in a very considerable difficulty. ["No, no!"] He did not blame the majority of the House; but it had, by passing a certain Resolution, placed the House in a position of considerable difficulty. The majority would make no definite proposal; but, after a great deal of unseemly discussion, a suggestion came from both sides of the House that the difficulty should be met, and ought to be met, by legislation. The Government were very far from saying the legislation they proposed was the proper remedy; but, at all events, it was the proposal they had to make to the House. The Government were anxious to lay before the House as soon as possible a proposal to meet the case; and surely it was a matter of importance that the House should be relieved from the position of difficulty and embarrassment in which it found itself. If ever there was a legitimate occasion for a Morning Sitting it was the present. For these reasons, he thought the House would be disposed to assent to the Motion.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS: My right hon. Friend the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) is unfortunately unable to be here to-night; but we have had some correspondence on this matter, and on his behalf and my own, and that of my Colleagues, I have to say that we undoubtedly object to a Morning Sitting on Tuesday. Whatever may have happened under peculiar circumstances in 1879 — into which I will not enter at this moment—it is very well to quote one instance, but not without taking the surrounding circumstances which made it necessary at the moment into consideration. We object to a Morning Sitting at this early period of the Session under such extraordinary circumstances; but when we come to what the circumstances are, our opinion undoubtedly is that they make rather for not giving facilities than for giving facilities. The noble Lord has said that the House is agreed that there should be legislation, and has referred to something which fell from me in the early part of the discussion, to the effect that legislation was the only way of dealing with the subject. What I stated was, that for those persons who wished to introduce Mr. Bradlaugh into the House the only possible way was by legislation. I was perfectly convinced that he could neither affirm nor take the Oath; but it is one thing to say that, and another to give facilities for legislation; and I, for one, can only say that I have no wish to admit Mr. Bradlaugh into this House at all. Whatever the substance of the proposed Bill may be, I should feel bound to vote against it; and, under these circumstances, I—and my right hon. Friend who has asked me to speak to-night is of the same opinion—am of opinion that it is a question on which there is not the slightest reason, but rather the contrary, for giving facilities. The Bill should come forward in the ordinary course. It is objected to by a large number of persons in this House, and we can see no reason for giving facilities for bringing in a Bill to which we strongly object.

Mr. HEALY wished to draw a parallel between the way in which the Government had treated one hon. Member of that House, and the way in which they had treated another hon. Member. One hon. Member who, in the last Session, acted towards them in a way which was exceedingly servile, and who had stated that he did not believe in God, and was charged by some people with having blasphemed God, was, in order that he might obtain admission to the

House, to get from the hands of the Government the extraordinary favour of a Morning Sitting all to himself. Another hon. Member, whose only offence was that he had saved hundreds of people from starvation, and had gone through America hat in hand begging for the starving people of his country, and had prevented families from being evicted; who had not blasphemed God, but who had blasphemed the Government in Ireland, had not been allowed a minute's time for the discussion of his arrest.

Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 128; Noes 122: Majority 6.—(Div. List, No. 195.)

Main Question proposed.

MR. RITCHIE, in rising to move the adjournment of the debate, said, he thought that after the division which had just taken place, and looking to the divided nature of the opinion of the House on the subject, as evidenced by the narrow majority the Government had obtained, such a departure from the ordinary mode of taking Business ought not to be insisted on. Therefore, in order to give the Government time for further reflection on their extraordinary position, he should conclude by moving the adjournment of the debate. The noble Lord had said that the object of the Bill was to get the House out of a position of great difficulty, in which its action the other day had placed it; but he considered that the House was placed in a position of difficulty, not by the action of the House, but by the non-action of the Government.

MR. MONK rose to Order. The right hon. Gentleman in the Chair had, on a previous occasion, ruled that it was not necessary for the House to decide to what future day a debate should be adjourned, and that it was not competent to an hon. Member to move the adjournment of a debate. He (Mr. Monk) had, therefore, to ask, whether it was not necessary that the day for the resumption of the debate should now be fixed?

MR. SPEAKER: The judgment of the House with regard to the time at which this debate should be resumed is about to be finally taken on the Question now proposed from the Chair. The hon. Member is not out of Order.

MR. RITCHIE, continuing, said, the difficulty in which the House found itself was owing to the want of action on the part of the Leader of the House in not seeing that the conclusion to which the House came was carried out. The House surely had power to see that its Resolutions were carried into effect without any alteration in the law; and he maintained that it was totally unnecessary that in order to carry out the Resolution of the House the Government should propose an alteration of the law, and to do that by the unusual course, at this time of the year, of a Morning Sitting. The noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Hartington) had told the House that the last Government had asked the House to sit in the morning in the beginning of May; but this year there was an altogether different state of circumstances, for the House met a month before the usual time, and until within the last week or two the Government had had control over every day of the Session. Now they proposed, by the method they asked the House to adopt, to still further curtail the rights of private Members, as there could not be any doubt that there was not that amount of energy and vigour shown when the House met at 9 o'clock in the evening as when it met in the ordinary way. He wished to warn the House as to what they were about to embark in. The question was not only one of a Morning Sitting, but it was one of carrying this Bill through by Morning Sittings. It was perfectly useless and idle for the Government to say that they only wanted a Morning Sitting to place the Bill in the hands of the House. The Leader of the House did not disguise the fact that the only method by which he hoped to carry the Bill was by Morning Sittings; and if the House consented to depart from the ordinary course and commenced Morning Sittings on Tuesday, the next thing the Government would propose would be to have Morning Sittings on Fridays and Tuesdays, and so coerce the House until this Bill was passed. The object of the Morning Sitting was to pass a Bill in which the country was not generally interested. It was to give admission to a Gentleman who had been elected, and had come before the House on two or three occasions proposing to enter the House in two or three different ways. It was immaterial to him in what way he entered, or what principles he sacrificed; but the House was asked to sacrifice a great principle in order to admit him — to adopt a course involving matters of serious moment to the country in order to admit this man. If they were going to have Morning Sittings there were plenty of measures which the Government might deal with which were of much more importance that the admission of Mr. Bradlaugh. There was a question in which a much larger number of persons were interested, which they might bring forward. What had become of that Bill in which every inhabitant of the Metropolis was interested—the Metropolitan Water Supply Bill? Hon. Members who were in the last Parliament would remember distinctly that every Gentleman now sitting on the Treasury Bench constantly pressed the Government, in season and out of season, to take up that measure, looking at the importance of passing it into law. Yet it was now placed on one side and ignored. If the Government were to ask the House and private Members to sacrifice their time and meet at 2 o'clock in the day in the beginning of the month of May, it ought to be for the purpose of dealing with questions of great Imperial importance, and not such a question as the admission of Mr. Bradlaugh into Parliament. The Jews and the Roman Catholics were knocking at the door of that House for years before they were admitted; but the Government now came down in hot haste and asked for the admission of Mr. Bradlaugh against the wishes of an immense majority of the people of the country the moment he presented himself. Under all the circumstances, and in order to give the Government time for further reflection as to the extraordinary course they proposed to adopt, he would move that the debate be now adjourned.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER begged to second the Motion of his hon. Friend (Mr. Ritchie). He approved of the proposition of his hon. Friend, but upon somewhat different grounds from those which he had assigned. His hon. Friend made a strong point of the rights of private Members; but he (Mr. R. N. Fowler) wished to point out that the Government had a most important measure before the House—the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill—and if they asked for a Morning Sitting for the sake of proceeding with that important measure, which considerably affected the interests of the commercial community, probably no objection would have been raised. But what was it that Her Majesty's Government were asking a Morning Sitting for? The hon. Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour) said he was anxious to see the Bill. He (Mr. R. N. Fowler) had no curiosity to see the Bill. He thought it had been sufficiently explained by the statement of the hon. and learned Attorney General. There was no doubt whatever what the Bill was. It was a Bill to admit into that House an hon. Member who, by his own confession, was an Atheist; and as he (Mr. R. N. Fowler) was opposed to the admission of an Atheist into that House, and as he intended, by every means in his power, to resist such an admission, he opposed the Bill of the Government, and seconded the Motion of his hon. Friend.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned." —(*Mr. Ritchie.*)

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS: I wish to say a few words upon the matter. Nothing, I think, could be more unfortunate than for the House to get into a long wrangle upon this question; and I would therefore put it to the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Hartington) whether, seeing the very even division that has just taken place, it would not be the wisest course, in order to avoid that which would be a great misfortune, to allow the debate to stand over until Monday, when it could be decided by a very different House? It must be adjourned until some time, and if adjourned now until Monday, there would be plenty of time to settle the question of the further adjournment. The wisest course, then, would be that this debate should now be adjourned, and I recommend that course for two reasons—in the first place, in order to give the Government time to consider whether, seeing the strong expression of opinion in the House against having a Morning Sitting for this purpose, it would not be wise to give it up; and, secondly, to give the House a fuller opportunity of considering the proposal which the Government has made.

Mr. JOHN BRIGHT: The hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie) and the hon. Member for the City of London (Mr. R. N. Fowler) have told us very plainly what their object is in objecting to the adjournment of the debate until 2 o'clock on Tuesday. I would therefore ask right hon. Gentlemen on the Front Opposition Bench to consider their position in the matter, because on Wednesday week, when I took the opportunity of stating at some length my opinion upon the question, and suggested a mode of extricating the House from the difficulty in which it is now placed, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) appeared entirely to agree to the proposition I made that legislation on this subject should be resorted to. [*Cries of* "No!" *from the Opposition.*] As some proof of the accuracy of what I say, I beg to recall the recollection of the House, and especially that of the hon. Member for the City of London (Mr. R. N. Fowler), to what occurred, because the hon. Member got up afterwards and stated that although right hon. Gentlemen on the Front Bench might adopt the suggestion which I had made, they must make their account with certain other Members of the House who held different opinions. As the hon. Member (Mr. R. N. Fowler) lifted his hat when I referred to him, I have no doubt that he assents to the representation I have made.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER: I beg the right hon. Gentleman's pardon. What I said was that whatever my right hon. Friends did I should oppose the Bill.

Mr. JOHN BRIGHT: The hon. Member also said that right hon. Gentlemen on the Front Opposition Bench must make their account with hon. Members on the Benches behind them. I recollect the words expressly.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER: I do not recollect having used that expression.

Mr. JOHN BRIGHT: The hon. Member also said—and I do not wish to disguise it at all—that although he should not take any part in obstructing the Bill, he should feel it his duty in every division to vote against it. What I complain of, and what I say is extraordinary, is that the right hon. Gentleman the Leader on that side of the House, not being here to-night, should have commissioned his Colleague the late Home Secretary (Sir R. Assheton Cross) to make a statement which, in my opinion, is entirely at variance in spirit with the declaration made on the occasion to which I refer by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon. The House will remember the condition the House was in on that occasion. It was felt—I am quite sure the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon felt, and most men in this House felt—[An hon. Member: No!]—I say, yes—that the House was in a very unpleasant position, and that it was most desirable we should extricate ourselves from it. When I put a question as to whether he objected to the admission into the House of the hon. Member for Northampton on the ground of his disbelief, or on account of the manner in which it was proposed to admit him, the right hon. Gentleman stated distinctly that it was because he objected to the profanation of the Oath. One hon. Member opposite got up and said I had been endeavouring to pin the right hon. Gentleman to that view. [Mr. Warton: Yes!] I did not pin him to any view. I said that was my own view, and I believe that the right hon. Gentleman felt it to be so sensible a view that he found himself bound to coincide with it. Her Majesty's Government now propose that there should be a Morning Sitting on the 10th of May, in order to discuss the introduction of the Bill which my hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General has already explained to the House. Hon. Gentlemen opposite know that in regard to a measure of less importance than this, their own Government had a Morning Sitting on the 6th of May. All that we propose now is that we should take a few hours—from 2 to 7 o'clock—and that the House shall meet again in the ordinary way at 9 o'clock. Any other course would materially retard the progress of the most important Business that can possibly come before the House. ["No!"] I speak of the question we have before us in the Bill now standing for second reading in regard to the state of Ireland. I put it to every thoughtful man in the House if it is wise on the part of the House of Commons to allow that question to drag on from day to day —[Mr. Healy: Declare urgency.]—or to oppose its uninterrupted progress by an accidental question like that which has now come before us? The Government have no interest in the question of altering the Oath. Some hon. Members have said this Bill is only for one man, Now, I undertake to say that when the House shall have passed the Bill brought in by my hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General, there are scores of Members in this House who have hitherto taken the Oath, who will gladly avail themselves of its provisions to make an Affirmation in place of taking an Oath; and, on that account, we may fairly ask the House to allow us to pass the Bill. The feeling of the House has already been shown to be in favour of meeting at 2 o'clock on Tuesday. If the majority had been the other way, what would the House have thought if my noble Friend had got up and asked the House, because the numbers were so evenly balanced, to allow the Government to have their way? The House has determined by a majority what ought to be the course of proceeding. I therefore ask, not on account of Mr. Bradlaugh, but on account of the pressure of great and most momentous Business, that the House should facilitate and not interpose any obstacle in the way of the Government, whose labours during the Session have been exceptionally onerous, and who have been subjected to a pressure which they cannot throw off, which they must grapple with, and which they must bear. I trust that, under the circumstances, the House will agree to what has already been decided, and will agree upon adjourning the debate until 2 o'clock on Tuesday.

Viscount SANDON: The right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. John Bright) used strong words when he spoke of the great and momentous Business before the House. I think he underrates the feeling of hon. Members on this side of the House. He does not appreciate the fact that we consider this question of altering the Parliamentary Oath to be as great and momentous a question as can be brought before us. I appeal to the knowledge of hon. Gentlemen of what has happened on both sides of the House in regard to the question. What is the meaning of the division which has just taken place? The right hon. Gentleman is a Member of a Government which possess a very large majority. What, then, was the meaning of the absence of some 200 Members who usually support Her Majesty's Government? I say, with the right hon. Gentleman, that we feel this to be a great, a grave, and a momentous question. [*Laughter.*] It is a question that is not to be treated slightingly with laughter and jest. Surely our feelings are to be considered in a matter of this kind. The question is either a very small one—and nobody can suppose that it is a very small one—or it is one of the very gravest and of the very last importance. All we say on this occasion is that we do not want to interfere with the progress of Business; but we do say this—that we are determined that no extra importance shall be given to this question of the admission of the hon. Member for Northampton, by giving to it special and unusual facilities. We do not intend to oppose his admission in any undue way; but we conceive the question to be one of the gravest and most momentous which can be brought before us in regard to the constitution of the House; and we expect that every opportunity will be given to us for expressing our opinion upon it.

Mr. WARTON remarked, that he was extremely sorry for hon. Members who thought it right to indulge in laughter, because they evidently understood the importance of the question. He should be as ashamed of himself as he was of them if he were not prepared to treat the matter in the most serious light. He certainly regretted to see a Liberal Government bringing all its influence, just and unjust, and using arguments perverted and false, in order to induce the House to see in the question anything but a determination on the part of a Radical Government to foist an Atheist upon the House. It was a question upon which the spirit of the country was fairly aroused, and it was rapidly rising to a pitch of which those who sat on the Front Bench opposite were utterly ignorant. He held it to be his duty, superior to his action on any other question, to avail himself of every means that were possible to resist this wicked attempt on the part of Her Majesty's Government. He called it a wicked attempt because the grossest perversion had been used. He was exceedingly sorry that the subject had been forced upon the attention of the House, and he regretted that the duty of opposing the proposition now made by the Government had been supported by such weak arguments. The hon. Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour) put it on the early period of the Session;

the hon. Baronet the Member for West Essex (Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson), on the prejudicial interference it might have with the discussion of the question of police superannuation. No doubt, that question was of the utmost importance, and he sympathized with every word that had been said in regard to it; but when these grounds were assigned as the reason for objecting to the Government proposal they only formed an excuse for the ingenious perversion and misrepresentation which had been indulged in on the other side of the House, certainly by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, as to what the real motives of those who opposed the Bill were. The right hon. Gentleman had done him (Mr. Warton) the honour to refer to him, because he was the Member who had charged the right hon. Gentleman, as he charged the right hon. Gentleman now, with having picked out one part of the statement which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) made, and misrepresenting it as the whole of the argument of his right hon. Friend. Let it now be known that the Radical Party —not the whole of them, because some voted against the Government, and others stayed away—let it be known that Her Majesty's Government and those who supported them were determined, rightly or wrongly, although there were important Bills before the House, such as the Land Law (Ireland) Bill and others, to bring Mr. Bradlaugh into that House, and that the Tory Party were determined to do all they could to prevent him from being admitted. Both the country and right hon. Gentlemen opposite now knew what his feeling was in the matter. All the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon said was that he objected to the profanation of the Oath. The Tory Party as a body objected to the profanation of the Oath, and they objected, also, to the admission of an Atheist into that House. The country must be made aware of that, and see that there was no further misunderstanding upon the matter.

MR. NEWDEGATE said, that last year the House, acting on the Reports of two Committees, placed Her Majesty's Government in a minority upon the question relating to Mr. Bradlaugh. It would, therefore, do very wrong in allowing the independent expression of its opinions by its majority to be passed over by Her Majesty's Ministers. Either that House was an independent Assembly, or it was an abject following of the Government; and if it intended to retain the character which it had borne during the last 300 years, it would not submit to having its opinions slighted in any manner by Her Majesty's Ministers. The House now objected to having that which, by its majority, it had declared to be a great question taken at unfitting hours, and on undue occasions, at the instance of Her Majesty's Ministers; and he could assure hon. Members that the communications which both he and right hon. Gentlemen sitting on the Front Bench of the Opposition had received all proved that the feelings of the country would be outraged if this question were treated by the House with less gravity than the great majority of the English people attributed to it. He should vote against the exceptional appointment of a Morning Sitting, because he considered it indicated that Her Majesty's Government were at liberty to shuffle off this question. Perhaps they were conscious that, by their conduct, they had already violated the deepest feelings of the people. He was convinced Her Majesty's Government were making a great mistake. Throughout the whole of this business they had been wrong in law; they had obliged Mr. Bradlaugh to incur heavy penalties; and he supposed if they succeeded in altering the law for his convenience, the next Motion they proposed would be that Mr. Bradlaugh should be indemnified out of the public money for having broken the law at their suggestion.

MR. HICKS pointed out that at that time of the year there was a number of Committees sitting upstairs. The Business under their consideration was of a kind that involved great expense to the parties connected with it. He wished to ask Her Majesty's Government whether these Committees were to be suspended during the discussion of this question; and, if so, whether the parties who would undoubtedly lose large sums of money by their adjournment were to be indemnified? On the other hand, if the Committees were not suspended, were the Members constituting them who wished to take part in the debate on a question of vital Constitutional importance to be debarred from doing so? The House should bear in mind that if this Motion was agreed to, it would be competent for Her Majesty's Government, or any private Member, on Motion for adjournment, to take the House at a disadvantage at any moment. Why, he asked, did not Her Majesty's Government demand a Morning Sitting for the Land Law (Ireland) Bill as well as for the Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Bill, of which they had at one time heard so much, but now heard so little? In the last Parliament hon. Members opposite were never tired of talking about bribery, surely they had abundant evidence of bribery at the last Election. Why, then, was not the Bribery Bill pressed forward?

Mr. GORST thought he could give a reason which might possibly induce Her Majesty's Government to assent to the Motion for adjournment. When they moved that the debate on the Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," be postponed until Tuesday at 2 o'clock, he had no doubt they believed that with their large and docile majority they would be able to carry the Motion. He thought that the division which had just taken place must cause Her Majesty's Government some slight misgivings as to whether, when the Motion was put on Tuesday, it would be carried. In his opinion, it was likely that the House would refuse it; and, looking at the narrow majority for the Government on the last division, he suggested that it would be well to wait until Monday, to see whether there was to be a Morning Sitting or not.

Colonel MAKINS said, that a flood of light had been thrown upon the Bill by the statement which had been made from the Benches opposite that it was not merely intended for the purpose of bringing Mr. Bradlaugh into the House, but for the relief of "scores" of persons who were anxious to affirm, instead of taking the Oath. He pointed out to the right hon. Gentleman who made that statement (Mr. John Bright) that there need be no hurry at all so far as that point was concerned, for it was impossible for those hon. Members who, it was said, now desired to affirm to shuffle off the Oath they had already taken. Therefore, unless, in consequence of the narrow majority for the Government, as shown by the last division, the right hon. Gentleman saw another General Election looming in the immediate distance, it was quite impossible for the hon. Members in question to exercise the right which the Bill would give them until the next Parliament.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he was surprised at the simplicity of the hon. and gallant Member for South Essex (Colonel Makins) in attaching the least importance to the argument of the right hon. Gentleman which he had just referred to. Had the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster been speaking a week ago, and there was a necessity of coming to an early decision upon the question, he would have said—"Look at the constituency of Northampton, deprived of one of its Representatives in this House; is not that grossly unfair to the people of Northampton?" Why did not the right hon. Gentleman use that argument now? It was because he knew that by making an allusion to a constituency which had but one of its Representatives in the House, he would call to mind the fact that another constituency was deprived of its Representative—not by the law of the land, but by a breach of that law, and of the Constitution, committed by right hon. Gentlemen opposite. It was difficult to say which of the two speeches delivered in the course of the evening by Members of the Government was the more unsatisfactory. But the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster had referred to the number of Saints' days which were observed in Ireland in a manner which was scarcely appreciated by the Irish Members. With the permission of the right hon. Gentleman, he would remind him that the great mistake of the Government, of which he was a Member, was that they had, so to speak, too many Saints' days in the carrying out of their present proposals. The right hon. Gentleman, with the endeavour to shift on to Irish Members the responsibility for the blunders committed by the Government in Ireland, had said there were great questions before the House with regard to that country, which must be immediately settled. Let the Government, then, proceed with the Land Bill, than which there was nothing more momentous, *de die in diem*, and defer the Parliamentary Oaths Bill, which could very well wait, until it was settled. For his own part, he intended to support the principle of the Parliamentary Oaths Bill; but he was not at all bound to admire the blundering tactics of the right hon. Gentleman and his Colleagues. The answer of the Irish Members to the appeal of the right hon. Gentleman that they would support the Government in urging on the settlement of the question with regard to Northampton was that they would do so, if he would give them like support in filling up the vacancy for Tipperary.

Question put.

The House *divided:* — Ayes 115; Noes 127: Majority 12. —(Div. List, No. 196.)

Main Question again proposed.

MR. CHAPLIN rose to make an appeal to his noble Friend (the Marquess of Hartington), in view of the strong feeling shown by the Opposition on this question. He did not see much importance in the argument that, even under a Conservative Government, a Morning Sitting had taken place early in May, for private Members were still justified in insisting on their rights. The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. John Bright) had attempted to draw a red herring across the path, saying, "Do not interfere with the Land Bill." Private Members manage the Business of the House; they did not fix first, second, or third readings of Bills. It was the Government who put down the Bills; and if the progress of the Land Law (Ireland) Bill was interfered with, it would be entirely owing to the course the Government had adopted. ["No, no!"] Well, he was stating the simple fact, and was pointing out to the Government that if that Bill had been delayed, or was likely to be, it was owing to hon. Members on the Ministerial side of the House. The noble Marquess said no other suggestion had been made. Here, then, was a suggestion—let the Government introduce and proceed with the measure in the ordinary way. If they did this, he would answer for himself—of course, he could not answer for others—that he would not place any obstacle in the way of the measure proceeding to the second reading stage. Of course, he would reserve to himself the right to do what he liked on the second reading. He could not conceive anything more unreasonable than to ask private Members to give up their rights for the purpose of allowing the introduction of a measure they most strongly opposed. If the noble Marquess was prepared to bring on the measure in the ordinary way, let him consent to the proposal that he (Mr. Chaplin) now made, that the House do now adjourn.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. Chaplin.*)

COLONEL BARNE said, he wished to support the Motion. He had the strongest objection to giving the Government facilities for the introduction of a Bill which would have the effect of introducing an Atheist into the House.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, that if the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Dublin (Colonel Taylor) would state, on the part of the Opposition, that they were determined to pursue he (the Marquess of Hartington) would not say "Obstructive" tactics, but that active opposition, he would not put the House to the trouble of dividing; but, as the noble Viscount the Member for Liverpool (Viscount Sandon) and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross), who had taken so prominent a part in the discussion, were now not in the House, he did not know whether the Opposition intended to refrain from offering further impediment to the Motion for the adjournment of the debate until Tuesday. ["No, no!"] He was sorry it was not so. The noble Viscount the Member for Liverpool had made rather a curious statement a few minutes ago, when he said that the matter was one of most vital importance, and that the magnitude of it could not be exaggerated, and had qualified it with the assertion that the question as to the Morning Sitting was of even greater importance. And there was one argument which had struck him very much indeed. The hon. Gentleman the Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie) had complained of the inaction of the Government. Surely they could be no longer charged with that. They were desirous of introducing a Bill, and they had explained what the measure was they desired to introduce, and it was only right that they should be afforded an opportunity for their proposal. The Government should strive as long as they reasonably could to get their proposal considered. It had been said that they should put it down for a Government night; but the Government had no intention of doing that to the exclusion of the consideration of the Land Law (Ireland) Bill. If the House refused to adopt the proposal they made, that the measure should be dealt with at a Morning Sitting, then he was afraid the difficulty could not be removed, and that it would be for hon. Gentlemen opposite, under the guidance of the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets, to say when the Bill should be taken.

Colonel TAYLOR said, he had only to say this—that he had had no communication with his Friends who usually sat on that (the Front Opposition) Bench since the last division; but he could inform the noble Marquess that hon. Members on that side of the House were determined to continue the present opposition.

Earl PERCY said, the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) had expressed surprise at hon. Members on the Front Opposition Bench, who took such an interest in the question, having left the House. He (Earl Percy), however, rose to express his inability to understand the exact position in which Her Majesty's Government professed to be placed, because, on the one hand, they were informed by one right hon. Gentleman that this was a very small measure—one merely for the purpose of removing a temporary difficulty—but, on the other hand, another right hon. Gentleman declared that it was a most important Bill, and that they ought to make the greatest sacrifices in order to bring it forward. The noble Marquess said it was owing to no fault of the Government that they were placed in the difficulty in which they now found themselves; but he (Earl Percy) would ask, was the difficulty not owing to the action of the Government last Session? The Government were fairly warned, and might have foreseen that this difficulty would arise. They should have avoided it by early legislation if they intended to deal with it at all. They had chosen to put it off to a crowded Session when a great difficulty arose, and did not now propose to give the facilities that were ordinarily afforded when such Bills were brought forward. The noble Marquess seemed anxious that one-half of the House should fix a Morning Sitting against the wish of the other half, notwithstanding that, in a matter of this sort, it was desirable that they should have, practically, the unanimous consent of the House.

Sir JOHN HAY said, that, as a Scotch Member, he wished to say that this proposed measure was repulsive to the good sense of the Scotch people, and that as it could not be denied that the measure was for the relief of Atheists—for Atheists in general, or one in particular—he should remain there as long as he could find any other Member to join him in offering every Parliamentary means to oppose the Motion.

Dr. LYONS desired to explain the course he was about to take. He was strongly opposed to the admission of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Northampton, and last year had voted against the Government with regard to the hon. Member being permitted to take his seat. He had a conscientious objection to Mr. Bradlaugh's admission into that House, and upon that question he had recorded his vote with hon. Gentlemen opposite. But the question was now losing the aspect of principle, and degenerating into one of unreasonable obstruction. Though he still abided most strongly by his conscientious convictions, and should take every opportunity of recording his vote in affirmation of them, he would not countenance an unreasonable obstruction in any matter upon which the House had arrived at a decision. It was greatly to be regretted that the Army without Leaders, as he might venture to designate the Opposition at the present moment, should put themselves in the position of unreasonable hostility to the action of the Government on this subject. He could not see that any good purpose whatever would result from it. They might continue to sit until that time to-morrow; but he did not see that that would advance the cause which he (Dr. Lyons), in common with hon. Gentlemen opposite, had mostly at heart. He felt it his duty, in the present aspect of the case, to support Her Majesty's Government, because he could not conceive what good object could be served by the obstruction which was being adopted by the Opposition.

SIR HENRY SELWIN-IBBETSON said, he should be sorry to abandon principle for the sake of Party. He would remind the House that the position taken by the Opposition on this occasion was one which was hardly fairly designated by the hon. Member for Dublin (Dr. Lyons) as pure obstruction; because, when a division was so close as the one they had just taken, the course taken by the Opposition was seldom strongly resisted by the Government, especially when the real question at issue was the postponement of a subject to a further day. Under the circumstances, he hoped the noble Marquess the Leader of the Government on the present occasion would see that this was not a case of pure obstruction; but that the demands of the Opposition were perfectly legitimate.

LORD EDWARD CAVENDISH said, if the Government were prepared to resist the Motion for adjournment, he would very cordially support them; but, at the same time, he regretted they had decided to oppose it, although he did so for a different reason to what had been given by the hon. Member for Dublin (Dr. Lyons). A number of irresponsible minor lights appeared to think that that evening they were playing a very important part; but they seemed to have forgotten one consideration, and that was the very difficult position in which they were placing the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote). When their excitement had cooled down, and when they had received the castigation which they would probably receive in the course of a very few hours for their conduct this evening, they would regret the course they had adopted, and on Monday put on the white sheet.

MR. MACARTNEY said, the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) had asserted that the Government were bringing forward this Bill for the purpose of getting the House out of a difficulty. It was the Member for Northampton who was in a difficulty; it was the constituency of Northampton, and not that House, which had deliberately put itself in a difficulty. From the beginning of the Bradlaugh business to the present moment the House had been of one opinion, and Mr. Bradlaugh had been of another. In the first place, he was legally wrong; and, in the second place, he was wrong in the action he took; and he imagined now that by keeping up a kind of threat that he would appear constantly at the Table of the House and claim his right in spite of the decision of the House, and in spite of the decision of the Courts of Law, he would be allowed to take his seat. The Government had been beaten on every occasion, and they wanted to thrust him upon the House. The Government did it deliberately, and when they were resisted they resorted to the charge of obstruction. They who, upon principle, were opposed to the admission into that House of a man who had no belief in God, and no regard for principle or decency of any kind, would resist him by every means in their power.

MR. E. STANHOPE appealed to the noble Marquess to consent to the adjournment. He did not pretend to speak as an exponent of his Party; but he was satisfied there was a considerable section in the House who were prepared to go into the Lobby in support of the adjournment, and do their utmost to resist the proposal of the Government.

MR. LABOUCHERE did not know what hon. Gentlemen meant by saying they were not engaging in obstruction. There had been two divisions, and in each of them the Opposition had found themselves in the minority. He (Mr. Labouchere) was always under the impression that the minority ought to cede to the majority. [*A laugh.*] Hon. Gentlemen laughed at the very idea of such a thing. They now said they would not resist; they say, "although a minority, we can sit as long as you, and perhaps longer; and therefore, possibly, we may win." [Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Hear, hear!] The noble Lord said "Hear, hear!" If he (Mr. Labouchere) remembered rightly, the Irish Members took a similar course when the Coercion Bill was before the House, and he (Mr. Labouchere) thought they were right; but Conservatives who did not think they were right were constantly attacking them for their obstructive tactics. As hon. Gentlemen opposite had asserted their intention to resist, by every obstructive means, the introduction of this Bill, he would ask the Government what was the use of a Morning Sitting on Tuesday? It seemed to him that at the end of the Sitting they would be in precisely the same position as they were now. They would have a number of speeches, and that was all. Under those circumstances, anxious as he was that the measure should be brought on, he would ask the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) whether there was any use in continuing that strife? It seemed they would revert to the position in which they found themselves before it was suggested that the Bill should be introduced. And then he did not say what would happen. It was possible on Tuesday evening Mr. Bradlaugh might come to the Table. [Lord Randolph Churchill: Hear, hear!] The noble Lord cheered. No doubt he would be glad to see Mr. Bradlaugh at the Table. Be that as it might, Mr. Bradlaugh had always claimed he had a statutory right to come to the Table, and that had been the difficulty which the Government was now attempting to meet. If the Bill of the Government could not be brought in, Mr. Bradlaugh would maintain his statutory right; consequently, when hon. Gentlemen opposite said that if a Morning Sitting was not taken on Tuesday they would be able to bring forward the question of police superannuation, he was sorry to say he feared they would be greatly disappointed.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, the House had been treated to a threat in a perfectly undisguised form. Mr. Bradlaugh's *alter ego* had informed the House that if it did not assent to a Morning Sitting, Mr. Bradlaugh would come to the Table and repeat those discreditable scenes of which they had lately had so many. All he could say to the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) and his *alter ego* (Mr. Bradlaugh) was, that if Mr. Bradlaugh thought it necessary to assert what he considered his statutory right, the House of Commons would think it necessary to assert its authority.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 100; Noes 121: Majority 21.—(Div. List, No. 197.)

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF trusted that the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) would now see his way to meet the wishes of the large minority. The noble Marquess must have seen from the first that the opinion of the House was divided, and he could hardly congratulate himself on the small majority which the Government had obtained. All that was being proposed was that the debate should be adjourned till Monday, in order that the discussion might be continued when it was more expected than it had been that night. The House had received no Notice of a Morning Sitting for Tuesday; but it had been started upon them by surprise, and he thought it would only be within the courtesies of Parliamentary life, and fair, that the noble Marquess should agree to the proposal. He begged to move the adjournment of the debate.

Mr. EDWARD CLARKE seconded the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Sir H. Drummond Wolff.*)

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: If we cannot congratulate ourselves upon a very large majority, we can congratulate ourselves upon a sufficient majority. I acknowledge that the minority appear to be extremely determined; and, while I have been delighted to hear several times this evening that there is no desire on their part to resort to obstruction, their action appears to my mind to bear so close a resemblance to obstruction that I do not propose to contend with them any longer. I am quite willing to accede to the wishes of hon. Members opposite.

Question put, and *agreed to*.

Debate *adjourned* till *Monday* next.

LAND DRAINAGE PROVISIONAL ORDERS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Courtney, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders under "The Land Drainage Act, 1861," *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Courtney and Secretary Sir William Harcourt.

MERCHANT SHIPPING BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Chamberlain, Bill to explain and amend the provisions of "The Merchant Shipping Act, 1854," with respect to the measurement of tonnage, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Ashley.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 151.]

House adjourned at Three o'clock
till Monday next.

INDEX

TO

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES,

VOLUME CCLX.

FOURTH VOLUME OF SESSION 1881.

EXPLANATION OF THE ABBREVIATIONS.

In Bills, Read 1°, 2°, 3°, or 1ª, 2ª, 3ª, Read the First, Second, or Third Time.—In Speeches, 1R., 2R., 3R., Speech delivered on the First, Second, or Third Reading.—*Amendt.*, Amendment.—*Res.*, Resolution.—*Comm.*, Committee.—*Re-Comm.*, Re-Committal.—*Rep.*, Report.—*Consid.*, Consideration.—*Adj.*, Adjournment or Adjourned.—*cl.*, Clause.—*add. cl.*, Additional Clause.—*neg.*, Negatived.—*M. Q.*, Main Question.—*O. Q.*, Original Question.—*O. M.*, Original Motion.—*P. Q.*, Previous Question.—R. P., Report Progress.—*A.*, Ayes.—*N.*, Noes.—*M.*, Majority.—1*st. Div.*, 2*nd. Div.*, First or Second Division.—*l.*, Lords.—*c.*, Commons.

When in this Index a * is added to the Reading of a Bill, it indicates that no Debate took place upon that stage of the measure.

When in the Text or in the Index a Speech is marked thus *, it indicates that the Speech is reprinted from a Pamphlet or some authorized Report.

When in the Index a † is prefixed to a Name or an Office (the Member having accepted or vacated office during the Session) and to Subjects of Debate thereunder, it indicates that the Speeches on those Subjects were delivered in the speaker's private or official character, as the case may be.

Some subjects of debate have been classified under the following "General Headings:"—ARMY — NAVY — INDIA — IRELAND — SCOTLAND — PARLIAMENT — POOR LAW—POST OFFICE—METROPOLIS — CHURCH OF ENGLAND — EDUCATION — CRIMINAL LAW — LAW AND JUSTICE — TAXATION, under WAYS AND MEANS.

ABINGER, Lord
  Army Organization—New Scheme, 691

ACLAND, Sir T. D., *Devonshire, N.*
  Agricultural Tenants' Compensation, Comm. 992

Afghanistan
  LORDS
    Candahar, Question, Lord Waveney; Answer, Viscount Enfield *Mar* 29, 90

Afghan War—Vote of Thanks for the Military Operations in Afghanistan
  Resolutions (*Earl Granville*) *May* 5, 1803; after short debate, Resolutions agreed to, nemine dissentiente

Afghanistan
  COMMONS
  Military Operations
    Vote of Thanks to General Sir Frederick Roberts and the Army, Questions, Mr. Onslow; Answers, The Marquess of Hartington *April* 1, 474; *April* 4, 562; Question, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington *May* 3, 1665
    Moved, "That the Thanks of this House be given to General Sir Frederick Paul Haines, G.C.B., G.C.S.I., C.I.E., Commander in Chief in India, for the ability and judgment with which he directed the recent operations from September 1879 to September 1880 in Afghanistan" (*The Marquess of Hartington*) *May* 5, 1842
    Amendt. to leave out from "That," and add "this House, disapproving of the Afghan War as needless and unjust, considers it

[cont.

Afghanistan — Military Operations—Commons—*cont.*

inexpedient to return Thanks to Officers or Soldiers for slaying a number of people with whom we had no righteous quarrel, and devastating their Country" (*Mr. Healy*) *v.*; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after debate, Question put; A. 304, N. 20; M. 284 (D. L. 194)

Main Question put, and agreed to:—Other Resolutions moved, and agreed to

Political Affairs

Candahar, Questions, Sir Henry Tyler, Mr. Onslow; Answers, The Marquess of Hartington *Mar* 28, 10;—*Withdrawal of the British Troops*, Question, Mr. Onslow; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington *April* 4, 551

Subsidies to the Ameer, Question, Mr. O'Donnell; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington *Mar* 31, 358

Yakoub Khan and Abdurrahman, Question, Mr. O'Donnell; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington *April* 1, 457

The Ameer, Question, Mr. O'Donnell; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington *April* 7, 887

Reported Russian Mission to Cabul, Questions, Mr. A. J. Balfour, Mr. Bourke; Answers, The Marquess of Hartington; Observations, Sir Charles W. Dilke *May* 6, 1966

Southern Afghanistan—Pishin and Sibi, Question, Sir George Campbell; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington *April* 7, 890

Africa, South

Lords

The Transvaal

Military Operations—Surrender of Potchefstroom, Questions, Viscount Cranbrook, Earl Cairns; Answers, The Earl of Kimberley *Mar* 29, 89; Observations, Lord Waveney; Reply, The Earl of Kimberley *May* 6, 1928;—*Withdrawal of Troops*, Questions, Lord Lamington, The Marquess of Salisbury; Answers, The Earl of Kimberley *April* 1, 445

Negotiations, Observations, Earl Cairns; Reply, The Earl of Kimberley; debate thereon *Mar* 31, 249;—*Protection to Loyal Subjects*, Questions, Observations, Viscount Bury; Reply, The Earl of Kimberley *April* 7, 863

Murder of Captain Elliott, Dr. Barber, and others, Questions, Observations, Lord Brabourne; Reply, The Earl of Kimberley *April* 7, 848

Slavery, Observations, Questions, Lord Brabourne, The Marquess of Salisbury; Answers, The Earl of Kimberley *April* 1, 446

Africa, South

Commons

Basutoland (*Negotiations*), Questions, Mr. W. H. James, Sir Wilfrid Lawson; Answers, Mr. Grant Duff *Mar* 28, 10; Questions, Sir Wilfrid Lawson, Sir George Campbell; Answers, Mr. Grant Duff *Mar* 31, 359; Questions, Mr. A. Pease, Sir George Campbell; Answers, Mr. Grant Duff *April* 26, 1183; Questions, Sir George Campbell, Sir Wilfrid Lawson; Answers, Mr. Grant Duff *May* 2, 1545

The Transvaal

Military Operations, Questions, Sir John Kennaway, Mr. R. H. Paget, Lord John Manners; Answers, Mr. Childers *April* 1, 460

Surrender of Potchefstroom, Questions, Sir John Hay, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answers, Mr. Childers *Mar* 29, 156; Questions, Sir Walter B. Barttelot, Lord Randolph Churchill, Mr. Parnell, Mr. A. M. Sullivan; Answers, Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Grant Duff *Mar* 31, 366; Question, Sir John Kennaway; Answer, Mr. Grant Duff *April* 8, 1022; Questions, Mr. Gibson; Answers, Mr. Grant Duff *April* 28, 1309; *May* 2, 1533

Blockade of Pretoria, Question, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach; Answer, Mr. Grant Duff *April* 1, 471; Observation, Mr. Childers *April* 4, 565

The 60th Rifles, Question, Major General Feilden; Answer, Mr. Childers *April* 28, 1314

The Volunteer Force, Question, Mr. Gorst; Answer, Mr. Grant Duff *April* 28, 1318

The Action at Majuba Hill — The 15th Hussars, Question, Mr. Gilbert Leigh; Answer, Mr. Childers *April* 29, 1414

Negotiations

Questions, Sir Stafford Northcote, Mr. Gorst, Sir John Lubbock; Answers, Mr. Grant Duff *Mar* 28, 17; Question, Mr. Stanley Leighton; Answer, Mr. Grant Duff *April* 29, 1416

Religious Toleration, Question, Mr. O'Donnell; Answer, Mr. Grant Duff *Mar* 29, 156

The Transvaal Commission — Conditions of Peace, Question, Mr. Macfarlane; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *April* 5, 761;—*The Instructions*, Questions, Sir Stafford Northcote, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach; Answers, Mr. Gladstone *April* 5, 772

Violation of the Armistice, Questions, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett, Lord Colin Campbell; Answers, Mr. Grant Duff *April* 5, 766

Repayment of Loan, Question, Mr. Long; Answer, Mr. Grant Duff *April* 4, 563; Question, Mr. Puleston; Answer, Mr. Grant Duff *April* 8, 1025

Further Papers, Question, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach; Answer, Mr. Grant Duff *May* 2, 1533

The "Suzerainty" of the Transvaal, Question, Sir Henry Peek; Answer, The Attorney General *May* 2, 1534; Question, Mr. Gorst; Answer, The Attorney General *May* 5, 1822; Question, Earl Percy; Answer, Mr. Gladstone, 1831

Political Affairs

The "South African Republic," Question, Mr. Wodehouse; Answer, Mr. Grant Duff *Mar* 31, 347

Land Ownership, Question, Mr. Cropper; Answer, Mr. Grant Duff *Mar* 31, 359

[*cont.*

Africa, South — Political Affairs — COMMONS—*cont.*

Policy of the Government, Questions, Sir Stafford Northcote, Lord Randolph Churchill, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach; Answers, Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Childers *April* 1, 472

Notice of Resolutions, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Sir Wilfrid Lawson *April* 8, 1035; Question, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *May* 2, 1531

MISCELLANEOUS QUESTIONS

Letter of King Cetewayo, Questions, Mr. Gorst; Answers, Mr. Grant Duff *April* 8, 1020

Native Customs in Natal, Question, Mr. Summers; Answer, Mr. Grant Duff *May* 2, 1534

Protection to Loyal Inhabitants, Question, Colonel Taylor; Answer, Mr. Grant Duff *April* 7, 885

Revocation of Letters Patent, 1879, Questions, Mr. Gibson; Answers, Mr. Grant Duff *April* 8, 1012

Sekukuni, Question, Mr. Summers; Answer, Mr. Grant Duff *April* 1, 457

The Boers, Question, Mr. Rylands; Answer, Mr. Grant Duff *May* 5, 1816

Statistics—Natives and Europeans, Question, Mr. W. H. James; Answer, Mr. Grant Duff *April* 1, 462

The Native Inhabitants, Question, Mr. Gorst; Answer, Mr. Grant Duff *April* 25, 1082;—*The Papers,* Question, Mr. Gorst; Answer, Mr. Grant Duff *April* 28, 1308

The 94*th Regiment—Protection of Native Interests—Slavery,* Questions, Sir John Hay, Mr. Grantham, Mr. R. N. Fowler, Sir Wilfrid Lawson, Mr. Macfarlane; Answers, Mr. Grant Duff *Mar* 31, 354

War Casualties, Question, Mr. S. Leighton; Answer, Mr. Childers *May* 3, 1661

Africa, West—The Gold Coast

Question, Mr. Summers; Answer, Mr. Grant Duff *April* 1, 460

Agricultural Holdings Act (1875) Amendment Bill (*Mr. Staveley Hill, Mr. Monckton*)

c. Ordered; read 1°* *Mar* 28 [Bill 127]

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *Mar* 31, 442

Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Brand*); after short debate, Question put; A. 54, N. 1; M. 53 (D. L. 177)

Agricultural Holdings (Distress for Rent)

Moved, "That, in the opinion of this House, it is desirable to abolish the power of levying Distress for the Rent of Agricultural Holdings in England, Wales, and Ireland" (*Mr. Blennerhassett*) *May* 3, 1665; Previous Question moved, "That the Original Question be now put" (*Mr. H. T. Davenport*); after long debate, Previous Question put, and agreed to

Agricultural Labourers' Habitations (Ireland)

Amendt. on Committee of Supply *May* 6, To leave out from "That," and add "in the opinion of this House, it is expedient and necessary that measures should be taken in the present Session of Parliament to improve the condition of agricultural labourers' habitations in Ireland" (*Mr. Callan*) *v.*, 1967; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after short debate, Question put, and negatived

Question proposed, "That the words 'in the opinion of this House, it is expedient and necessary that measures should be taken in the present Session of Parliament to improve the condition of agricultural labourers' habitations in Ireland,' be there added"

Amendt. to the said proposed Amendt. To leave out "in the present Session of Parliament" (*Mr. William Edward Forster*); Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after long debate, Question put, and negatived

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to

Agricultural Tenants' Compensation Bill (*Mr. Chaplin, Mr. James Cowan, Mr. J. C. Lawrance, Mr. Birkbeck*) [Bill 10]

c. Order for Committee read; Moved, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair" *April* 7, 991

Amendt. to leave out from "That," and add "the Bill be committed to a Select Committee" (*Mr. M'Lagan*) *v.*; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after short debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Courtney*); Question put; A. 36, N. 25; M. 11 (D. L. 185); Debate adjourned

Alkali, &c. Works Regulation Bill [H.L.] (*Mr. Dodson*)

c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *Mar* 31, 427

Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. R. N. Fowler*); after short debate, Motion withdrawn

Original Question put, and agreed to; Bill read 2° [Bill 119]

Order for Committee read; Moved, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair" *April* 25, 1170

Amendt. to leave out from "That," and add "the Bill be referred to a Select Committee" (*Sir Sydney Waterlow*) *v.*; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after short debate, Question put, and agreed to

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker, &c." put, and agreed to—Committee—R.P.

Committee—R.P. *May* 2, 1629

ANDERSON, Mr. G., *Glasgow*

Army—Auxiliary Forces—Adjutants of Volunteers, 1542

Banking Laws Amendment, 2R. 1779, 1785, 1796

Brazil—Claims of a British Subject, 350

Canada, Dominion of—Irish Emigration, 13

[cont.

Anderson, Mr. G.—*cont.*
Coinage (Decimal System), Res. Amendt. 168
Crown Agents for the Colonies, 879, 1551
Married Women's Property (Scotland), Comm. 687; Consid. 1179, 1180; 3R. 1526
Parliament — Public Business (Half-past-Twelve Rule), Res. 1723
Scotland—The Treasury Minute on Scotch Banks, 873
Technical Education, 525
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 627

Argyll, Duke of
Ministry, The—Resignation of the Duke of Argyll—Personal Explanation, 993

Armitage, Mr. B., *Salford*
Inland Revenue—Tax on Horses and Carriages, 1540

Army
Miscellaneous Questions
Army Discipline—Abolition of Flogging, Question, General Sir George Balfour; Answer, Mr. Childers *April* 4, 562
Army Recruiting—Irish Recruits, Questions, Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. Childers *May* 2, 1549;—*Scotch Recruits*, Question, Sir Alexander Gordon; Answer, Mr. Childers *April* 28, 1318
Crime and Punishment, 1879, Question, Mr. Caine; Answer, Mr. Osborne Morgan *Mar* 31, 365
Half-Pay Captains, Question, Sir Walter B. Barttelot; Answer, Mr. Childers *April* 1, 467
Non-Commissioned Officers, Question, Mr. O'Connor Power; Answer, Mr. Childers *April* 5, 765
Quartermasters—Warrant of 1880, Question, Mr. Causton; Answer, Mr. Childers *April* 5, 757
Staff Appointments—Captains of Cavalry and Infantry, Question, Mr. Moss; Answer, Mr. Childers *April* 29, 1415
The Brigade of Guards, Question, Sir Patrick O'Brien; Answer, Mr. Childers *April* 5, 754
The Royal Artillery—Pay of Artificers, Question, Mr. Boord; Answer, Mr. Childers *April* 28, 1310
The Royal Engineers (*Extra Pay*), Question, Mr. Leake; Answer, Mr. Childers *April* 5, 763
Military Operations in the Transvaal—Despatch of Forces, Question, Colonel North; Answer, Mr. Childers *April* 1, 462
The Zulu War—General Newdigate's Medal Roll, Question, Mr. Boord; Answer, Mr. Childers *May* 5, 1821
Troops in Ireland—The 2*nd and* 3*rd Dragoon Guards*, Question, Major O'Beirne; Answer, Mr. Childers *April* 7, 873

Public Worship—Political Sermons, Questions, Mr. O'Donnell, Mr. Tottenham, Mr. Sexton; Answers, Mr. Childers *April* 7, 869
Royal Hibernian Military School, Dublin, Questions, Mr. W. J. Corbet, Mr. Gibson; Answers, Mr. Childers *May* 3, 1654

[*cont.*

Army—*cont.*
Army Organization
The New Scheme, Observations, Lord Abinger; long debate thereon *April* 5, 691;—*Majors of Royal Artillery and Engineers*, Question, Mr. Carington; Answer, Mr. Childers *April* 5, 755
The New Regulations—Compulsory Retirement, Question, Sir Alexander Gordon; Answer, Mr. Childers *May* 5, 1823
Distinguished Service Pensions, Question, Mr. O'Shea; Answer, Mr. Childers *Mar* 28, 12
Infantry and Cavalry Majors, Question, Mr. Montague Guest; Answer, Mr. Childers *Mar* 31, 368
Regimental Organization, Question, Lord Edward Cavendish; Answer, Mr. Childers *April* 5, 752; Question, Sir Eardley Wilmot; Answer, Mr. Childers *May* 6, 1957
The Buffs—The Uniform, Question, Major Vaughan Lee; Answer, Mr. Childers *April* 8, 1020; — *Militia Officers — The Uniforms*, Question, Mr. Ritchie; Answer, Mr. Childers *May* 5, 1818
The 87*th and* 88*th Regiments*, Question, Major Nolan; Answer, Mr. Childers *Mar* 29, 156

The Auxiliary Forces
Adjutants of Volunteers, Question, Mr. Anderson; Answer, Mr. Childers *May* 2, 1542
Distinctions to Militia Officers, Question, Mr. A. Moore; Answer, Mr. Childers *April* 4, 565
Militia Quartermasters, Questions, Major General Feilden, Mr. Gourley; Answers, Mr. Childers *April* 4, 556
Promotion in the Militia, Question, Mr. Dalrymple; Answer, Mr. Childers *Mar* 28, 14
The Volunteer Review at Windsor, Question, Mr. Buxton; Answer, Mr. Childers *May* 2, 1535

Army Organization — Territorial Regiments—The Uniforms
Moved, That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for Return showing the amount of expenditure estimated by the change of uniform involved in the proposed organization of territorial regiments, both as affecting individual officers and the public purse (*The Earl of Galloway*) *April* 8, 1007; after short debate, Motion withdrawn

Army Alternative Punishment Bill [H.L.]
(*The Lord Denman*)
l. Presented; read 1ª * *April* 8 (No. 72)

Army Discipline and Regulation (*Annual*) *Bill*
Summary Punishments — The 4*th Clause*, Question, Sir R. Assheton Cross; Answer, Mr. Childers *Mar* 28, 9; Question, Captain Price; Answer, Mr. Childers *April* 8, 1026;—*Case of Patrick King*, Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. Osborne Morgan *April* 8, 1034

Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual) Bill (*Mr. Secretary Childers, The Judge Advocate General, Mr. Trevelyan*)
c. Read 2°, after debate *Mar* 28, 20 [Bill 123]
Order for Committee read; Moved, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair" *Mar* 31, 369
Amendt. to leave out from "That," and add "it is undesirable that the punishment to be awarded by Courts Martial for grave offences committed by soldiers on active service should be regulated by the Secretary of State, and thereby withdrawn from the direct control of Parliament" (*Viscount Emlyn*) *v.*; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after short debate, Amendt. withdrawn
Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker, &c." put, and agreed to; Committee; Report
Considered; read 3° *April* 4, 650
l. Read 1ª (*E. of Morley*) *April* 5, 690 (No. 61)
Read 2ª, after short debate *April* 6, 797
Committee; Report; read 3ª, after short debate *April* 7, 849
Royal Assent *April* 8 [44 *Vict.* c. 9]

ARNOLD, Mr. A., *Salford*
Agricultural Holdings (Distress for Rent), Res. 1691
Agricultural Labourers' Habitations (Ireland), Res. 2001
Butter (Spurious Compounds), Res. 509
Church Patronage, 2R. 990
Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts—Compensation for Compulsory Slaughter—Importation of Cattle, 1656
Customs (Outport Officers), Res, 1738
Land Law (Ireland), 2R. 1134, 1164
Parliamentary Oath (Mr. Bradlaugh), 1281
Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, 1881—Mr. Dillon, 1830
Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention, 2R. 432, 440
Turkey and Greece—An Egyptian Contingent, 1029
Frontier Question, 1555

ASHLEY, Hon. E. M. (Secretary to the Board of Trade), *Isle of Wight*
Mercantile Marine—Trawlers' Lights Committee, 13, 872
Thames River, 2R. 120, 121, 122, 127, 132

ASHMEAD-BARTLETT, Mr. E., *Eye*
Africa, South—The Transvaal—Violation of the Armistice, 766
Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), Consid. *cl.* 4, 679; 3R. 685
Asia, Central—Advance of the Russians, 468, 469, 470, 471
Butter (Spurious Compounds), Res. 525
Greece, Affairs of, Res. 2015, 2030, 2037, 2038, 2039, 2040
Turkey and Greece—Statistics, 1027
The Frontier Question, 766
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 616

ATTORNEY GENERAL, The (Sir H. JAMES) *Taunton*
Africa, South—The Transvaal (Negotiations) Suzerainty, 1534, 1822
Conveyancing and Law of Property, 2R. 686
Criminal Law—Arrest of the Editor of the "Freiheit," 464, 875, 876
Queen v. Bradlaugh and Another—"Fruits of Philosophy," 1827
Crossed Cheques Act, 1876 — Corporation Bonds, 1958
Elections (Closing of Public Houses), 2R. 238
Judicature Acts—The Amended Rules and Orders, 558
Jury System (England), 1412
Leases, Comm. *cl.* 3, 85, 87
Married Women's Property (Scotland), Comm. 687
Mutiny Acts—Corporal Punishment, 459
Parliament—New Writ for Knaresborough, 1871
Parliamentary Representation — Vacant Seats, 1957
Parliamentary Elections Act, 1868—Miscellaneous Questions
Boston Election, 1547, 1964
Disqualification for Corrupt Practices, 760
Sandwich Election Commission, 1956
Scheduled Solicitors, 1080
The Reported Boroughs, 352, 353, 465, 466
Parliamentary Oath (Mr. Bradlaugh), 353, 482, 484, 884, 1223, 1229
Parliamentary Oaths, 1528, 1529, 1556; Motion for Leave, 1621, 1623; Motion for Adjournment, 1625
Queen v. Edwards—Parish of Woolwich—Expenses Incurred in Burying the Victims of the "Princess Alice" Calamity, 880

Austria—Arrest of Socialists
Question, Mr. J. Cowen; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *May* 5, 1840

AYLMER, Captain J. E. F., *Maidstone*
Customs and Inland Revenue—Differential Duty on Spirits, 1537

BALFOUR, General Sir G., *Kincardineshire*
Army Discipline—Abolition of Flogging, 562
Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), 2R. 36; Comm. 375; *cl.* 5, 381, 382

BALFOUR, Mr. A. J., *Hertford*
Agricultural Holdings Act (1875) Amendment, 2R. 443
Alkali, &c. Works Regulation, Comm. 1170
India—Afghanistan—Reported Russian Mission to Cabul, 1966
Ireland, State of—Land League Meeting at Midleton, 473
Land Law (Ireland), 2R. 1610
Parliament—Public Business, 1967
Parliamentary Oaths, Motion for Bill, Amendt. 2046, 2050
Teinds (Scotland), 2R. 421, 426

Balfour, Mr. J. B. (Solicitor General for Scotland), *Clackmannan, &c.*
Teinds (Scotland), 2R. 426

Banking Laws Amendment Bill
(*Mr. Anderson, Mr. Ramsay, Mr. Charles M'Laren*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *May* 4, 1779
Amendt. to leave out "now," and add "upon this day six months" (*Mr. Robert Fowler*); Question proposed, "That 'now,' &c.;" after debate, Amendt. and Motion withdrawn; Bill withdrawn [Bill 46]

Bankruptcy Bill
(*Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Solicitor General, Mr. Ashley*)
c. Motion for Leave (*Mr. Hibbert*) *April* 7, 992; Debate adjourned
Debate resumed *April* 8, 1056; after short debate, Question put, and agreed to; Bill ordered; read 1°* [Bill 137]
Estates in Liquidation, Question, Sir Eardley Wilmot; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain *May* 6, 1957

Bankruptcy and Cessio (Scotland) Bill
(*Dr. Cameron, Mr. Orr Ewing, Mr. Ramsay, Mr. James Campbell, Mr. Mackintosh*)
c. Read 2°, after short debate *April* 29, 1519
Committee*—R.P. *May* 2 [Bill 81]

Barclay, Mr. J. W., *Forfarshire*
Agricultural Holdings (Distress for Rent), Res, 1696, 1703
County Representative Boards (Scotland), 1320

Barne, Colonel F. St. J. N., *Suffolk, E*
Agricultural Holdings (Distress for Rent), Res. 1688
Parliamentary Oaths, Motion for Bill, 2066

Barran, Mr. J., *Leeds*
Customs (Outport Officers), Res. 1734

Barttelot, Colonel Sir W. B., *Sussex, W.*
Africa, South—The Transvaal (Military Operations)—Surrender of Potchefstroom, 366
Agricultural Holdings (Distress for Rent), Res. 1693, 1964
Army—Half-Pay Captains, 467
Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), 2R. 29; Comm. 379; *add. cl.* 405; Consid. *cl.* 6, 683
Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts—Foot-and-Mouth Disease, 157
Customs (Outport Officers), Res. 1737
Parliamentary Oath (Mr. Bradlaugh), 1296
Parliamentary Oaths, 1567
Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention, 2R. 433
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 640, 641

Baxter, Right Hon. W. E., *Montrose, &c.*
Entail (Scotland), 158
Thames River, 2R. 141
Treaty of Berlin—Article 61—Armenia, 752

Beach, Right Hon. Sir M. E. Hicks-*Gloucestershire, E.*
Africa, South—The Transvaal—Miscellaneous Questions, 1035, 1036, 1531
Commission—Instruction, 773
Military Operations—Blockade at Pretoria, 471
Negotiations—Further Papers, 1533
Policy of the Government, 472
Land Law (Ireland), Leave, 931
Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention, 2R. 441

Beach, Mr. W. W. B., *Hants, N.*
London and South Western Railway, 2R. 452

Beaconsfield, K.G., The late Earl of
Lords
Observations, Earl Granville, The Duke of Richmond and Gordon *May* 5, 1801
Commons
Notice of Motion for an Address to Her Majesty, Lord Richard Grosvenor *April* 25, 1084
Committee, to consider a humble Address to be presented to Her Majesty, praying that Her Majesty will give directions that a Monument be erected, as a public charge, in the Collegiate Church of St. Peter, Westminster, to the memory of the late Right Honourable the Earl of Beaconsfield (Queen's Recommendation signified), upon Monday 9th May (*Mr. Gladstone*) *April* 25
Notice of Motion, Mr. Labouchere *May* 2, 1531; Question, Sir Wilfrid Lawson; Answer, Mr. Speaker *May* 3, 1665; Notice of Motion, Mr. Gladstone *May* 5, 1841
The Inscription, Questions, Mr. Macdonald, Mr. Rylands; Answers, The Marquess of Hartington *May* 6, 1960

Beer Bill
(*Colonel Barne, Mr. Storer, Mr. Hicks*)
c. Considered in Committee; Resolution agreed to, and reported; Bill ordered; read 1°* *April* 27 [Bill 142]

Bellingham, Mr. A. H., *Louth*
Criminal Law—Arrest of the Editor of the "Freiheit," 555
Poor Law (England)—Oldham Guardians—Catholic Children, 5

Bentinck, Right Hon. G. A. F. Cavendish, *Whitehaven*
Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), Consid. *cl.* 4, 654, 656
Elections in Foreign Countries, 774

BIDDELL, Mr. W., *Suffolk, W.*
Alkali, &c. Works Regulation, Comm. 1172
Butter (Spurious Compounds), Res. 507
Land Law (Ireland), Leave, 937
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 633

BIGGAR, Mr. J. G., *Cavan Co.*
Alkali, &c. Works Regulation, Comm. *cl.* 3, 1642, 1648; Motion for Adjournment, 1649
India Office Auditor (Superannuation), 2R. Motion for Adjournment, 1923, 1925
Ireland—Miscellaneous Questions
  Evictions — Mohill, Co. Leitrim, 150;—Proportion of Rents to Valuations, 151
  Inland Revenue—Beer Licences, 153
  Law and Justice—Processes of Ejectment, 1079
  National Education—Model Schools, 5
  Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, 1881, 1035;—Mr. Dillon, 1746
Parliament—Easter Recess, 1054

BIRKBECK, Mr. E., *Norfolk, N.*
Mercantile Marine — Rights of Trawling Smacks, 872

BIRLEY, Mr. H., *Manchester*
France and Tunis—British Subjects in Tunis, 1549
Inland Revenue—Tax on Horses and Carriages, 1540

BLAKE, Mr. J. A., *Waterford Co.*
Land Law (Ireland), 2R. 1133
Lunacy Law Assimilation (Ireland), 2R. 813
Parliamentary Oath (Mr. Bradlaugh), 1292
Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Wales), 1765

BLENNERHASSETT, Mr. R. P., *Kerry*
Agricultural Holdings (Distress for Rent), Res. 1665, 1674

Board of Trade—Resignation of Mr. R. Giffen
Question, Mr. H. S. Northcote; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain *April* 7, 882

BOLTON, Mr. J. C., *Stirling*
Banking Laws Amendment, 2R. 1797

BOORD, Mr. T. W., *Greenwich*
Army — Royal Artillery — Pay of Artificers, 1310
  Zulu War — General Newdigate's Medal Roll, 1821
Coinage (Decimal System), Res. 170

BOURKE, Right Hon. R., *Lynn Regis*
India—Afghanistan—Reported Russian Mission to Cabul, 1967
Russia — Central Asia — Recall of General Skobeleff, 554
Turkey and Greece—The Frontier Question, 19, 554

BRABOURNE, Lord
Africa, South — The Transvaal—Murder of Captain Elliott, Dr. Barber, and others, 848
  Slavery, 446, 450

BRADLAUGH, Mr. C., *Northampton*
Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), 2R. 34
Parliamentary Oath (Mr. Bradlaugh), 1184, 1185, 1207, 1241, 1244, 1245, 1252

BRAND, Right Hon. H. B. W., (*see* SPEAKER, The)

BRAND, Mr. H. R., *Stroud*
Agricultural Holdings Act (1875) Amendment, 2R. Motion for Adjournment, 443
Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), Comm. *cl.* 5, 385, 386
Land Law (Ireland), 2R. 1358
London City Lands (Thames Embankment), 2R. 737

Brazil—Claims of a British Subject
Question, Mr. Anderson; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke *Mar* 31, 350

Bridges (South Wales) Bill (*Viscount Emlyn, Sir Hardinge Giffard, Mr. Hussey Vivian, Mr. Henry Allen, Mr. Pugh*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Mar* 31 [Bill 129]
Read 2° * *April* 25
Committee *; Report *May* 5
Read 3° * *May* 6

BRIGGS, Mr. W. E., *Blackburn*
Church Patronage, 2R. Motion for Adjournment, 980
Parliament—Public Business (Half-past Twelve Rule), Res. 1725

BRIGHT, Right Hon. J. (Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster), *Birmingham*
Agricultural Labourers' Habitations (Ireland), Res. 1987
Bankruptcy, Motion for Leave, 1077
Parliamentary Oath (Mr. Bradlaugh), 1199, 1244, 1263, 1278, 1291
Parliamentary Oaths, Motion for Bill, 2056, 2057

BRIGHT, Mr. J., *Manchester*
Wild Fowl Act, 1880, 1822

BRISE, Colonel S. B. RUGGLES-, *Essex, E.*
Agricultural Holdings Act (1875) Amendment, 2R. 444
Agricultural Holdings (Distress for Rent), Res. 1692

British Burmah—Consumption of Opium
Question, Mr. J. W. Pease; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington *April* 5, 764

British Museum—Electric Lighting
Question, Mr. Albert Grey; Answer, Mr. Spencer Walpole *Mar* 31, 360

Broadhurst, Mr. H., *Stoke-on-Trent*
Customs (Outport Officers), Res. 1738
Jury System (England), 1412
Technical Education, 543, 544

Brodrick, Hon. W. St. J. F., *Surrey, W.*
Guildford, Kingston, and London Railway, 2R. 341
Land Law (Ireland), 1035; 2R. 1124
Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention, 2R. 967
Summary Jurisdiction (Ireland), 2R. Motion for Adjournment, 844

Brooks, Mr. M., *Dublin*
Alkali, &c. Works Regulation, Comm. *cl.* 3, 1641, 1647
Law and Justice (Ireland)—Dublin Jury List, 1081
Tramways (Ireland) Acts Amendment, Comm. *cl.* 7, Motion for reporting Progress, 972, 973

Brown, Mr. A. H., *Wenlock*
Butter (Spurious Compounds), Res. 506
Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention, 2R. 431, 970; Appointment of Select Committee, Motion for Adjournment, 1800

Bruce, Sir H. H., *Coleraine*
Land Law (Ireland), 1411; 2R. 1873
Landlord and Tenant (Ireland) Act, 1870, Commission (The Earl of Bessborough's)—The Evidence, 12, 565, 566, 880
Lunacy Law Assimilation (Ireland), 2R. 811

Bryce, Mr. J., *Tower Hamlets*
Guildford, Kingston, and London Railway, 2R. 333
London and South Western Railway, 2R. 454
London City (Parochial Charities), 2R. 341
Post Office—Indicators to Pillar Letter-Boxes, 17
Royal University of Ireland—Scheme of the Senate, 883
Skipton and Kettlewell Railway (Extension to Aysgarth), Consid. 1010

Burnaby, General E. S., *Leicestershire, N.*
Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), 2R. 42; Consid. *cl.* 3, Amendt. 651

Bury, Viscount
Africa, South—The Transvaal (Negotiations)—Peace Arrangements, 304;—Protection to Loyal Subjects, 863
Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), Comm. *cl.* 4, 854; *cl.* 7, 857, 858
Army Organization—New Scheme, 722

Butter (Spurious Compounds)
Amendt. on Committee of Supply *April* 1, To leave out from "That," and add "it is desirable that steps be taken by the Legislature to ensure that of the spurious compounds resembling butter, which are imported from America, those only which are harmless shall be permitted to be exposed for sale under distinctive names, and that the importation and sale of those which are hurtful or dangerous to health shall be prohibited altogether" (*Sir Herbert Maxwell*) *v.*, 494; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after debate, Question put; A. 75, N. 59; M. 16 (D. L. 177)

Buxton, Mr. F. W., *Andover*
Army—Auxiliary Forces—Volunteer Review at Windsor, 1535
Banking Laws Amendment, 2R. 1798
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 615

Byrne, Mr. G. M., *Wexford Co.*
Petty Sessions Clerks (Ireland), 2R. 842
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 629

Caine, Mr. W. S., *Scarborough*
Army—Crime and Punishment, 1879, 365
Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), Comm. *add. cl.* 388, 414
Elections (Closing of Public Houses), 2R. 243

Cairns, Earl
Africa, South—Transvaal (Military Operations)—Surrender of Potchefstroom, 89
Negotiations—Peace Arrangements, 249, 259, 264, 268, 269, 270, 287, 290, 313
Local Courts of Bankruptcy (Ireland), 2R. 249

Callan, Mr. P., *Louth*
Agricultural Labourers' Habitations (Ireland), Res. 1967, 1983
Alkali, &c. Works Regulation, Comm. *cl.* 3, 1633, 1640
Belfast Improvement Act, 1878—"Finley *v.* Belfast Town Council," 1552
Ireland—Constabulary Barracks, 551
Ireland, State of—Conflict near Clogher—Verdict of "Wilful Murder," 1660
Land Law (Ireland), Leave, 937, 1029; 2R. 1618
Parliament—Public Business (Half-past Twelve Rule), Res. 1726
Parliamentary Oaths, 1568
Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention, Appointment of a Select Committee, 1800

Cambridge, Duke of (Field Marshal Commanding-in-Chief)
Afghan War—Vote of Thanks for the Military Operations in Afghanistan, 1812
Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), Comm. 853; *cl.* 7, 857, 858
Army Organization—New Scheme, 709

Cameron, Mr. D., *Inverness-shire*
Circuit Courts (Scotland), 873
Scotland—Vagrancy in Counties, 873

[*cont.*

Cameron, Dr. C., *Glasgow*
Bankruptcy and Cessio (Scotland), 2R. 1519
Coolies (Indian)—Hurricane in La Réunion, 362
India and China—The Opium Trade, 1493

Campbell, Lord Colin, *Argyll*
Africa, South—The Transvaal—Violation of the Armistice, 767

Campbell, Sir G., *Kirkcaldy, &c.*
Afghan War—Vote of Thanks for the Military Operations in Afghanistan, 1869
Africa, South—Basutoland (Peace Negotiations), 359, 1183, 1545
Banking Laws Amendment, 2R. 1799
Customs and Inland Revenue, 2R. 1518
Guildford, Kingston, and London Railway, 2R. 340
India and China—The Opium Trade, 1512
Land Law (Ireland), Leave, 930
Married Women's Property (Scotland), Consid. 1179; 3R. 1521
Parliament—New Writ for Knaresborough, 1870
Power of Representatives Abroad, Res. 1445
Railways (India), 349;—Treaty of Lisbon—Portuguese Territory, 1818
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 646, 647

Campbell-Bannerman, Mr. H., *Stirling, &c.*
Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), Comm. 379

Camperdown, Earl of
Municipal Franchise (Scotland), 2R. 1928

Canada, Dominion of—Irish Emigration
Question, Mr. Anderson; Answer, Mr. Grant Duff *Mar* 28, 13

Carbutt, Mr. E. H., *Monmouth, &c.*
Customs (Outport Officers), Res. 1735
Elections (Closing of Public-Houses), 2R. 231, 247
H.M.S. "Doterel," Destruction of, 1747
Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Wales), 2R. 1757

Carington, Hon. R., *Bucks*
Army Organization—New Scheme—Majors of Royal Artillery and Engineers, 755
Street Traffic (Metropolis)—The Vestries, 18

Cartwright, Mr. W. C., *Oxfordshire*
Portugal—The Lorenzo-Marques Treaty, 1958

Causton, Mr. R. K., *Colchester*
Army—Quartermasters—Warrant of 1880, 757

Cavendish, Lord E., *Derbyshire, N.*
Army—Regimental Organization, 752
Parliamentary Oaths, Motion for Bill, 2069

Cavendish, Lord F. C. (Secretary to the Treasury), *Yorkshire, W.R., N. Div.*
Banking Laws Amendment, 2R. 1793, 1797
Civil Service—The Playfair Scheme, 6, 1538
Consolidated Fund—Miscellaneous Pensions (Ireland), 1015
Customs and Inland Revenue, Comm. 1921
Customs (Outport Officers), Res. 1731, 1732, 1733
Customs Re-organization — Customs Clerks (Liverpool), 16
Customs Service—Out-door Officers—Competitive Examination, 351
Excise—Trading by Excise Officers, 1961
Fisheries (Ireland)—Mackerel Fishery, 1535
Land Law (Ireland), 847
London City Lands (Thames Embankment), 2R. 746
Public Offices—Writers and Copyists, 1416
Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention, 2R. 441, 970
Scotland—The Treasury Minute on Scotch Banks, 873
Suez Canal Company—British Shares, 555
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 644, 645, 647

Cecil, Lord E. H. B. G., *Essex, W.*
Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), Comm. 374
Crown Lands Act, 1866—The Foreshore at Shoeburyness, 867

Census, 1881
Questions, Mr. Puleston, Mr. Montague Guest; Answers, Mr. Dodson *April* 8, 1024
The Householders' Schedules, Question, Sir Hardinge Giffard; Answer, Mr. Dodson *April* 1, 463

Central Asia
Miscellaneous Questions
Advance of Russia, Questions, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett, Mr. Montague Guest, Mr. Alderman Lawrence; Answers, Mr. Speaker, The Marquess of Hartington *April* 1, 468; Questions, Mr. J. Cowen; Answers, Sir Charles W. Dilke *April* 28, 1308
Recall of General Skobeleff, Question, Mr. Bourke; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke *April* 4, 554; Question, Mr. E. Stanhope; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke *April* 29, 1422
English Intrigues at Merv, Questions, Mr. Onslow; Answers, Sir Charles W. Dilke *April* 4, 560
The Papers, Question, Lord George Hamilton; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke *April* 4, 561

Chamberlain, Right Hon. J. (President of the Board of Trade), *Birmingham*
Bankruptcy—Estates in Liquidation, 1957
Bankruptcy, Motion for Leave, 1056
Board of Trade—Resignation of Mr. R. Giffen, 882
Butter (Spurious Compounds), 518, 524
Coinage (Decimal System), Res. 171

[*cont.*

CHAMBERLAIN, Right Hon. J.—*cont.*
Companies Act, 1867—Trinity College, London, 1830
Guildford, Kingston, and London Railway, 2R. 335, 337
Hall Marking—Report of Select Committee, 1879, 154
Mercantile Marine—British Channel Pilots, 155
Merchant Shipping Acts—Overloading the "Dublin Castle." 1828
Parliament—Business of the House, 770
Public Health—Cholera at Chicago—Butterine, 364
Putrid American Hams, 769
Thames River, 2R. 141, 144, 147
Trade and Manufacture—Exports and Imports, 558
The Woollen Trade, 566, 567, 1307

CHAMBERS, Sir T., *Marylebone*
London City Lands (Thames Embankment), 2R. 739

CHANCELLOR, The LORD (LORD SELBORNE)
Africa, South—The Transvaal (Negotiations)—Peace Arrangements, 306, 313
Local Courts of Bankruptcy (Ireland), Comm. 451

CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER—See GLADSTONE, Right Hon. W. E.

CHAPLIN, Mr. H., *Lincolnshire, Mid.*
Agricultural Holdings Act (1875) Amendment, 2R. 444
Agricultural Tenants' Compensation, Comm. 991, 992
Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), Consid. *cl.* 4, 669, 680
Land Law (Ireland), Leave, 929; 2R. 1111, 1121, 1916
Parliament—Business of the House, 1032
Easter Recess, 1045
Parliamentary Oath (Mr. Bradlaugh), 1277
Parliamentary Oaths, 1568; Motion for Bill, Motion for Adjournment, 2065
Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention, 2R. Motion for Adjournment, 432

Charitable Trusts Acts Amendment Bill [H.L.] (*The Lord Chancellor*)
l. Presented; read 1ª* *April 5* (No. 59)

CHELMSFORD, Lord
Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), 2R. 797, 799; Comm. 850; *cl.* 4, 854; *cl.* 5, 856
Army Organization—New Scheme, 700

Cheshire Salt Districts Compensation Bill
c. Committee nominated; List of the Committee *Mar* 29
Mr. Hastings *disch.*, Mr. Story-Maskelyne *added April* 27

CHILDERS, Right Hon. H. C. E. (Secretary of State for War), *Pontefract*
Afghan War—Vote of Thanks for the Military Operations in Afghanistan, 1866
Africa, South—The Transvaal (Casualties), 1661
Military Operations, 461;—Action at Majuba Hill—15th Hussars, 1415;—Blockade of Pretoria, 565;—Despatch of Forces, 462;—Policy of the Government, 473;—60th Rifles, 1315;—Surrender of Potchefstroom, 156, 157
Army—Miscellaneous Questions
Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual) Bill — Summary Punishments — 4th Clause, 9, 1026
Army Discipline—Abolition of Flogging, 562
Army Re-organization—Distinguished Service Pensions, 12;—87th and 88th Regiments, 156;—Half-Pay Captains, 467;—Infantry and Cavalry Majors, 368;—Majors of Royal Artillery and Engineers, 755;—New Regulations — Compulsory Retirement, 1823; — Uniforms — The Buffs, 1020
Brigade of Guards, 754
Non-Commissioned Officers, 765
Public Worship—Political Sermons, 870, 871
Quartermasters—Warrant of 1880, 757
Recruits—Irish Recruits, 1549;—Scotch Recruits, 1319
Regimental Organization, 753, 1957
Royal Artillery—Pay of Artificers, 1811
Royal Engineers (Extra Pay), 763
Royal Hibernian Military School, Dublin, 1655
Staff Appointments—Captains of Cavalry and Infantry, 1415
Troops in Ireland—2nd and 3rd Dragoon Guards, 874
Zulu War—General Newdigate's Medal Roll, 1821
Army (Auxiliary Forces) — Miscellaneous Questions
Adjutants of Volunteers, 1543
Distinctions to Militia Officers, 565
Militia Quartermasters, 557
Re-organization—Promotion in the Militia, 14
Uniforms—Militia Officers, 1818
Volunteer Review at Windsor, 1535
Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), 2R. 40; Comm. 372, 380; *cl.* 5, 386, 387; *add. cl.* 411, 417; Consid. 650; *cl.* 1, 651; *cl.* 3, 652; *cl.* 4, *ib.*, 656, 668, 671, 672, 673, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683; *cl.* 6, *ib.* 684; 3R. 685
Crown Lands Act, 1866—The Foreshore at Shoeburyness, 867
Ireland, State of—Riot at Dungarvan, 868

China—Mixed Court of Shanghai—Chinese Criminals
Question, Mr. J. W. Pease; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke *April* 5, 758

Church Boards Bill (*Mr. Albert Grey, Mr. Edward Howard, Mr. Stuart-Wortley, Mr. Marriott, Mr. Pulley*) [Bill 14]
c. 2R., after short debate, Debate adjourned *April* 27, 1297

CHURCHILL, Lord R., *Woodstock*
Africa, South—The Transvaal (Military Operations)—Policy of the Government, 472
Surrender of Potchefstroom, 367
Berlin Conference—Greek Inhabitants of Ceded Turkish Provinces, 15
Criminal Law—Miscellaneous Questions
Arrest of the Editor of the "Freiheit," 345, 347, 464, 874, 876, 877
"Freiheit"—Personal Explanation, 1032
"Irish World," 882
Evictions (Ireland), 788
Land Law (Ireland), 1411;—The Commission, 1540
Land Law (Ireland), 2R. 1914
Parliament—Business of the House, 1824
Parliamentary Oaths, 1423, 1556; Motion for Leave, Motion for Adjournment, 1628, 2071

Church Patronage Bill [Bill 30]
(*Mr. Stanhope, Mr. Albert Grey, Mr. Stanley Leighton, Mr. Stuart-Wortley*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *April* 6, 845; after short debate, Debate adjourned
Debate resumed *April* 7, 973
Amendt. to leave out from "That," and add "in the opinion of this House, it is inexpedient to pass any measure which gives legal sanction to the sale under any circumstances of the right of appointing ministers to parochial or other benefices" (*Mr. Illingworth*) *v.*; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after short debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Willis*); after further short debate, Question put; A. 23, N. 62; M. 39 (D. L. 183)
Question again proposed, "That the words, &c.;" Moved, "That this House do now adjourn" (*Mr. Evans Williams*); after short debate, Question put; A. 23, N. 56; M. 33 (D. L. 184)
Question again proposed, "That the words, &c.;" Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Briggs*); after short debate, Question put, and agreed to; Debate adjourned

Churchwardens (Admission) Bill [Bill 47]
(*Mr. Monk, Sir Gabriel Goldney*)
c. 2R., Debate adjourned *April* 8, 1077

Civil Service—The Playfair Scheme
Question, Mr. John Hollond; Answer, Lord Frederick Cavendish *Mar* 28, 6; Question, Mr. A. Grant; Answer, Lord Frederick Cavendish *May* 2, 1538

CLARKE, Mr. E. G., *Plymouth*
Companies Act, 1867—Trinity College, London, 1830
Merchant Shipping Acts—Overloading the "Dublin Castle," 1828
Parliamentary Oath (Mr. Bradlaugh), 1197
Parliamentary Oaths, Motion for Bill, 2072

Coal Mines—The Seaham Explosion—Report and Evidence
Question, Mr. Macdonald; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *May* 3, 1658

Coal Mines Regulation Act—The Pen-y-Graig Explosion
Question, Mr. Macdonald; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *May* 3, 1657

Coinage (Decimal System)
Moved, "That, in the opinion of this House, the introduction of a Decimal System of Coinage, Weights, and Measures ought not to be longer delayed" (*Mr. Ashton Dilke*) *Mar* 29, 158
Amendt. to leave out from "That," and add "a Select Committee be appointed to inquire whether any basis can be found for a decimal system that would not so seriously disturb existing conditions as to make it practically inexpedient to change" (*Mr. Anderson*) *v.*; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after short debate, Question put, and negatived
Question put, "That those words be there added;" A. 28, N. 108; M. 80 (D. L. 171)

COLMAN, Mr. J. J., *Norwich*
Agricultural Holdings (Distress for Rent), Res. 1693

Colonial Governors
Question, Mr. Warton; Answer, Mr. Grant Duff *May* 6, 1959

COLTHURST, Col. D. La Zouche, *Cork Co.*
Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), Comm. 377; *add. cl.* 402
Butter (Spurious Compounds), Res. 509
Lunacy Law Assimilation (Ireland), 2R. 812

COMMINS, Dr. A., *Roscommon*
Alkali, &c. Works Regulation, Comm. *cl.* 3, 1635
Bankruptcy and Cessio (Scotland), 2R. 1520
Land Law (Ireland)—Yearly Tenants, 1839
Parliamentary Oath (Mr. Bradlaugh), 1294, 1295

Companies Act, 1867—Trinity College, London
Question, Mr. Edward Clarke; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain *May* 5, 1830

Consolidated Fund (No. 2) Bill
(*The Earl Granville*)
l. Read 1ª* *Mar* 26
Read 2ª*; Committee negatived; read 3ª *Mar* 28
Royal Assent *Mar* 29 [44 *Vict.* c. 8]

Contagious Diseases Acts—Case of Elizabeth Burley
Question, Mr. Hopwood; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *May* 5, 1815

Contagious Diseases (*Animals*) *Acts*
Compensation for Compulsory Slaughter—Importation of Cattle, Question, Mr. Arthur Arnold; Answer, Mr. Mundella *May* 3, 1656
Foot-and-Mouth Disease, Question, The Marquess of Lansdowne; Answer, Earl Spencer *Mar* 29, 90; Questions, Mr. Stanley Leighton, Sir Walter B. Barttelot; Answers, Mr. Mundella *Mar* 29, 157;—*Animals Order, Article* 22, Question, Mr. Long; Answer, Mr. Mundella *April* 29, 1419;—*Outbreak at Carlisle*, Question, Mr. W. Lowther; Answer, Mr. Mundella *April* 25, 1084;—*Outbreak at Newcastle*, Question, Mr. Lowther; Answer, Mr. Mundella *May* 3, 1661; Question, Mr. Elliot; Answer, Mr. Mundella *May* 5, 1826
Glanders, Question, Lord Claud Hamilton; Answer, Mr. Mundella *April* 7, 881

Conveyancing and Law of Property Bill [H.L.] (*Mr. H. H. Fowler*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *April* 4, 685; Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Gorst*); after short debate, Question put, and negatived
Main Question put, and agreed to; Bill read 2°, and committed to a Select Committee [Bill 101]

Coolies (*Indian*)—*The Hurricane in La Réunion*
Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke *Mar* 31, 362

Coope, Mr. O. E., *Middlesex*
Turkey and Greece—The Frontier Question, 19

Copyhold Enfranchisement Bill
(*Mr. Waugh, Mr. George Howard, Mr. Stafford Howard, Mr. Ainsworth, Mr. Ferguson*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *April* 6, 834
Amendt. to leave out "now," and add "upon this day six months" (*Sir Gabriel Goldney*); Question proposed, "That 'now,' &c.;" after short debate, Amendt. withdrawn
Main Question put, and agreed to; Bill read 2° [Bill 117]

Corbet, Mr. W. J., *Wicklow Co.*
Army—Royal Hibernian Military School, Dublin, 1654
Geological Survey of Ireland—The Re-Survey, 1655
Magistracy (Ireland)—County Government, 1652
Relief of Distress (Ireland) Act—Relief Works at Arklow, 1956

Coroners (Ireland) Bill [Bill 73]
(*Mr. Healy, Mr. Gray, Mr. Barry*)
c. Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland *April* 8, 1022
Select Committee nominated *May* 3; List of the Committee, 1742
Moved, "That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records" (*Mr. Healy*); Question put; A. 15, N. 75; M. 60 (D. L. 192)
Ordered, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee, that they have power to consider the operation of the Law relating to Coroners in Ireland, and, if they shall so think fit, to amend the Bill accordingly

Corry, Mr. J. P., *Belfast*
Petty Sessions Clerks (Ireland), 2R. 842

Courtney, Mr. L. H. (Under Secretary of State for the Home Department), *Liskeard*
Agricultural Holdings (Distress for Rent), Res. 1704
Agricultural Tenants' Compensation, Comm. 992
Copyhold Enfranchisement, 2R. 837
Criminal Law—Abduction of English Girls, 1311
Extraordinary Tithe Rent Charges, Motion for a Select Committee, Amendt. 1650, 1651
Metropolitan Open Spaces Act (1877) Amendment, 2R. 226
Middlesex Land Registry, 2R. 832
Municipal Corporations Act (1859) Amendment, 2R. 248
Prisons (England) Act, 1877—Newcastle and Morpeth Prisons, 1536
Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention—Appointment of a Select Committee, 1799, 1800

Cowen, Mr. J., *Newcastle-on-Tyne*
Afghan War—Vote of Thanks for the Military Operations in Afghanistan, 1860
Asia, Central—Russian Advance, 1308, 1309
Austria, Arrest of Socialists in, 1840
Criminal Law—Arrest of the Editor of the "Freiheit," 345
Licensing Act—The Radical Club, King's Cross, 1082
Parliamentary Oath (Mr. Bradlaugh), Motion for Adjournment, 1249, 1286
Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, 1881—Prisoners under the Act—Newspaper Editors, 1825

Craig, Mr. W. Y., *Staffordshire, N.*
Agricultural Labourers' Habitations (Ireland), Res. 1993

Cranbrook, Viscount
Afghan War—Vote of Thanks for the Military Operations in Afghanistan, 1808
Africa, South—The Transvaal (Military Operations)—Surrender of Potchefstroom, 89
Negotiations—Peace Arrangements, 292, 295, 298, 300

CRIMINAL LAW

MISCELLANEOUS QUESTIONS

Abduction of English Girls, Question, Mr. M'Coan; Answer, Mr. Courtney *April* 28, 1311

Arrest of the Editor of the "Freiheit," Questions, Mr. Gregory, Lord Randolph Churchill, Mr. J. Cowen; Answers, Sir William Harcourt *Mar* 31, 344; Question, Lord Randolph Churchill; Answer, The Attorney General *April* 1, 464; Question, Mr. Bellingham; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *April* 4, 555; Question, Observations, Lord Randolph Churchill; Reply, The Attorney General; Observations, Sir Charles W. Dilke *April* 7, 874; Personal Explanation, Lord Randolph Churchill *April* 8, 1032

Juvenile Offenders Act, Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *May* 5, 1819

The "Irish World," Question, Lord Randolph Churchill; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *April* 7, 882; Questions, Mr. Tottenham, Mr. A. M. Sullivan, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster *April* 8, 1018

The Queen v. Bradlaugh and Another—"Fruits of Philosophy," Question, Mr. O'Donnell; Answer, The Attorney General *May* 5, 1826

CROPPER, Mr. J., *Kendal*

Africa, South — The Transvaal (Political Affairs)—Land Ownership, 359

CROSS, Right Hon. Sir R. A., *Lancashire, S.W.*

Agricultural Holdings (Distress for Rent), Res. 1701, 1702, 1703

Alkali, &c. Works Regulation, 2R. 429; Comm. 1174; *cl.* 3, 1636

Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual)—Summary Punishments—4th Clause, 9

Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), Consid. *cl.* 4, 672

Bankruptcy and Cessio (Scotland), 2R. 1520

Church Patronage, 2R. 985

Elections (Closing of Public Houses), 2R. 240

Land Law (Ireland), 2R. 1120

Married Women's Property (Scotland), 3R. 1522, 1527

Parliament — Public Business (Half-past Twelve Rule), Res. Motion for Adjournment, 1722

Parliamentary Elections Act, 1868—The Reported Boroughs, 352, 466

Parliamentary Oath (Mr. Bradlaugh)—New Writ for the Borough of Northampton, 475

Parliamentary Oaths, Motion for Bill, 2051, 2056

Patronage of Benefices (Church of England), Res. 210

Teinds (Scotland), 2R. 423

Ways and Means, Report, 971

CROSS, Mr. J. K., *Bolton*

Trade and Commerce—The New General Tariff, 1539

Crossed Cheques Act, 1876—*Corporation Bonds*

Question, Mr. Jackson; Answer, The Attorney General *May* 6, 1957

Crown Agents for the Colonies

Questions, Mr. Anderson; Answers, Mr. Grant Duff *April* 7, 879; *May* 2, 1551

Crown Lands Act, 1866—*The Foreshore at Shoeburyness*

Question, Lord Eustace Cecil; Answer, Mr. Childers *April* 7, 867

CUBITT, Right Hon. G., *Surrey, W.*

Guildford, Kingston, and London Railway, 2R. 319

CUNLIFFE, Sir R. A., *Denbigh, &c.*

Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), Comm. *add. cl.* 413

Customs and Inland Revenue Bill

(*Mr. Playfair, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord Frederick Cavendish*)

c. Ordered; read 1°* *April* 7 [Bill 136]

Order for 2R. read *April* 25, 1170; after short debate, 2R. deferred

Farm Buildings, Question, Sir Baldwyn Leighton; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *April* 28, 1308

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *April* 29, 1515

Amendt. to leave out from "That," and add "the alteration gives no relief to the labourer, who justly complains, that, when he brews only two bushels for harvest, he is subject to a higher duty, as licence, than he paid under the malt tax, although the Law was professedly altered for his relief" (*Mr. Storer*) *v.*; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after short debate, Amendt. withdrawn

Main Question put, and agreed to; Bill read 2°

Differential Duty on Spirits, Question, Captain Aylmer; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *May* 2, 1537

Order for Committee read; Moved, "That the Committee on the Bill be deferred" (*Lord Frederick Cavendish*) *May* 5, 1920; after short debate, Question put, and agreed to; Committee deferred

Customs (Outport Officers)

Moved, "That the disadvantageous position in which Customs Out-door Officers at the Outports are placed, in respect of salary, as compared with Customs Officers of the same rank, and performing the same duties, at London and Liverpool, is unjust to those officers, and prejudicial to the public service" (*Mr. Norwood*) *May* 3, 1727; after debate, Motion withdrawn

Select Committee appointed, "to inquire into the conditions of service and the rates of pay of the Customs Out-door Officers at the Outports, with power to send for persons, papers, and records, and to report to this House" (*Mr. Norwood*) *May* 5

Customs Re-organization—Customs Clerks (Liverpool)
Question, Lord Claud Hamilton; Answer, Lord Frederick Cavendish *Mar* 28, 16

Customs Service—Out-door Officers—Competitive Examination
Question, Mr. A. M. Sullivan; Answer, Lord Frederick Cavendish *Mar* 31, 351

Cyprus
Taxation, Question, Mr. Rylands; Answer Mr. Grant Duff *April* 7, 867
The Law Courts—The Greek Language, Question, Mr. A. M'Arthur; Answer, Mr. Grant Duff *May* 5, 1817

Dalhousie, Earl of
Naval Education, 1930

Dalrymple, Mr. C., *Buteshire*
Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), 2R. 37
Army Re-organization (Auxiliary Forces)—Promotion in the Militia, 14
Teinds (Scotland), 2R. 422

Daly, Mr. J., *Cork*
Agricultural Labourers' Habitations (Ireland), Res. 1974
Ireland, State of—Whiteboy Act—Case of D. O'Sullivan at Millstreet, Co. Cork, 1543
Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Wales), 2R. 1757

Davenport, Mr. H. T., *Staffordshire, N.*
Agricultural Holdings (Distress for Rent), Res. Previous Question moved, 1670, 1706

Davey, Mr. H., *Christchurch*
Leases, Comm. *cl.* 3, 86
Married Women's Property (Scotland), Comm. 688
Parliamentary Oath (Mr. Bradlaugh), Amendt. 1188

Davies, Mr. D., *Cardigan*
Agricultural Holdings (Distress for Rent), Res. 1689

Dawson, Mr. C., *Carlow*
Agricultural Holdings (Distress for Rent), Res. 1693
Agricultural Labourers' Habitations (Ireland), Res. 2002
Geological Survey of Ireland—The Re-Survey, 1656
India Office Auditor (Superannuation), 2R. 1923
Ireland, State of—Dublin, 1838
Land Law (Ireland), 2R. 1919
Parliament—New Writ for Knaresborough, 1871
Small-Pox (Metropolis), 1823

De Ferrieres, Baron, *Cheltenham*
Elections (Closing of Public Houses), 2R. 236

De La Warr, Earl
France and Tunis—Occupation of Kef, &c. 1926
Tunis—The Enfida Case, 860, 863
Turkey—Land Law—Admission of Foreigners, Address for a Paper, 1008

Denman, Lord
Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), 2R. 798, 800; Comm. *cl.* 4, Amendt. 854, 856
Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts—Foot-and-Mouth Disease, 95
Local Courts of Bankruptcy (Ireland), Comm. 450
Turkey—Sir A. H. Layard, Late H.M. Ambassador at the Porte, Address for Papers, 1001

De Worms, Baron H., *Greenwich*
France and Tunis—Outbreak of the Krouhmir Tribes—Military Operations, 1316
"Queen v. Edwards"—Parish of Woolwich—Expenses Incurred in Burying the Victims of the "Princess Alice" Calamity, 879
Small-Pox (Metropolis), 1822
Suez Canal Company—British Shares, 866, 1021
Thames River, 2R. 131
Tunis—Disturbances on the Frontier, 764

Dilke, Sir C. W. (Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs), *Chelsea, &c.*
Asia, Central—Miscellaneous Questions
  English Intrigues at Merv, 560, 561
  Papers, 561
  Russian Advance, 1308, 1309
Berlin Conference — Greek Inhabitants of Ceded Turkish Provinces, 15
  The French at Tunis, 8, 9
Brazil—Claims of a British Subject, 350
China—Mixed Court of Shanghai—Chinese Criminals, 758
Coolies (Indian)—Hurricane in La Réunion, 363
Criminal Law—The "Freiheit," 877
Elections in Foreign Countries, 560, 774
Extradition of Political Offenders, 1312
France and Tunis—British Subjects in Tunis, 1550
  Occupation of Bizerta, 1662
France—New Commercial Treaty, 884;—Negotiations, 1083, 1084; — Sugar and Shipping Bounties, 1314
Greece, Affairs of, Res. 2030, 2036, 2037, 2038, 2039, 2040
India—Afghanistan—Reported Russian Mission to Cabul, 1967
India (Finance, &c.)—Opium Taxation, 1417
International Bi-Metallic Conference, 878
Mines—Mining in Foreign Countries—Report of Residents Abroad, 1955
Portugal—The Lorenzo Marques Treaty, 867, 1958
Russia — Central Asia — Recall of General Skobeleff, 554, 1422
Trade and Commerce — The New French General Tariff, 1539

[cont.

Dilke, Sir C. W.—*cont.*
Treaty of Berlin—Article 61—Armenia, 752
Tunis—Disturbances on the Frontier, 765;—Krouhmir Tribes—Military Preparations of France, 1021, 1317
Turkey—British Trade at Smyrna, 762
Turkey and Greece—Miscellaneous Questions
  Egyptian Contingent, 1029
  Frontier Question, 19, 558, 766, 1556
  Statistics, 1027

Dilke, Mr. A. W., *Newcastle-on-Tyne*
Afghan War—Vote of Thanks for Military Operations in Afghanistan, 1862, 1865
Coinage (Decimal System), Res. 158, 177

Dillon, Mr. J., *Tipperary*
Land Law (Ireland), 2R. Motion for Adjournment, 1912

Dillwyn, Mr. L. L., *Swansea*
Coinage (Decimal System), Res. 165
Parliament — Public Business (Half-past Twelve Rule), Res. 1725
Parliamentary Oaths, 1567

Dixon-Hartland, Mr. F. D., *Evesham*
Public Health—Putrid American Hams, 769

Dodds, Mr. J., *Stockton*
Leases, Comm. *cl.* 3, 87
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 604

Dodson, Right Hon. J. G. (President of the Local Government Board), *Scarborough*
Alkali, &c. Works Regulation, 2R. 428; Comm. 1170, 1176; *cl.* 2, 1178, 1629, 1630; *cl.* 3, 1631, 1633, 1646; Motion for reporting Progress, 1649
Census, 1881—Householders' Schedules, 463, 1025
Highway Acts—Surveyors of Highways—The Accounts, 1414
Highways—Maintenance of Main Roads, Res. 63
Poor Law (England)—Miscellaneous Questions
  Oldham Guardians—Catholic Children, 5
  Metropolis—Workhouse at Champion Hill, 885
  Workhouse Inmates — Religious Attendance, 353
Poor Rate (Metropolis)—Gray's Inn, 474
Public Health (Metropolis) (Law Costs)—Hampstead Hospital Case, 363;—Small-pox, 889, 1024, 1315, 1419, 1822, 1823;—Hospital Tents, 1959
Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention, 2R. 430, 438, 440, 442, 773, 962, 970
Sale of Food and Drugs Act—Oleomargarine, 1820
Vaccination Acts—Case of Mr. J. Abel of Farringdon, 1310

Donaldson-Hudson, Mr. C., *Newcastle-under-Lyne*
Land Act (Ireland)—Purchase Clauses, 1816

Donoughmore, Earl of
Landlord and Tenant (Ireland) Act, 1870, Commission (The Earl of Bessborough's)—The Evidence, 3

Douglas, Mr. A. Akers-, *Kent, E.*
Prisons (England) Act—Maidstone Prison, 559, 888

Duckham, Mr. T., *Herefordshire*
Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention, 2R. 957

Duff, Right Hon. M. E. G. (Under Secretary of State for the Colonies), *Elgin, &c.*
Africa, South—Basutoland (Negotiations), 10, 359, 1183, 1545
  Native Customs in Natal, 1534
Africa, South—The Transvaal—Miscellaneous Questions
  Boers, 1816
  Letter of King Cetewayo, 1020
  Military Operations—Blockade of Pretoria, 471;—Surrender of Potchefstroom, 366, 367, 1023, 1309, 1310, 1533;—Volunteer Force, 1318
  Negotiations, 17, 18, 1417, 1533;—Religious Toleration, 156
  94th Regiment — Protection of Native Interests—Slavery, 354, 355, 356
  Peace Negotiations—Repayment of Loan, 563, 1025
  Political Affairs, 347, 359
  Protection of Loyal Inhabitants, 885, 1083, 1308
  Revocation of Letters Patent, 1879, 1012, 1013
  Sekukuni, 457
  Statistics—Natives and Europeans, 462
  Violation of the Armistice, 767
Africa, West—Gold Coast, 460
Canada, Dominion of—Irish Emigration, 14
Colonial Governors, 1960
Crown Agents for the Colonies, 879, 1551
Cyprus—Law Courts—Greek Language, 1817
  Taxation, 868
Malta—Ancient Monuments, 1032
  Salary of the Governor—Food Taxes, 751
West Indies—Currency, 352
  Jamaica—Its Government as a Crown Colony, 877

Dunsany, Lord
Landlord and Tenant (Ireland) Act, 1870, Commission (The Earl of Bessborough's)—The Evidence, 3

Dyke, Right Hon. Sir W. H., *Kent, Mid*
Agricultural Holdings (Distress for Rent), Res. 1674

Education Department (England and Wales)
Board and Voluntary Schools, Question, Mr. Lyulph Stanley; Answer, Mr. Mundella *Mar* 31, 357

[*cont.*

Education Department (*England and Wales*)—cont.

School Accommodation, Question, Mr. Lyulph Stanley; Answer, Mr. Mundella *Mar* 29, 152

Technical Education, Observations, Mr. Anderson; Reply, Mr. Mundella; short debate thereon *April* 1, 525

Edwards, Mr. J. P., *Salisbury*

Licensing Acts — Sunday Services in Music Halls, 361

Egerton, Hon. Wilbraham, *Cheshire, Mid*

Alkali, &c. Works Regulation, Comm. *cl.* 3, 1638

Elcho, Lord, *Haddingtonshire*

Guildford, Kingston, and London Railway, 2R. 336, 337

Land Law (Ireland), Leave, 930; 2R. 1322, 1411; Amendt. 1570

Elections (Closing of Public Houses) Bill (*Mr. Carbutt, Mr. Hussey Vivian, Mr. Hugh Mason, Mr. Caine*) [Bill 58]

c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *Mar* 30, 231

Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Litton*); after debate, Question put, and agreed to; Debate adjourned

Elementary Education Provisional Order Confirmation (Clay Lane) Bill [H.L.]

(*The Lord President*)

l. Presented; read 1^{a}*, and referred to the Examiners *April* 8 (No. 69)

Elementary Education Provisional Order Confirmation (London) Bill [H.L.]

(*The Lord President*)

l. Presented; read 1^{a}*, and referred to the Examiners *April* 8 (No. 68)

Ellenborough, Lord

Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), Comm. 849

Elliot, Mr. G. W., *Northallerton*

Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts—Outbreak of Foot-and-Mouth Disease at Newcastle-on-Tyne, 1826

Excise—Trading by Excise Officers, 1960

Land Law (Ireland), 885

Emlyn, Viscount, *Carmarthenshire*

Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), Comm. Amendt. 369, 380; Consid. *cl.* 4, Amendt. 653, 669, 679

Endowed Schools Acts—Hulme's Charity—The Commissioners' Scheme

Question, Mr. Summers; Answer, Mr. Mundella *April* 29, 1414

Enfield, Viscount (Under Secretary of State for India)

Candahar, 90

Entail (*Scotland*) *Bill*

Question, Mr. Warton; Answer, Mr. Baxter *Mar* 29, 158

Errington, Mr. G., *Longford Co.*

Alkali, &c. Works Regulation, Comm. *cl.* 3, Amendt. 1630

Land Law (Ireland), Leave, 938

Ewing, Mr. A. O., *Dumbarton*

Teinds (Scotland), 2R. 422

Excise Department—Trading by Excise Officers

Question, Mr. Elliot; Answer, Lord Frederick Cavendish *May* 6, 1960

Extraordinary Tithe Rent-Charges

Moved, "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire as to the expediency of abolishing extraordinary Tithe Rent-charges, and providing a scheme for their redemption upon equitable terms; and also to inquire into and report upon the expediency of providing greater facilities for the redemption of ordinary Tithes upon equitable terms" (*Mr. Inderwick*) *May* 2, 1650

Amendt. to leave out from "terms," in line 5, to end (*Mr. Courtney*); Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after short debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Earl Percy*); Question put, and negatived; Question, "That the words, &c." put, and negatived

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to

Resolved, That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire as to the expediency of abolishing extraordinary Tithe Rent-charges, and providing a scheme for their redemption upon equitable terms

Fawcett, Right Hon. H. (Postmaster General), *Hackney*

Post Office—Miscellaneous Questions

Indicators to Pillar Letter-Boxes, 17

Postal Deliveries (Ireland), 878

Post Office Act, 1837—Detention and Opening of Suspicious Letters, 344, 565

Telegraph Department (Dublin), 869

Feilden, Major-General R. J., *Lancashire, N.*

Africa, South—The Transvaal—60th Rifles, 1314

Army (Auxiliary Forces)—Militia Quartermasters, 556

Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), Consid. *cl.* 4, 669

FINDLATER, Mr. W., *Monaghan*
- Accountant-General's Office in Chancery (Ireland), 756
- Alkali, &c. Works Regulation, Comm. *cl.* 3, 1649
- Lunacy Law Assimilation (Ireland), 2R. 821
- Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 618

FIRTH, Mr. J. F. B., *Chelsea*
- London City Lands (Thames Embankment), 2R. Amendt. 732, 749, 750
- Public Health (Metropolis) (Law Costs)—Hampstead Hospital Case, 363

Fisheries—Lights of Fishing Vessels
- Question, Mr. Heneage; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *May* 2, 1536

FITZMAURICE, Lord E., *Calne*
- Highways—Maintenance of Main Roads, Res. 55
- Land Law (Ireland), 2R. 1892
- Portugal—The Lorenzo-Marques Treaty, 867

FITZPATRICK, Hon. B. E., *Portarlington*
- Lunacy Law Assimilation (Ireland), 2R. 821
- Petty Sessions Clerks (Ireland), 2R. 842

FLETCHER, Sir H., *Horsham*
- Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), 2R. 42; Comm. *cl.* 5, 384; Consid. *cl.* 4, 661, 679; *cl.* 6, 684
- Ireland, State of—Speech of Mr. Dillon, M.P., at Thurles, 768
- Navy—The Marines, 768

FOLKESTONE, Viscount, *Wilts, S.*
- Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), Consid. *cl.* 4, Motion for Adjournment, 681
- Butter (Spurious Compounds), Res. 517
- Ireland, State of—Alleged Crimes and Outrages, 1820
- Metropolitan Open Spaces Act (1877) Amendment, 2R. 223

FORSTER, Right Hon. W. E. (Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland), *Bradford*
- Criminal Law—The "Irish World," 883, 1019, 1020
- Ireland—Miscellaneous Questions
  - Arms Act—Proclamation of the County of Longford, 1015
  - Baronial Works—Ballydehob, Co. Cork, 751
  - Constabulary, 867;—Buck Shot, 1013;—Land League, 1034;—Alleged Excess of Duty at Newcastle, 1544, 1545
  - Constabulary Barracks, 551
  - Crime—The Police at Knochnagree, Co. Kerry, 1079
  - Dublin—Young Ireland Debating Society—Interference of Police, 1833
  - Evictions, 151, 770, 783, 784, 787, 889, 1016;—Mohill, Co. Leitrim, 150, 362;—Number of Families, 1660;—Proportion of Rents to Valuations, 151;—West of Ireland, 473

FORSTER, Right Hon. W. E.—*cont.*
  - Irish Land Act, 1870—Compensation for Disturbance—The Return, 1083;—Purchase Clauses, 1817
  - Land Law—Recovery of Rent by Writ, 1550;—Yearly Tenants, 1838, 1839
  - Landlord and Tenant—Charge against a Process Server, 872
  - Landlord and Tenant (Ireland) Act, 1870, Commission (The Earl of Bessborough's)—The Evidence, 13, 566, 880
  - Law and Justice—Legal Proceedings of Landlords, 12;—Penalties of Prosecutions, 1015;—Processes of Ejectment, 1079
  - Magistracy — Ballyhannis Petty Sessions, 1011;—County Government, 1652;—Mr. Blake, 1954, 1955
  - National Education—Model Schools, 6
  - Notices and Ejectments, 553
  - Peace Preservation—Arms Licences, 1962;—Arrest of Mr. R. Hodnett, 1413;—Proclamation of Co. Monaghan, 1832
  - Poor Law—Arrears of Rent, &c. 1836, 1837;—Midleton Union — Election of Guardians, 1078;—Relief to Wives of Prisoners, 456
  - Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, 1881 — Mr. J. Daly, a Prisoner under the Act, 1412;—Mr. Jasper Tully, 1654;—Mr. Dillon, 1554, 1555, 1664, 1830;—Patrick Downey, 755, 756;—Prisoners in Kilmainham Gaol, 9, 150, 343, 458, 1965;—Treatment of Prisoners under the Act, 1538, 1653;—Newspaper Editors, 1825, 1826
  - Relief of Distress (Ireland) Act—Employment Works, 1832;—Relief Works at Arklow, 1856
  - Royal University of Ireland—Scheme of the Senate, 884
  - Sales of Land—Return, 1021
- Ireland, State of—Miscellaneous Questions
  - Affray in the County of Sligo, 888
  - Alleged Crimes and Outrages, 1821
  - Alleged Outrage by Soldiers—Co. Cork, 356, 357
  - Collision in Mayo, 886, 887
  - Conflict near Clogher—Verdict of "Wilful Murder," 1659, 1660
  - Constabulary, 753
  - Co. Monaghan—Alleged Excess of Duty by Bailiffs, 1829
  - Distress in Castlebar, 1011;—In Galway, 1662
  - Dublin, 1838
  - Land League Meetings—Government Reporters, 152
  - Limerick Co. 1080
  - Outrage on Animals, 559
  - Outrages at Muckross and Clifden, 1541, 1542
  - Riot at Midleton, Co. Cork, 360, 473
  - Sheriffs' Sale at Howth, 1663
  - Speech of Mr. Dillon at Thurles, 467, 768, 872, 1421
  - Whiteboy Act—Case of D. O'Sullivan at Millstreet, Co. Cork, 1543
- Ireland—Agricultural Labourers' Habitations, Res. 1981, 1983, 2014
- Land Law (Ireland), Leave, 935; 2R. 1116, 1117, 1127, 1153, 1159, 1164
- Parliament—Easter Recess, 1044

[cont.

FOWLER, Mr. H. H., *Wolverhampton*
- Conveyancing and Law of Property, 2R. 685, 686
- Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 611

FOWLER, Mr. R. N., *London*
- Africa, South—The Transvaal—94th Regiment —Protection of Native Interests—Slavery, 355
- Alkali, &c. Works Regulation, 2R. Motion for Adjournment, 428, 430
- Banking Laws Amendment, 2R. Amendt. 1785
- Church Patronage, 2R. 980, 991
- Customs and Inland Revenue, Comm. 1920
- India and China—The Opium Trade, 1509
- Land Law (Ireland), Leave, 939
- Middlesex Land Registry, 2R. 830
- Parliament—Public Business (Half-past Twelve Rule), Res. Amendt. 1710, 1727
- Parliamentary Oath (Mr. Bradlaugh), 1283
- Parliamentary Oaths, 1528; Motion for Leave, 1618, 2055, 2057
- Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 644

FOWLER, Mr. W., *Cambridge*
- Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), Comm. *add. cl.* 410
- Banking Laws Amendment, 2R. 1786
- Municipal Corporation Act (1859) Amendment, 2R. 248

France

MISCELLANEOUS QUESTIONS
- *The Monetary Conference at Paris,* Question, Mr. Puleston; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *April* 1, 475; Question, Mr. J. G. Hubbard; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke *April* 7, 878
- *The New Commercial Treaty—The Negotiations,* Question, Mr. Jackson; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke *April* 7, 884; Question, Mr. J. G. Hubbard; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke, 887; Questions, Mr. Mac Iver; Answers, Sir Charles W. Dilke *April* 25, 1083; Question, Mr. Mac Iver; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *April* 28, 1312;—*The Sugar and Shipping Bounties,* Questions, Mr. Mac Iver, Sir John Lubbock; Answers, Sir Charles W. Dilke *April* 28, 1314
- *Customs and Inland Revenue—The Commercial Treaty with France,* Question, Mr. Hermon; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *April* 28, 1313

France and Tunis
- *British Subjects in Tunis,* Question, Mr. Birley; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke *May* 2, 1549
- *Outbreak of the Krouhmir Tribes—Military Operations,* Questions, Baron Henry De Worms, Mr. Montague Guest, Sir H. Drummond Wolff, Mr. Mac Iver; Answers, Sir Charles W. Dilke *April* 28, 1316
- *Occupation of Bizerta,* Question, Mr. Montague Guest; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke *May* 3, 1661
- *Occupation of Kef, &c.* Question, Observations, Earl De La Warr; Reply, Earl Granville *May* 6, 1926
  - [See title *Tunis*]

GALLOWAY, Earl of
- Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), Comm. *cl.* 4, 855; *cl.* 7, 857
- Army Organization—New Scheme, 720
  - Regimental Uniforms, 1007, 1008

Gas Provisional Orders Bill
(*Mr. Ashley, Mr. Chamberlain*)
c. Ordered; read 1º * *May* 3 [Bill 147]

GIBSON, Right Hon. E., *Dublin University*
- Africa, South—The Transvaal—Revocation of Letters Patent, 1879, 1012, 1013
  - Surrender of Potchefstroom, 1309, 1310, 1533
- Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), Comm. 378
- Army—Royal Hibernian Military School, Dublin, 1654
- India—Madras Covenanted Civil Service, 1014
- Land Law (Ireland), 847, 1027, 1028; 2R. 1085, 1159, 1395, 1399, 1401
- Lunacy Law Assimilation (Ireland), 2R. 814
- Petty Sessions Clerks (Ireland), 2R. 841
- Summary Jurisdiction (Ireland), 2R. 845

GIFFARD, Sir H. S., *Launceston*
- Census, 1881—The Householders' Schedules, 463
- Parliamentary Oath (Mr. Bradlaugh), 1222

GIVAN, Mr. J., *Monaghan*
- Agricultural Labourers' Habitations (Ireland), Res. 1983
- Land Law (Ireland), Leave, 933
- Peace Preservation (Ireland) Act—Proclamation of Co. Monaghan, 1832

GLADSTONE, Right Hon. W. E. (First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer), *Edinburghshire*
- Afghan War—Vote of Thanks for Military Operations in Afghanistan, 1854
- Africa, South—The Transvaal, 1036, 1532
  - Commission—Conditions of Peace, 761;—Instructions, 773
  - Military Operations—Policy of the Government, 472; — Surrender of Potchefstroom, 366, 367;—"Suzerainty," 1831
- Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), Consid. *cl.* 4, 676
- Coinage (Decimal System), Res. 177
- Controverted Elections—Knaresborough—Report of the Royal Commissioners, 148
- County Representative Boards (Scotland), 1321
- Customs and Inland Revenue, 1170
  - Commercial Treaty with France, 1313
  - Differential Duty on Spirits, 1537
  - Farm Buildings, 1308
- Customs and Inland Revenue, 2R. 1517
- Evictions (Ireland), 788, 789
- Fisheries—Lights on Fishing Vessels, 1537
- France—Forthcoming Monetary Conference at Paris, 475
  - New Commercial Treaty, 1312

[*cont.*

Gladstone, Right Hon. W. E.—*cont.*
Highways—Maintenance of Main Roads, 19; Res. 72
Inland Revenue—Beer Licences (Ireland), 153
Tax on Horses and Carriages, 1540
Land Law (Ireland), 886;—The Commission, 1541;—Grants of Public Monies, 1834
Land Law (Ireland), Leave, 890, 932; 2R. 1112, 1169, 1409, 1912
Local Taxation, 886;—Annual Statement, 1319
Ministry—Resignation of the Duke of Argyll, 1029
Monument to the Right Hon. the late Earl of Beaconsfield, K.G., 1841
Parliament—Miscellaneous Questions
Business of the House, 494, 890, 1030, 1321, 1824, 1828, 1839, 1840
Easter Recess, 1036, 1049
Order of Business, 773
Rules and Orders—Questions — Printing Replies, 762
Parliamentary Oath (Mr. Bradlaugh), 1212, 1241, 1242, 1246, 1249, 1253, 1256, 1268, 1295;—New Writ for the Borough of Northampton, 490
Parliamentary Oaths, 1422, 1423, 1556, 1562, 1565, 1569; Motion for Leave, 1628
Patronage of Benefices (Church of England), Res. 207, 216
Poor Law (Ireland) Bill—Arrears of Rent, &c. 1837
Power of Representatives Abroad, Res. 1434
Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Wales), 2R. 1770
Suez Canal Company—The British Shares, 348, 1022
Turkey and Greece—Frontier Question, 554
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 568, 587, 612, 643
Ways and Means—Financial Statement—Probate and Legacy Duties, 772, 1017, 1018;—Silver Duties—Statement, 1296, 1297
Terminable Annuities and the Reduction of the National Debt, 874
Terminable Annuities, Conversion of, 1420

Goldney, Sir G., *Chippenham*
Agricultural Holdings (Distress for Rent), Res. 1686
Copyhold Enfranchisement, 2R. Amendt. 835, 839
Highways—Maintenance of Main Roads, Res. 70
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 608

Gordon, General Hon. Sir A. H., *Aberdeenshire, E.*
Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), 2R. 36; Comm. *cl.* 5, 386, 387; *add. cl.* 388, 410; Consid. *cl.* 1, Amendt. 651
Army Organization—New Regulations—Compulsory Retirement, 1823
Army Recruits—Scotch Recruits, 1318
Teinds (Scotland), 2R. 424

Gorst, Mr. J. E., *Chatham*
Africa, South—The Transvaal—Miscellaneous Questions
Letter of King Cetewayo, 1020
Military Operations—Volunteer Force, 1318
Native Inhabitants, 1082, 1083, 1308
Negotiations, 17, 18
Suzerainty, 1822
Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), Consid. *cl.* 4, 666, 673; 3R. 685
Conveyancing and Law of Property, 2R. Motion for Adjournment, 686
Greece, Affairs of, Res. 2045
Land Law (Ireland), 2R. 1110, 1918
Leases, Comm. *cl.* 3, 87
Married Women's Property (Scotland), Comm. Motion for reporting Progress, 687
Navy — Destruction of H.M.S. "Doterel," 1746
Quartermasters of Royal Marines, 11
Parliamentary Oath (Mr. Bradlaugh), 1205, 1257;—New Writ for the Borough of Northampton, 485
Parliamentary Oaths, Motion for Bill, 2048, 2063
Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention, 2R. 436, 442, 967
Trade and Manufacture—The Woollen Trade, 566
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 633, 644

Gourley, Mr. E. T., *Sunderland*
Army (Auxiliary Forces)—Militia Quartermasters, 557
Navy—H.M.S. "Inflexible," 759
Trade and Commerce—The New French Tariff, 1539

Grant, Mr. A., *Leith, &c.*
Civil Service—The Playfair Scheme, 1538

Grantham, Mr. W., *Surrey, E.*
Africa, South—The Transvaal—94th Regiment — Protection of Native Interests—Slavery, 354
Copyhold Enfranchisement, 2R. 837
High Court of Justice, The New—Accommodation for the Bar, 1962
Leases, Comm. *cl.* 3, Amendt. 85

Granville, Earl (Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs)
Afghan War—Vote of Thanks for the Military Operations in Afghanistan, 1803
Earl of Beaconsfield, K.G., The late, 1801
France and Tunis—Occupation of Kef, &c. 1927
Turkey—Land Law—Admission of Foreigners, Address for a Paper, 1008
Turkey—Sir A. H. Layard, late H.M. Ambassador at the Porte, Address for Papers, 1002

Gray, Mr. E. D., *Carlow Co.*
Infectious Diseases Notification (Ireland), 2R. 227
Poor Rate (Metropolis)—Gray's Inn, 474

Greece, Affairs of
Amendt. on Committee of Supply *May* 6, To leave out from "That," and add "Her Majesty's Government, by their encouragement to the Greeks to mobilise their army, by their injustice to Turkey, and by their refusal to publicly advise Greece to moderate her excessive demands, have alienated the Mussulman feeling of the East, have imposed overwhelming burdens upon the Greek Nation, and have tended to disturb the peace of Europe" (*Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett*) *v.* 2015; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after short debate, Question put, and agreed to

Gregory, Mr. G. B., *Sussex, E.*
Agricultural Holdings (Distress for Rent), Res. 1686
Butter (Spurious Compounds), Res. 512
Copyhold Enfranchisement, 2R. 839
Criminal Law—Arrest of the Editor of the "Freiheit," 344
Elections (Closing of Public Houses), 2R. 237
Land Law (Ireland), 2R. 1350
Leases, Comm. *cl.* 3, 87
Middlesex Land Registry, 2R. 831
Ways and Means—Financial Statement—Probate and Legacy Duties, 1017
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 614

Grey, Mr. A. H. G., *Northumberland, S.*
British Museum—Electric Lighting, 360
Church Boards, 2R. 1297

Grosvenor, Right Hon. Lord R., *Flintshire*
Monument to the Right Hon. the late Earl of Beaconsfield, 1084
Parliament—New Writ for Knaresborough, 1870

Guest, Mr. M. J., *Wareham*
Army Re-organization—Infantry and Cavalry Majors, 368
Asia, Central—Advance of the Russians, 469
Berlin Conference—The French at Tunis, 8
Census, 1881, 1025
France and Tunis — Occupation of Bizerta, 1661, 1662
Tunis—Disturbances on the Frontier, 764
  Krouhmir Tribes—Military Preparations of France, 1021, 1316

Guildford, Kingston, and London Railway Bill (by Order)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" (*Mr. Cubitt*) *Mar* 31, 319
Amendt. to leave out "now," and add "upon this day six months" (*Sir Henry Peek*); Question proposed, "That 'now,' &c.;" after short debate, Question put; A. 275, N. 49; M. 226 (D. L. 172)
Main Question put, and agreed to; Bill read 2°

Hall-Marking (Gold and Silver)—Report of the Select Committee, 1879
Question, Mr. C. M'Laren; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain *Mar* 29, 154

Hamilton, Lord C. J., *Liverpool*
Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts—Glanders, 881
Customs Re-organization — Customs Clerks (Liverpool), 16
Landlord and Tenant (Ireland) Act, 1870, Commission (The Earl of Bessborough's)—The Evidence, 881

Hamilton, Right Hon. Lord G. F., *Middlesex*
Asia, Central—The Papers, 561
Land Law (Ireland), 2R. 1917
Suez Canal Company—The British Shares, 348
Ways and Means—Terminable Annuities and the Reduction of the National Debt, 874

Hamilton, Mr. I. T., *Dublin Co.*
Sales of Land (Ireland)—Return, 1021

Harcourt, Right Hon. Sir W. G. V. (Secretary of State for the Home Department), *Derby*
Agricultural Holdings (Distress for Rent), Res. 1682, 1686, 1702
Austria—Arrest of Socialists, 1840
Church Patronage, 2R. 978, 979, 991
Coal Mines Regulation Act — Pen-y-Graig Explosion, 1657
  Seaham Explosion—Important Evidence, 1658
Contagious Diseases Acts—Case of Elizabeth Burley—Action of the Police, 1815
Criminal Law—Arrest of the Editor of the "Freiheit," 345, 347, 556
  Juvenile Offenders Act, 1820
Ireland, State of—Land League Meetings—Government Reporters, 152
Law and Police—Riots at Basingstoke, 155
Land Law (Ireland), 2R. 1119, 1356
Licensing Acts—Sunday Services in Music Halls, 361, 362
  The Radical Club, King's Cross, 1082
Licensing (Metropolis), 755
Lord Chamberlain's Department — Fires in Theatres, 154, 155
Metropolitan Water Supply, 1083
Mines Acts—Reports of Inspectors of Mines, 1880, 1816
Prisons (England) Act—Maidstone Prison, 560, 888
Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention, 2R. 968
Street Traffic (Metropolis)—The Vestries, 18
Teinds (Scotland), 2R. 424
Ways and Means, Report, 971
Wild Fowl Act, 1880, 1822

Harcourt, Mr. E. W., *Oxfordshire*
Highways—Maintenance of Main Roads, 19; Res. 42, 64, 81

Hardinge, Viscount
Army Organization—New Scheme, 716

Hartington, Right Hon. Marquess of (Secretary of State for India), *Lancashire, N.E.*

- Afghan War—Vote of Thanks for Military Operations in Afghanistan, 474, 475, 563, 1665, 1842
- Asia, Central — Advance of the Russians, 470
- British Burmah — Consumption of Opium, 764
- Customs (Outport Officers), Res. 1739
- Greece, Affairs of, Res. 2034
- Highways—Maintenance of Main Roads, 19
- India—Miscellaneous Questions
  - Cinchona Plant, 1011
  - Finance, &c.—Budget Statement, 460
  - Madras Covenanted Civil Service, 1014
  - Madras Irrigation Company, 1416
  - Nagas Territory, 364
  - Railways, 349 ;—Railway to Sibi, 559 ;—Treaty of Lisbon—Portuguese Territory, 1819
- India—Afghanistan—Miscellaneous Questions
  - Candahar (Political Affairs), 10, 358 ;—Yakoub Khan and Abdurrahman, 457 ;—Withdrawal of British Troops, 551 ;—The Ameer, 887
  - Reported Russian Mission to Cabul, 1966, 1967
  - Southern Afghanistan—Pishin and Sibi, 890
- India and China—The Opium Trade, 1496
- India Office Auditor (Superannuation), 2R. 1922, 1924
- Monument to the Right Hon. the late Earl of Beaconsfield, K.G., 1181 ;—The Inscription, 1961
- Parliament—Public Business (Half-past Twelve Rule), Res. 1713, 1722
- Parliamentary Oaths, Motion for Bill, 2050, 2066, 2072

Havelock-Allan, Major-General Sir H. M., *Sunderland*

- Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), 2R. 32

Hay, Admiral Right Hon. Sir J. C. D., *Wigtown, &c.*

- Africa, South—The Transvaal (Military Operations)—Surrender of Potchefstroom, 156
  - 94th Regiment—Protection of Native Interests—Slavery, 354
- Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), 2R. 33 ; Comm. 379
- Land Law (Ireland), 1412 ;—Grants of Public Monies, 1834
- Mutiny Acts—Corporal Punishment, 458
- Navy—Corporal Punishment, 753
  - Destruction of H.M.S. "Doterel," 1833
- Parliamentary Oaths, Motion for Bill, 2048, 2068
- Science and Art—The Geological Survey, 757
- Terminable Annuities, Conversion of, 1420

Healy, Mr. T. M., *Wexford*

- Afghan War—Vote of Thanks for Military Operations in Afghanistan, Amendt. 1869
- Agricultural Labourers' Habitations (Ireland), Res. 2014
- Alkali, &c. Works Regulation, Comm. *cl.* 3, 1638
- Army Discipline and Regulation Act—Case of Patrick King, 1034
- Army Recruiting—Irish Recruits, 1549
- Coroners (Ireland), 1022 ; Nomination of Select Committee, Amendt. 1742
- Criminal Law—The "Irish World," 1019
- Customs (Outport Officers), Res. 1740
- India Office Auditor (Superannuation), 2R. 1924
- Ireland—Miscellaneous Questions
  - Bankruptcy and Insolvency (Ireland) Act, 1857—Payment of Claims of Servants, 1958
  - Baronial Works—Ballydehob, Co. Cork, 750
  - Constabulary, 866 ;—Land League, 1033
  - Coroners—Election in Wexford County, 751
  - Evictions, 785, 795
  - Magistracy—Mr. Blake, 1954, 1955
  - Peace Preservation (Ireland) Act, 1881—Arms Licences, 1961, 1962
  - Poor Law—Out-door Relief to Wives of Prisoners, 456
  - Protection of Person and Property Act, 1881—Arrests—Kilmainham Gaol, 343, 458 ;—Mr. Dillon, 1746 ;—Patrick Downey, 755, 756 ;—Prisoners under the Act, 1653, 1654 ;—Newspaper Editors, 1826
- Ireland, State of—Miscellaneous Questions
  - Conflict near Clogher—Verdict of "Wilful Murder," 1660
  - Outrage on Animals, 559
  - Outrages at Muckross and Clifden, 1542
- Land Law (Ireland), 2R. 1410, 1919
- Parliament—Easter Recess, 1054
- Parliament—Public Business (Half-past Twelve Rule), Res. 1726
- Parliamentary Oaths, Motion for Bill, 2052, 2058
- Post Office—Detention and Opening of Suspicious Letters, 564
  - Telegraph Department, Dublin, 869
- Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention, 2R. 970

Heneage, Mr. E., *Great Grimsby*

- Agricultural Holdings (Distress for Rent), Res. 1673
- Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), Consid. *cl.* 4, 670
- Customs (Outport Officers), Res. 1729
- Fisheries—Lights of Fishing Vessels, 1536
- Highways—Maintenance of Main Roads, 19
- Mercantile Marine—Trawlers' Lights Committee, 13
- Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention, 2R. 945 ; Appointment of a Select Committee, 1800

Henry, Mr. Mitchell, *Galway Co.*

- Commercial Treaty with France—Negotiations, 1084
- Land Law (Ireland), 847 ; 2R. 1123

Hermon, Mr. E., *Preston*
Customs and Inland Revenue—Commercial Treaty with France, 1313

Herschell, Sir F. (*see* Solicitor General, The)

Hibbert, Mr. J. T. (Parliamentary Secretary to the Local Government Board), *Oldham*
Alkali, &c. Works Regulation, Comm. *cl.* 3, 1634, 1642
Public Health—Vaccination—Cow-Pox, 149
Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention, 2R. 435

Hicks, Mr. E., *Cambridgeshire*
Parliamentary Oaths, Motion for Bill, 2062

Highway Acts—Surveyors of Highways—The Accounts
Question, Mr. E. Stanhope; Answer, Mr. Dodson *April* 29, 1413

Highways—Maintenance of Main Roads
Question, Mr. Heneage; Answer, Mr. E. W. Harcourt *Mar* 28, 19
Moved, "That, in the opinion of this House, it is expedient so to amend 'The Highway Act, 1878,' that part of the maintenance of main roads may be defrayed from other sources than county rates" (*Mr. Harcourt*) *Mar* 28, 42
Amendt. to leave out from "expedient," and add "to amend 'The Highway Act, 1878,' and especially those portions of the said Act which relate to main roads" (*Mr. J. W. Pease*) *v.*; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after long debate, Question put; A. 145, N. 159; M. 14 (D. L. 170)
Words added; main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to

Hill, Mr. A. S., *Staffordshire, W.*
Agricultural Holdings Act (1875) Amendment, 2R. 442
Married Women's Property (Scotland), 3R. 1522, 1527
Parliamentary Oath (Mr. Bradlaugh), 1245

His Imperial Majesty the Emperor of All the Russias—H.R.I.H. the Duchess of Edinburgh's Answer to Message of Condolence
Observations, The Duke of Richmond and Gordon *May* 6, 1926

Holker, Sir J., *Preston*
Bankruptcy, Motion for Leave, 1076

Holland, Sir H. T., *Midhurst*
Agricultural Holdings (Distress for Rent), Res. 1700

Hollond, Mr. J. R., *Brighton*
Civil Service—The Playfair Scheme, 6

Hopwood, Mr. C. H., *Stockport*
Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), 2R. 40; Consid. *cl.* 4, 673
Contagious Diseases Acts—Case of Elizabeth Burley—The Action of the Police, 1815
Middlesex Land Registry, 2R. 825, 833
Summary Jurisdiction (Ireland), 2R. 844

Houghton, Lord
Turkey—Sir A. H. Layard, late H.M. Ambassador at the Porte, Address for Papers, 1000

Howard, Mr. J., *Bedfordshire*
Agricultural Holdings (Distress for Rent), Res. 1675, 1694

Hubbard, Right Hon. J. G., *London*
Agricultural Holdings (Distress for Rent), Res. 1690
Coinage (Decimal System), Res. 170
International Bi-Metallic Conference, 878
Parliamentary Oath (Mr. Bradlaugh), 1267
Patronage of Benefices (Church of England), Res. 214
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 607

Illingworth, Mr. A., *Bradford*
Afghan War—Vote of Thanks for the Military Operations in Afghanistan, 1867
Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), Comm. *add. cl.* 404
Church Patronage, 2R. 846; Amendt. 973, 974, 979, 980, 986, 989
Patronage of Benefices (Church of England), Res. 213
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 624

Inclosure Provisional Order (Beamsley Moor) Bill—*afterwards*
Regulation Provisional Order (Beamsley Moor) Bill
(*Mr. Courtney, Secretary Sir William Harcourt*)
c. Report* *April* 1 [Bill 112]
Read 3°* *April* 4
l. Read 1ª* (*Earl of Dalhousie*) *April* 5 (No. 62)

Inclosure Provisional Order (Langbar Moor) Bill—*afterwards*
Regulation Provisional Order (Langbar Moor) Bill
(*Mr. Courtney, Secretary Sir William Harcourt*)
c. Report* *April* 1 [Bill 111]
Read 3°* *April* 4
l. Read 1ª* (*Earl of Dalhousie*) *April* 5 (No. 63)

Inclosure Provisional Order (Scotton and Ferry Common) Bill
(*Mr. Courtney, Secretary Sir William Harcourt*)
c. Read 2°* and committed *Mar* 28 [Bill 115]
Report* *April* 5
Read 3°* *April* 6
l. Read 1ª* (*Earl of Dalhousie*) *April* 7 (No. 64)

Inclosure Provisional Order (Thurstaston Common) Bill
(*Mr. Courtney, Secretary Sir William Harcourt*)
c. Read 2° * and committed *Mar* 30 [Bill 122]
Report * *April* 8
Read 3° * *April* 25
l. Read 1ª * (*Earl of Dalhousie*) *May* 5 (No. 76)

Inclosure Provisional Order (Wibsey Slack and Low Moor Commons) Bill
(*Mr. Courtney, Secretary Sir William Harcourt*)
c. Read 2° * and committed *Mar* 28 [Bill 114]
Report * *April* 5
Considered * *April* 6
Read 3° * *April* 7
l. Read 1ª * (*Earl of Dalhousie*) *April* 8 (No. 71)

INDERWICK, Mr. F. A., *Rye*
Extraordinary Tithe Rent Charges, Motion for a Select Committee, 1650, 1651

INDIA
MISCELLANEOUS QUESTIONS
Finance, &c.—The Budget Statement, Question, Mr. E. Stanhope; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington *April* 1, 460;—*Opium Taxation*, Question, Mr. J. W. Pease; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke *April* 29, 1417
Madras Covenanted Civil Service, Question, Mr. Gibson; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington *April* 8, 1014
Madras Irrigation Company, Question, Mr. Ritchie; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington *April* 29, 1416
Railways, Question, Sir George Campbell; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington *Mar* 31, 349;—*Railway to Sibi*, Question, Mr. Macfarlane; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington *April* 4, 559;—*Treaty of Lisbon —Portuguese Territory*, Question, Sir George Campbell; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington *May* 5, 1818
The Cinchona Plant, Question, Captain Price; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington *April* 8, 1011
The Nagas Territory, Question, Mr. O'Donnell; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington *Mar* 31, 364

India and China—The Opium Trade
Observations, Mr. J. W. Pease; long debate thereon *April* 29, 1451
[See title *British Burmah*]

India Office Auditor (Superannuation) Bill (*The Marquess of Hartington, Lord Frederick Cavendish*)
c. Resolution in Committee *April* 25
Resolution reported, and agreed to; Bill ordered; read 1° * *April* 27 [Bill 140]
Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *May* 5, 1921; after short debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Biggar*); after further short debate, Motion withdrawn; Bill read 2°

India Office (Sale of Superfluous Land) Bill (*Viscount Enfield*)
l. Royal Assent *Mar* 29 [44 *Vict.* c. 7]

Infectious Diseases Notification (Ireland) Bill (*Mr. Edmond Gray, Mr. Brooks, Mr. Dawson*)
c. Read 2°, after short debate *Mar* 30, 227 [Bill 40]

Inland Revenue Buildings Bill
(*Mr. Shaw Lefevre, Lord Frederick Cavendish*)
c. Read 2° * *April* 8 [Bill 125]
Committee *; Report *April* 25
Read 3° * *April* 28
l. Read 1ª * (*The Lord Sudeley*) *May* 5 (No. 73)

IRELAND
MISCELLANEOUS QUESTIONS
Accountant General's Office in Chancery, Question, Mr. Findlater; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland *April* 5, 756
Bankruptcy and Insolvency (Ireland) Act, 1857—Payment of Claims of Servants, Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland *May* 6, 1958
Baronial Works—Ballydehob, Co. Cork, Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *April* 5, 750
Belfast Improvement Act, 1878—"*Finley v. Belfast Town Council*," Question, Mr. Callan; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland *May* 2, 1552
Consolidated Fund—Miscellaneous Pensions, Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, Lord Frederick Cavendish *April* 8, 1015
Coroners — Elections in Wexford County, Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland *April* 5, 751
Crime—The Police at Knocknagree, Co. Kerry, Question, The O'Donoghue; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *April* 25, 1079
Distress—County of Galway, Question, Major Nolan; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *May* 3, 1662
Fisheries—The Mackerel Fishery, Question, Mr. O'Shea; Answer, Lord Frederick Cavendish *May* 2, 1535
Geological Survey — The Re-Survey, Questions, Mr. W. J. Corbet, Mr. Dawson; Answers, Mr. Mundella *May* 3, 1655
Royal University of Ireland, Scheme for the Organisation of the University as adopted by the Senate *April* 5;—*Scheme of the Senate*, Question, Mr. Bryce; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *April* 7, 883
Young Ireland Debating Society (Dublin)—Alleged Interference of the Police, Question, Mr. T. D. Sullivan; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *May* 5, 1832

National Education
Model Schools, Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *Mar* 28, 5

Poor Law
Out-door Relief to Wives of Prisoners, Questions, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster *April* 1, 456

[*cont.*

Ireland—*Poor Law—cont.*
The Midleton Union—Election of Guardians, Question, Mr. Litton; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *April* 25, 1078

Law and Justice
Legal Proceedings of Landlords, Question, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *Mar* 28, 11
Leitrim Assizes—"The Queen v. Clancey," Question, Mr. Justin M'Carthy; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland *April* 4, 567
Penalties of Prosecutions, Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *April* 8, 1014
Processes of Ejectment, Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *April* 25, 1079
The Dublin Jury List, Question, Mr. M. Brooks; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland *April* 25, 1081

Criminal Law
Case of Joseph B. Walsh, Questions, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. A. M. Sullivan; Answers, The Attorney General for Ireland *April* 1, 462; Questions, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Parnell; Answers, The Attorney General for Ireland *April* 4, 563

The Magistracy,
Ballyhannis Petty Sessions, Question, Mr. O'Connor Power; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *April* 8, 1011
County Government, Questions, Mr. W. J. Corbet; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster *May* 3, 1652
Mr. Blake, R.M., Tuam, Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *May* 6, 1954

The Royal Irish Constabulary
Resignations, Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *April* 7, 866
Alleged Excess of Duty at Newcastle, Questions, Mr. Parnell; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster *May* 2, 1544
Buckshot, Questions, Mr. O'Kelly, Mr. A. M. Sullivan; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster *April* 8, 1013
Constabulary Barracks, Question, Mr. Callan; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *April* 4, 551
The Land League, Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *April* 8, 1033

Landlord and Tenant (Ireland) Act, 1870, *Commission* (*The Earl of Bessborough's*)
The Evidence, Question, Observations, Lord Monteagle; Reply, Earl Spencer; Observations, Lord Dunsany *Mar* 28, 2; Questions, Sir Hervey Bruce, Mr. Plunket; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster *Mar* 28, 12; Questions, Sir Hervey Bruce; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster *April* 4, 565; Questions, Sir Hervey Bruce, Lord Claud Hamilton; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster, Mr. Shaw *April* 7, 880
Sales of Land—Return, Question, Mr. Ion Hamilton; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *April* 8, 1021
The Land Act (*Ireland*), 1870—*Compensation for Disturbance—The Return,* Question, Mr. A. M. Sullivan; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *April* 25, 1083;—*The Purchase Clauses,* Question, Mr. Donaldson-Hudson; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *May* 5, 1816

[*cont.*

Ireland—*cont.*
State of Ireland
Evictions
Question, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *Mar* 29, 150; Questions, Mr. O'Connor Power, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster *April* 5, 770; Observations, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, 774; Question, Mr. Justin M'Carthy; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *April* 8, 1016
Mohill Union, Co. Leitrim, Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *Mar* 29, 150; Questions, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Parnell; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster *Mar* 31, 362
Evictions in the West of Ireland, Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *April* 1, 473
Proportion of Rents to Valuations, Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *Mar* 29, 151

Land League Meetings, Outrages, &c.
Land League Meetings—Government Reporters, Questions, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster, Sir William Harcourt *Mar* 29, 151
Alleged Outrage by Soldiers—Co. Cork, Questions, Mr. Parnell, Mr. A. M. Sullivan, Mr. O'Donnell; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster *Mar* 31, 356
The Land League Meeting at Midleton, Co. Cork, Question, Earl Percy; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *Mar* 31, 360; Question, Mr. A. J. Balfour; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *April* 1, 473
Convictions for "Boycotting," Question, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland *Mar* 31, 365
Speech of Mr. Dillon, M.P., at Thurles, Question, Mr. Warton; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *April* 1, 467; Question, Sir Henry Fletcher; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *April* 5, 768; Question, Mr. Warton; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *April* 7, 872; Questions, Mr. Long, Mr. Sexton; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster *April* 29, 1421
Ejectments and Notices, Question, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *April* 4, 552;—*Number of Ejectments,* Questions, Mr. Parnell, Mr. Gibson; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster *April* 7, 889;—*Number of Families,* Questions, Mr. Sexton; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster *May* 3, 1660
Outrage on Animals, Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *April* 4, 559
The Constabulary, Question, Mr. Justin M'Carthy; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *April* 5, 753
Riot at Dungarvan, Question, Mr. O'Donnell; Answer, Mr. Childers *April* 7, 868
Landlord and Tenant—Charge against a Process-Server, Question, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *April* 7, 871;—*Lord Oranmore and Browne,* Observations, Lord Oranmore and Browne; Reply, Earl Spencer *April* 7, 858
Collision in Mayo, Questions, Mr. O'Donnell; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster *April* 7, 886
Affray in the County Sligo, Question, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *April* 7, 887

[*cont.*

Ireland—*State of*—cont.
Distress in Castlebar, Question, Mr. O'Connor Power; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *April* 8, 1010
Mr. Randle Peyton, Questions, Mr. Justin M'Carthy; Answers, The Attorney General for Ireland *April* 8, 1026
County Limerick, Question, Mr. Lewis; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *April* 25, 1080
Alleged Outrages at Muckross and Clifden, Notice of Question, Mr. Thornhill *April* 29, 1422; Questions, Mr. Thornhill, Mr. Lewis, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster *May* 2, 1541
The Whiteboy Act—Case of Daniel O'Sullivan, at Mill Street, Co. Cork, Question, Mr. Daly; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *May* 2, 1543
Conflict near Clogher—Verdict of "Wilful Murder," Questions, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Callan; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster; Question, Mr. Healy; [no reply] *May* 3, 1658
Sheriffs' Sale at Howth, Question, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *May* 3, 1662
Alleged Crimes and Outrages, Question, Viscount Folkestone; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *May* 5, 1820
Alleged Excess of Duty by Bailiffs in County Monaghan, Question, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *May* 5, 1829
Dublin, Question, Mr. Dawson; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *May* 5, 1838

Relief of Distress (Ireland) Act
Employment Works, Question, Major Nolan; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *May* 5, 1832
Relief Works at Arklow, Question, Mr. W. J. Corbet; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *May* 6, 1956

Peace Preservation (Ireland) Act, 1881
Arms Act—Proclamation of the County of Longford, Question, Mr. Justin M'Carthy; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *April* 8, 1015
Arms Licences, Questions, Mr. Healy, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster *May* 6, 1961

Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, 1881
Prisoners in Kilmainham Gaol, Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *Mar* 28, 9; Question, Mr. Justin M'Carthy; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *Mar* 29, 149; Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *Mar* 31, 343; Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *May* 6, 1964;—*The Prison Fare*, Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *April* 1, 458
Joseph B. Walsh, a Prisoner under the Act, Question, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland *Mar* 31, 350
Patrick Downey, a Prisoner under the Act, Questions, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster *April* 5, 755
Mr. James Daly, a Prisoner under the Act, Question, Mr. Justin M'Carthy; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *April* 29, 1412
Arrest of Mr. Richard Hodnett, Question, Mr. Parnell; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *April* 29, 1413
[*cont.*

Ireland—Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, 1881—cont.
Mr. Jasper Tully, a Prisoner under the Act, Question, Mr. O'Kelly; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *May* 3, 1654
Treatment of Prisoners under the Act, Question, Mr. O'Connor Power; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *May* 2, 1538;—*Supply of Newspapers*, Questions, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster *May* 3, 1653;—*Newspaper Editors*, Questions, Mr. T. D. Sullivan, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. A. M. Sullivan, Mr. Parnell, Mr. J. Cowen, Mr. O'Donnell, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster *May* 5, 1824
Mr. Dillon, M.P., Questions, Colonel Walrond, Mr. Sexton, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Parnell; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster *May* 2, 1553; Questions, Mr. Sexton, Mr. R. Power; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster; Question, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; [no reply] *May* 3, 1663; Questions, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Arthur Arnold; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster *May* 5, 1830
Proclamation of County Monaghan, Question, Mr. Givan; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *May* 5, 1832

Question, Mr. Biggar; [no reply] *April* 8, 1035

Jackson, Mr. W. L., *Leeds*
Controverted Elections—Knaresborough—Report of Royal Commissioners, 147
Crossed Cheques Act, 1876—Corporation Bonds, 1957
France—New Commercial Treaty, 884

Jamaica—Its Government as a Crown Colony
Question, Mr. Serjeant Simon; Answer, Mr. Grant Duff *April* 7, 877

James, Sir H. (*see* Attorney General, The)

James, Mr. C. H., *Merthyr Tydfil*
Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Wales), 2R. 1764

James, Mr. W. H., *Gateshead*
Africa, South—Basutoland (Negotiations), 10
The Transvaal—Statistics—Natives and Europeans, 462
Metropolitan Open Spaces Act (1877) Amendment, 2R. 217, 227
Parks (Metropolis)—St. James's Park, 5
Parliament—Public Business (Half-past Twelve Rule), Res. 1711

Jenkins, Mr. D. J., *Penryn, &c.*
Thames River, 2R. 147

Johnson, Mr. W. M. (Solicitor General for Ireland), *Mallow*
Elections (Closing of Public Houses), 2R. 247
Infectious Diseases Notification (Ireland), 2R. 231
[*cont.*

JOHNSON, Mr. W. M.—*cont.*
Land Law (Ireland), 801 ; Leave, 939
Lunacy Law Assimilation (Ireland), 2R. 822
Petty Sessions Clerks (Ireland), 2R. 842
Summary Jurisdiction (Ireland), 2R. 844

Judicature Acts—The Amended Rules and Orders
Question, Mr. Whitley ; Answer, The Attorney General *April* 4, 558

Jury System (England)—Legislation
Question, Mr. Broadhurst ; Answer, The Attorney General *April* 29, 1412

KENMARE, Earl of (Lord Chamberlain of the Household)
Lord Chamberlain's Department — Egress from Theatres (Metropolis), 690

KENNAWAY, Sir J. H., *Devon, E.*
Africa, South—The Transvaal (Military Operations), 460, 461 ;—Surrender of Potchefstroom, 1022
India and China—The Opium Trade, 1478

KIMBERLEY, Earl of (Secretary of State for the Colonies)
Africa, South—The Transvaal—Miscellaneous Questions
Military Operations—Surrender of Potchefstroom, 89, 90, 1928 ;—Withdrawal of Troops, 445, 446
Murder of Captain Elliott, Dr. Barber, and others, 848
Negotiations—Peace Arrangements, 258, 264, 268, 269, 270, 278, 287, 290, 295, 298, 314, 316, 318, 865
Slavery, 448, 450
Tunis—The Enfida Case, 863
Turkey—Sir A. H. Layard, late H.M. Ambassador at the Porte, Address for Papers, 1006

KINNEAR, Dr. J., *Donegal*
Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), Comm. 399
Metropolitan Open Spaces Act (1877) Amendment, 2R. 226
Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Wales), 2R. 1770

LABOUCHERE, Mr. H., *Northampton*
Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), Comm. *add. cl.* 409
Extradition of Political Offenders, 1312
Monument to the Right Hon. the late Earl of Beaconsfield, 1531
Navy—Court Martial at Sydney—Case of C. P. Stamp—H.M.S. "Wolverine," 758
Parliamentary Oath (Mr. Bradlaugh), 1192, 1195, 1243, 1247, 1253, 1256 ; Motion for Adjournment, 1257, 1289 ;—New Writ for the Borough of Northampton, 479
Parliamentary Oaths, Motion for Bill, 2070
Suez Canal Company—The British Shares, 348

LAING, Mr. S., *Orkney, &c.*
Agricultural Labourers' Habitations (Ireland), Res. 2010, 2011
India and China—The Opium Trade, 1489

LAMINGTON, Lord
Africa, South—The Transvaal (Military Operations)—Withdrawal of Troops, 445

Land Drainage Provisional Orders Bill
(*Mr. Courtney, Secretary Sir William Harcourt*)
c. Ordered * *May* 6

Landed Proprietors (Ireland) Bill
(*Mr. P. J. Smyth, Mr. Patrick Martin, Mr. Fay, Mr. Litton*) [Bill 63]
c. Order for 2R. read *April* 6, 801 ; 2R. deferred after short debate

Land Law (Ireland) Bill
Question, Mr. T. P. O'Connor ; Answer, The Solicitor General for Ireland *April* 6, 801 ; Questions, Sir Stafford Northcote, Mr. Mitchell Henry ; Answers, Lord Frederick Cavendish, 846 ; Question, Mr. Elliot ; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *April* 7, 885 ; Questions, Mr. Gibson, Mr. Tottenham ; Answers, The Attorney General for Ireland ; Question, Mr. Callan ; [no reply] *April* 8, 1027
Grants of Public Monies, Question, Sir John Hay ; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *May* 5, 1834
Recovery of Rent by Writ, Questions, The O'Donoghue, Mr. Parnell ; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster, The Attorney General for Ireland *May* 2, 1550
The Commission, Question, Lord Randolph Churchill ; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *May* 2, 1540
Yearly Tenants, Questions, The O'Donoghue, Dr. Commins ; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster *May* 5, 1838

Land Law (Ireland) Bill
(*Mr. Gladstone, Mr. William Edward Forster, Mr. Bright, Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland*)
c. Motion for Leave (*Mr. Gladstone*) *April* 7, 890 ; after debate, Motion agreed to ; Bill ordered ; read 1° * [Bill 135]
Notice of Resolution, Mr. Brodrick *April* 8, 1035
Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" (*Lord Richard Grosvenor*) *April* 25, 1085 ; after debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Warton*) ; after further short debate, Motion withdrawn
Original Question again proposed ; Moved, "That this House do now adjourn" (*Mr. Lewis*) ; after short debate, Motion withdrawn
Question again proposed, "That the Bill be now read 2°"
Amendt. to leave out from "That," and add "no measure of Land Reform for Ireland, however ably devised, can be considered complete or perfectly satisfactory which does not deal with the condition of the farm

[*cont.*

Land Law (*Ireland*) *Bill*—cont.
labourers of Ireland, with a view to ameliorate it" (*Mr. Villiers Stuart*) *v.* ; Question proposed, "That the words, &c. ;" after long debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Lord Elcho*) ; Question put, and agreed to ; Debate adjourned
Notice of Resolution, Lord John Manners *April* 28, 1307
Debate resumed *April* 28, 1322 ; after long debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. W. H. Smith*) ; Motion withdrawn ; Amendt. withdrawn
Original Question again proposed, "That the Bill be now read 2° ;" Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. W. H. Smith*) ; Question put, and agreed to ; Debate adjourned
Notices, The O'Donoghue, Lord Elcho, Lord Randolph Churchill, Sir Hervey Bruce, Sir John Hay *April* 29, 1411
Debate resumed *May* 2, 1570
Amendt. to leave out from "That," and add "this House, while willing to consider any just measure, founded upon sound principles, that will benefit tenants of land in Ireland, is of opinion that the leading provisions of the Land Law (Ireland) Bill are in the main economically unsound, unjust, and impolitic" (*Lord Elcho*) *v.* ; Question proposed, "That the words, &c ;" after long debate, Moved "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Lord John Manners*) ; Question put ; A. 263, N. 34 ; M. 229 (D. L. 190)
Notice of Amendment, Mr. Parnell *May* 5, 1841
Debate resumed *May* 5, 1872 ; after long debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Errington*) ; after further short debate, Question put, and agreed to ; Debate adjourned

Land Tax Commissioners' Names Bill
(*Mr. John Holms, Lord Frederick Cavendish*)
c. Read 2° * *Mar* 31 [Bill 126]

LANSDOWNE, Marquess of
Army Organization—New Scheme, 696
Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts—Foot-and-Mouth Disease, 90

LAW, Right Hon. H. (Attorney General for Ireland), *Londonderry Co.*
Coroners (Ireland), 1022 ; Nomination of Select Committee, 1742
Ireland—Miscellaneous Questions
Accountant General's Office in Chancery, 757
Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act, 1857—Payment of Claims of Servants, 1959
Belfast Improvement Act, 1878—"Finley *v.* Belfast Town Council," 1553
Coroners—Election in Wexford Co. 752
Criminal Law—Case of Joseph B. Walsh, 351, 462, 463, 564
Land Law (Ireland) Bill, 1027, 1028 ;—Recovery of Rent by Writ, 1551
Law and Justice—Dublin Jury List, 1081 ; Leitrim Assizes—"Queen *v.* Clancey," 567

[*cont.*

LAW, Right Hon. H.—*cont.*
Ireland, State of—Convictions for "Boycotting," 365
Mr. Randle Peyton, 1026
Land Law (Ireland), 2R. 1390, 1398, 1399, 1401
Mutiny Act—Corporal Punishment, 460

Law and Justice
Political Offenders, Extradition of, Question, Mr. Labouchere ; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke *April* 28, 1312
The New High Court of Justice—Accommodation for the Bar, Question, Mr. Grantham ; Answer, Mr. Shaw Lefevre *May* 6, 1962
The Queen v. *Edwards—The "Princess Alice" Calamity,* Question, Baron Henry De Worms ; Answer, The Attorney General *April* 7, 879

Law and Police—Riot at Basingstoke
Question, Mr. M'Coan ; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *Mar* 29, 155

LAWRENCE, Mr. Alderman W., *London*
Alkali, &c. Works Regulation, 2R. 427
Asia, Central—Advance of the Russians, 469
Coinage (Decimal System), Res. 177
London City Lands (Thames Embankment), 2R. 745
Thames River, 2R. 134
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 630

LAWSON, Sir W., *Carlisle*
Afghan War—Vote of Thanks for Military Operations in Afghanistan, 1856
Africa, South—Basutoland (Negotiations), 10, 359, 1545
The Transvaal, 1036 ;—94th Regiment—Protection of Native Interests—Slavery, 355
Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), Comm. *add. cl.* 406
Customs (Outport Officers), Res. 1742
Elections (Closing of Public Houses), 2R. 245
Monument to the Right Hon. the late Earl of Beaconsfield, 1665

LEA, Mr. T., *Donegal*
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 628

LEAKE, Mr. R., *Lancashire, S.E.*
Army—Royal Engineers (Extra Pay), 763
Parliament—Rules and Orders—Questions—Printing Replies, 762
Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention, 2R. 943

Leases Bill
(*Mr. Davey, Mr. Gregory, Mr. M'Cullagh Torrens, Mr. Lewis, Mr. Chitty*)
c. Committee ; Report *Mar* 28, 85 [Bill 108]

LEATHAM, Mr. E. A., *Huddersfield*
Patronage of Benefices (Church of England), Res. 178

LEATHAM, Mr. W. H., *York, W. Rid., S.*
Patronage of Benefices (Church of England), Res. 216

LEE, Major V. H. V., *Somerset, W.*
Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), Comm. *add. cl.* 416
Army Re-organization—Uniforms—The Buffs, 1020

LEFEVRE, Right Hon. G. J. Shaw (Chief Commissioner of Works), *Reading*
High Court of Justice, The New—Accommodation for the Bar, 1963
House of Commons—Additional Accommodation to Members—The House of Lords, 1023
Land Law (Ireland), 2R. 1586, 1593
Ordnance Survey—Neighbourhood of Hertford, 457
Parks (Metropolis)—St. James's Park, 5

LEIGH, Hon. G. H. C., *Warwick, S.*
Africa, South — The Transvaal — Action at Majuba Hill—15th Hussars, 1414

LEIGHTON, Sir B., *Shropshire, S.*
Customs and Inland Revenue—Farm Buildings, 1308
Customs and Inland Revenue, 2R. 1516
Highways—Maintenance of Main Roads, Res. 52, 58
Local Taxation, 886
Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention, 2R. 954

LEIGHTON, Mr. S., *Shropshire, N.*
Africa, South — The Transvaal — Casualties, 1661
  Negotiations, 1416
Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts—Foot-and-Mouth Disease, 157

LEWIS, Mr. C. E., *Londonderry*
Agricultural Labourers' Habitations (Ireland), Res. 2011
Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), Consid. *cl.* 4, 675
Ireland, State of—Co. Limerick, 1080
  Outrages at Muckross and Clifden, 1541, 1542
Land Law (Ireland), Leave, 932; 2R. 1110; Motion for Adjournment, 1120
Leases, Comm. *cl.* 3, 86, 88
Parliamentary Elections Act, 1868—Sandwich Election Commission, 1956
Parliamentary Oath (Mr. Bradlaugh), 1292, 1531;—New Writ for the Borough of Northampton, 487
Parliamentary Oaths, Motion for Adjournment, 1565, 1566
Parliamentary Representation—Vacant Seats, 1956

Licensing Acts
Sunday Services in Music Halls, Question, Mr. P. Edwards; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *Mar* 31, 361

[*cont.*

Licensing Acts—cont.
The Radical Club, King's Cross, Question, Mr. J. Cowen; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *April* 25, 1082

LITTON, Mr. E. F., *Tyrone*
Agricultural Labourers' Habitations (Ireland), Res. 1997, 1998
Elections (Closing of Public Houses), 2R. Motion for Adjournment, 235
Land Law (Ireland), Leave, 930; 2R. 1122, 1914
Lunacy Law Assimilation (Ireland), 2R. 802, 824
Petty Sessions Clerks (Ireland), 2R. 839
Poor Law (Ireland)—Midleton Union—Election of Guardians, 1078
Summary Jurisdiction (Ireland), 2R. 843, 845

LLOYD, Mr. M., *Beaumaris*
Controverted Elections—Parliamentary Elections Act, 1868, &c.—Reported Boroughs, 465
Elections (Closing of Public Houses), 2R. 237
Parliamentary Oath (Mr. Bradlaugh)—New Writ for the Borough of Northampton, 487
Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Wales), 2R. 1758

Local Courts of Bankruptcy (Ireland) Bill [H.L.] (*The Lord O'Hagan*)
l. Presented; read 1ª* *Mar* 29 (No. 56)
Read 2ª *Mar* 31, 249
Committee; Report *April* 1, 450
Read 3ª* *April* 4

Local Government (Gas) Provisional Order Bill (*Mr. Hibbert, Mr. Dodson*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *May* 2 [Bill 145]

Local Government (Highways) Provisional Order (York) Bill
(*Mr. Hibbert, Mr. Dodson*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *April* 4 [Bill 132]
Read 2°* and committed *April* 8
Report* *April* 29
Read 3°* *May* 2
l. Read 1ª* (*Marquess of Huntly*) *May* 5 (No. 78)

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Clonakilty &c.) Bill [H.L.]
c. Report* *Mar* 31 [Bill 103]
Read 3°* *April* 1
l. Royal Assent *April* 8 [44 *Vict.* c. iii]

Local Government Provisional Orders (Bath, &c.) Bill
(*Mr. Hibbert, Mr. Dodson*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *April* 4 [Bill 131]
Read 2°* and committed *April* 8
Report* *April* 29
Read 3°* *May* 2
l. Read 1ª* (*Marquess of Huntly*) *May* 5 (No. 77)

Local Government Provisional Orders (Berwick-upon-Tweed, &c.) Bill
(*Mr. Hibbert, Mr. Dodson*)
c. Ordered * *April* 26
Read 1° * *April* 27 [Bill 138]
Read 2° * *May* 4

Local Government Provisional Orders (Birmingham) Bill
(*Mr. Hibbert, Mr. Dodson*)
c. Ordered ; read 1° * *May* 2 [Bill 144]

Local Government Provisional Orders (Brentford Union, &c.) Bill
(*Mr. Hibbert, Mr. Dodson*)
c. Ordered ; read 1° * *May* 5 [Bill 149]

Local Government Provisional Orders (Godalming, &c.) Bill
(*Marquess of Huntly*)
l. Royal Assent *Mar* 29 [44 *Vict.* c. i]

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) Bill
(*Mr. Hibbert, Mr. Dodson*)
c. Ordered ; read 1° * *April* 1 [Bill 130]
Read 2° * and committed *April* 8
Report * *April* 29
Read 3° * *May* 2
l. Read 1ª * (*Marquess of Huntly*) *May* 5 (No. 79)

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 2) Bill
(*Mr. Hibbert, Mr. Dodson*)
c. Ordered * *April* 26
Read 1° * *April* 27 [Bill 139]
Read 2° * *May* 3

Local Taxation
Legislation, Question, Sir Baldwyn Leighton ; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *April* 7, 886
The Annual Statement, Question, Mr. Pell ; Answer, Mr. Dodson *April* 28, 1319

Local Taxation Returns (Scotland) Bill
[H.L.] (*The Earl of Dalhousie*)
l. Royal Assent *Mar* 29 [44 *Vict.* c. 6]

London and South Western Railway Bill (*by Order*)
c. Read 2°, after short debate *April* 1, 452

London City Lands (*Thames Embankment*) *Bill* [*Lords*] (*by Order*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *April* 5, 732
Amendt. to leave out "now," and add "upon this day six months" (*Mr. Firth*) ; Question proposed, "That 'now,' &c. ;" after short debate, Amendt. withdrawn ; main Question put, and agreed to ; Bill read 2°, and committed to a Select Committee, to consist of Fifteen Members, Ten to be nominated by the House, and Five by the Committee of Selection ; Instruction to the Committee

London City (*Parochial Charities*) *Bill* (*by Order*)
c. Moved, "That the Order for the Second Reading of the Bill upon Wednesday next be discharged, and that the Bill be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills" (*Mr. Bryce*) *Mar* 31, 341 ; Motion agreed to ; Leave given to the Examiners to sit and proceed forthwith

LONG, Mr. W. H., *Wilts, N.*
Africa, South—Transvaal Republic — Repayment of Advances, 563
Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts—Foot-and-Mouth Disease, 1419
Ireland, State of—Land League Meeting—Speech of Mr. Dillon, 1421
Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention, 2R. Motion for Adjournment, 440

LONGFORD, Earl of
Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), 2R. 798 ; Comm. 852
Army Re-organization—The Regimental Uniforms, 1008

LOPES, Sir M., *Devonshire, S.*
Highways—Maintenance of Main Roads, Res. 79

Lord Chamberlain's Department
Egress from Theatres (*Metropolis*), Question, The Duke of St. Albans ; Answer, The Earl of Kenmare *April* 5, 689
Fires in Theatres, Questions, Mr. Macfarlane ; Answers, Sir William Harcourt *Mar* 29, 154

LOWTHER, Hon. W., *Westmoreland*
Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts—Outbreak of Foot-and-Mouth Disease at Newcastle, 1661
Parliamentary Oath (Mr. Bradlaugh)—New Writ for the Borough of Northampton, 479

LUBBOCK, Sir J., *London University*
Africa, South—The Transvaal—Negotiations, 18
Banking Laws Amendment, 2R. 1789
France—New Commercial Treaty—Sugar and Shipping Bounties, 1314
Parliament—Easter Recess, 1052
Parliament—Public Business (Half-past Twelve Rule), Res. 1709, 1713, 1725
Technical Education, 547

Lunacy Law Assimilation (Ireland) Bill
(*Mr. Litton, Mr. Findlater, Sir Thomas M'Clure*)
c. Read 2°, after debate *April* 6, 802 [Bill 75]

LUSK, Sir A., *Finsbury*
Banking Laws Amendment, 2R. 1798
Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention, Appointment of a Select Committee, 1800

LYMINGTON, Viscount, *Barnstaple*
Land Law (Ireland), 2R. 1143

Lyons, Dr. R. D., *Dublin*
Customs (Outport Officers), Res. 1730
Parliamentary Oaths, Motion for Bill, 2068

Macartney, Mr. J. W. E., *Tyrone*
Alkali, &c. Works Regulation, Comm. *cl.* 3, 1645
Lunacy Law Assimilation (Ireland), 2R. 820
Parliamentary Oaths, Motion for Bill, 2069

Macdonald, Mr. A., *Stafford*
Coal Mines Regulation Act—Pen-y-Graig Explosion, 1657
  Seaham Explosion—Important Evidence, 1658
Mines Acts—Mining in Foreign Countries—Reports of Residents Abroad, 1955
  Reports of Inspectors of Mines, 1880, 1816
Monument to the Right Hon. the late Earl of Beaconsfield, K.G.—The Inscription, 1960, 1961

Macfarlane, Mr. D. H., *Carlow Co.*
Africa, South—The Transvaal—Commission—Conditions of Peace, 761
  94th Regiment—Protection of Native Interests—Slavery, 356
India—Railway to Sibi, 559
Lord Chamberlain's Department — Fires in Theatres, 154, 155

Mac Iver, Mr. D., *Birkenhead*
Alkali, &c. Works Regulation, Comm. *cl.* 3, 1637
Commercial Treaty with France, 1312
  Negotiations, 1083, 1084
  Sugar and Shipping Bounties, 1314
France and Tunis—Outbreak of the Krouhmir Tribes—Military Operations, 1317
Land Law (Ireland), 2R. 1918
Malta—Salary of the Governor—Food Taxes, 751
Parliamentary Oath (Mr. Bradlaugh), 1288, 1530
Parliamentary Oaths, Motion for Adjournment, 1567, 1569
Trade and Manufactures—Exports and Imports, 558
  The Woollen Trade, 566, 567, 1307
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 620

Mackintosh, Mr. C. Fraser-, *Inverness, &c.*
Census (Scotland) — The Gaelic Language, 1536

McArthur, Mr. A., *Leicester*
Cyprus—Law Courts—Greek Language, 1817

M'Carthy, Mr. Justin, *Longford*
Ireland—Miscellaneous Questions
  Arms Act—Proclamation of the County of Longford, 1015
  Evictions, 786, 787, 789, 1016
  Law and Justice—Leitrim Assizes—The "Queen *v.* Clancey," 567

M'Carthy, Mr. Justin—*cont.*
  Protection of Person and Property Act, 1881—Prisoners in Kilmainham Gaol, 149;—Mr. J. Daly, 1412
Ireland, State of—Constabulary, 753
  Mr. Randle Peyton, 1026
Parliament—Easter Recess, 1042

McClure, Sir T., *Londonderry Co.*
Lunacy Law Assimilation (Ireland), 2R. 810

M'Coan, Mr. J. C., *Wicklow*
Criminal Law—Abduction of English Girls, 1311
Law and Police—Riot at Basingstoke, 155
Turkey and Greece—Frontier Question, 557

McKenna, Sir J. N., *Youghal*
Parliamentary Oath (Mr. Bradlaugh)—New Writ for the Borough of Northampton, 492

McLagan, Mr. P., *Linlithgowshire*
Agricultural Tenants' Compensation, 991

McLaren, Right Hon. J., (Lord Advocate), *Edinburgh*
Bankruptcy and Cessio (Scotland), 2R. 1519
Married Women's Property (Scotland), Comm. 687, 688; 3R. 1523
Parliament—Public Business, 368
Scotland—Miscellaneous Questions
  Census—The Gaelic Language, 1536
  Circuit Courts, 873
  Court of Session—The Vacant Judgeship, 1312
  Vagrancy in Counties, 873
Teinds (Scotland), 2R. 417, 422

McLaren, Mr. C. B. B., *Stafford*
Hall Marking—Report of Select Committee, 1879, 154

Magniac, Mr. C., *Bedford*
Alkali, &c. Works Regulation, Comm. *cl.* 3, 1636, 1637
Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention, 2R. 433, 947, 961

Makins, Colonel W. T., *Essex, S.*
Agricultural Holdings (Distress for Rent), Res. 1706
Alkali, &c. Works Regulation, Comm. 1175; *cl.* 2, 1630
Customs (Outport Officers), Res. 1734
Parliament—Public Business (Half-past Twelve Rule), Res. 1712
Parliamentary Oath (Mr. Bradlaugh), 1288
Parliamentary Oaths, 1556, 1566; Motion for Bill, 2063
Patronage of Benefices (Church of England), Res. 213
Public Health—Small-Pox (Metropolis), 1418;—Hospital Tents, 1959
Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention, Appointment of a Select Committee, 1800
Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Wales), 2R. 1776

[*cont.*

Malta
Ancient Monuments, Question, Mr. Gregory; Answer, Mr. Grant Duff *April* 8, 1032
Salary of the Governor—Food Taxes, Question, Mr. Mac Iver; Answer, Mr. Grant Duff *April* 5, 751

Manners, Right Hon. Lord J. J. R. *Leicestershire, N.*
Africa, South—The Transvaal (Military Operations), 461
Land Law (Ireland), 2R. 1117, 1307; Motion for Adjournment, 1617, 1901
Parliamentary Oath (Mr. Bradlaugh), 1279

Married Women's Property (Scotland) Bill (*Mr. Anderson, Mr. Duncan M'Laren, Sir David Wedderburn*)
c. Report of Select Committee* *Mar* 29 [No. 152]
Bill re-committed *Mar* 29 [Bill 45]
Committee (*on re-comm.*)—R.P. *April* 4, 687
Committee* (*on re-comm.*)—R.P. *April* 7
Committee* (*on re-comm.*); Report *April* 8
Moved, "That the Bill be now taken into Consideration" *April* 25, 1179; after short debate, Question put; A. 69, N. 19; M. 50 (D. L. 186)
Moved, "That the Bill be now read 3°" *April* 29, 1521; Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Warton*); after short debate, Question put, and negatived
Original Question again proposed; after short debate, main Question put, and agreed to; Bill read 3°
l. Read 1ª* (*Lord Chancellor*) *May* 5 (No. 75)

Marriott, Mr. W. T., *Brighton*
Church Boards, 2R. 1301

Maxwell, Sir H. E., *Wigton*
Butter (Spurious Compounds), Res. 494

Maxwell-Heron, Captain J. M., *Kirkcudbright*
Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), 2R. 35; Comm. *add. cl.* 400
Butter (Spurious Compounds), Res. 520

Medical Acts—The Victoria University
Question, Mr. Summers; Answer, Mr. Mundella *May* 5, 1824

Meldon, Mr. C. H., *Kildare*
Land Law (Ireland), Leave, 938

Mellor, Mr. J. W., *Grantham*
Controverted Elections—Parliamentary Elections Act, 1868, &c.—Boston Election, 1546, 1963

Mercantile Marine
Bristol Channel Pilots, Question, Sir Philip Miles; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain *Mar* 29, 155
Lights of Trawling Smacks—Committee, Question, Mr. Heneage; Answer, Mr. Evelyn Ashley *Mar* 28, 13; Question, Mr. Birkbeck; Answer, Mr. Evelyn Ashley *April* 7, 872

Merchant Shipping Acts—Overloading—The "Dublin Castle"
Question, Mr. Edward Clarke; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain *May* 5, 1828

Merchant Shipping Bill
(*Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. Ashley*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *May* 6 [Bill 151]

Metropolis
Miscellaneous Questions
Licensing, Question, Sir Patrick O'Brien; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *April* 5, 754
Poor Rate—Gray's Inn, Question, Mr. Gray; Answer, Mr. Dodson *April* 1, 474
Small Pox—See under *Public Health*
Street Traffic—The Vestries, Question, Mr. Carington; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *Mar* 28, 18
The Parks—St. James's Park, Question, Mr. W. H. James; Answer, Mr. Shaw Lefevre *Mar* 28, 5

Metropolitan Commons Supplemental Bill
(*Mr. Courtney, Secretary Sir William Harcourt*)
c. Report* *April* 5 [Bill 99]
Read 3°* *April* 6
l. Read 1ª* (*Earl of Dalhousie*) *April* 7 (No. 65)

Metropolitan Open Spaces Act (1877) Amendment Bill
(*Mr. Walter James, Mr. Bryce*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *Mar* 30, 217
Amendt. to leave out "now," and add "upon this day six months" (*Earl Percy*); Question proposed, "That 'now,' &c.;" after short debate, Amendt. withdrawn
Main Question put, and agreed to; Bill read 2° [Bill 9]

Metropolitan Water Supply
Question, Mr. Ritchie; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *April* 25, 1083

Middlesex Land Registry Bill
(*Mr. Hopwood, Mr. Gregory, Sir Thomas Chambers, Sir Sydney Waterlow, Mr. Lewis*)
c. Bill withdrawn, after short debate *April* 6, 825 [Bill 87]

Miles, Sir P. J. W., *Somerset, E.*
Mercantile Marine—Bristol Channel Pilots, 155

Mines Acts—Reports of Inspectors of Mines, 1880
Question, Mr. Macdonald; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *May* 5, 1816

Mines—Mining in Foreign Countries—Report of Residents Abroad
Question, Mr. Macdonald; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke *May* 6, 1955

Monk, Mr. C. J., *Gloucester City*
Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), Consid. *cl.* 1, 651
Church Patronage, 2R. 984, 990
Parliament—Business of the House, 770
Parliament — Public Business (Half-past Twelve Rule), Res. 1706, 1723, 1828, 1839
Parliamentary Oaths, Motion for Bill, 2053
Suez Canal Company—British Shares, 554

Monteagle, Lord
Landlord and Tenant (Ireland) Act, 1870, Commission (The Earl of Bessborough's)—The Evidence, 2
Naval Education, 1929

Moore, Mr. A. J., *Clonmel*
Agricultural Labourers' Habitations (Ireland), Res. 1976
Army — Auxiliary Forces — Distinctions to Militia Officers, 565
Butter (Spurious Compounds), Res. 501

Morgan, Right Hon. G. Osborne (Judge Advocate General), *Denbighshire*
Army—Crime and Punishment, 1879, 365
Army Discipline and Regulation Act—Case of Patrick King, 1034
Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), 2R. 20 ; Comm. 378 ; *cl.* 4, Amendt. 381 ; *cl.* 5, Amendt. *ib.* 384, 386, 387 ; *add. cl. ib.* 389, 398, 407, 416
Middlesex Land Registry, 2R. 833
Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Wales), 2R. 1760

Morley, Earl of
Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), 1R. 690 ; 2R. 797, 798, 800 ; Comm. 849 ; *cl.* 4, 854, 855 ; *cl.* 5, 856 ; *cl.* 7, 857
Army Organization—New Scheme, 726
Regimental Uniforms, 1008

Moss, Mr. R., *Winchester*
Army — Staff Appointments — Captains of Cavalry and Infantry, 1415

Mowbray, Right Hon. Sir J. R., *Oxford University*
Parliament — Public Business (Half-past Twelve Rule), Res. 1709, 1726, 1839

Mundella, Right Hon. A. J. (Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education), *Sheffield*
Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts—Miscellaneous Questions
Compensation for Compulsory Slaughter—Importation of Cattle, 1656
Foot-and-Mouth Disease, 157, 1419 ;—At Carlisle, 1084 ; — At Newcastle, 1661, 1826
Glanders, 881
Education Department (England)—Miscellaneous Questions
Board and Voluntary Schools, 357
School Accommodation, 152
Technical Education, 535, 541

Mundella, Right Hon. A. J.—*cont.*
Endowed Schools—Hulme's Charity Commissioners' Scheme, 1414
Geological Survey of Ireland—The Re-Survey, 1655, 1656
Medical Acts—Victoria University, 1824
Science and Art—The Geological Survey, 757

Municipal Corporation Act (1859) Amendment Bill
(*Mr. William Fowler, Mr. Rylands, Mr. Walter James, Mr. Henry H. Fowler*)
c. Read 2° *Mar* 30, 248 [Bill 25]

Municipal Franchise (Scotland) Bill
(*The Earl of Camperdown*)
l. Read 2ª *May* 6, 1928 (No. 55)

Mutiny Acts—Corporal Punishment
Questions, Sir John Hay, Captain Price, Mr. T. P. O'Connor ; Answers, The Attorney General *April* 1, 458

Navy
Miscellaneous Questions
Armament of H.M. Ships, Question, Mr. W. H. Smith ; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *April* 28 1319
Corporal Punishment, Question, Sir John Hay ; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *April* 5, 753
Court Martial at Sydney—Case of C. P. Stamp —H.M.S. " Wolverine," Question, Mr. Labouchere ; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *April* 5, 758
Destruction of H.M.S. " Doterel," Questions, Mr. Gorst, Mr. Carbutt ; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 4, 1746 ; Question, Sir John Hay ; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 5, 1833 ; Question, Mr. W. H. Smith ; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *May* 6, 1965
H.M.S. " Inflexible," Question, Mr. Gourley ; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *April* 5, 759
Naval Education, Question, Observations, Lord Monteagle ; debate thereon *May* 6, 1929
Supply of Seamen, Question, Captain Price ; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *April* 26, 1182
The Marines, Question, Sir Henry Fletcher ; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *April* 5, 768 ;—*Quartermasters of Royal Marines*, Question, Mr. Gorst ; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *Mar* 28, 11

Newdegate, Mr. C. N., *Warwickshire, N.*
Agricultural Labourers' Habitations (Ireland), Res. 2009
Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), Consid. *cl.* 4, 660
Parliament—Business of the House, 1824
Parliament — Public Business (Half-past Twelve Rule), Res. 1713
Parliamentary Oath (Mr. Bradlaugh), 1236, 1275 ; — New Writ for the Borough of Northampton, 480, 484
Parliamentary Oaths, 1423, 1556, 1559, 1563, 1568 ; Motion for Leave, 1628, 2061
Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention, 2R. 967

[*cont.*

Nolan, Major J. P., *Galway Co.*
- Alkali, &c. Works Regulation, Comm. *cl.* 3, 1631, 1632, 1634, 1637, 1646
- Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), 2R. 41; Comm. *cl.* 4, 380; *cl.* 5, 381; Amendt. 382, 386, 387
- Army Re-organization—The 87th and 88th Regiments, 156
- Distress (Ireland)—Co. Galway, 1662
- Elections (Closing of Public Houses), 2R. 245
- Relief of Distress (Ireland) Act—Employment Works, 1832

North, Colonel J. S., *Oxfordshire*
- Army—Military Operations in the Transvaal—Despatch of Forces, 462
- Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), Comm. 374

Northbrook, Earl of (First Lord of the Admiralty)
- Africa, South—The Transvaal (Negotiations)—Peace Arrangements, 300
- Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), Comm. 852
- Naval Education, 1950

Northcote, Right Hon. Sir S. H., *Devon, N.*
- Africa, South—The Transvaal—Miscellaneous Questions
  - Commission—Instructions, 772
  - Military Operations—Surrender of Potchefstroom, 157
  - Negotiations, 17
  - Policy of the Government, 472
- Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), Consid. *cl.* 4, 657, 667
- Land Law (Ireland), 846, 847; Leave, 926; 2R. 1114, 1128, 1913
- Legacy and Probate Duties, 774
- London City Lands (Thames Embankment), 2R. 744
- Ministry—Resignation of the Duke of Argyll, 1029
- Monument to the Right Hon. the Late Earl of Beaconsfield, 1181
- Parliament—Miscellaneous Questions
  - Business of the House, 494, 890, 1030
  - Easter Recess, 1037
  - Order of Business, 773
- Parliamentary Oath (Mr. Bradlaugh), 1184, 1185, 1194, 1234, 1241, 1245, 1246, 1260;—New Writ for the Borough of Northampton, 489
- Parliamentary Oaths, 1423, 1560, 1569; Motion for Leave, 1623, 1627
- Thames River, 2R. 145
- Vote of Thanks for the Military Operations in Afghanistan, 1665, 1851
- Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 587, 601
- Ways and Means — Financial Statement —
  - Probate and Legacy Duties, 1017, 1018
  - Silver Duties, Statement, 1297

Northcote, Mr. H. S., *Exeter*
- Board of Trade—Resignation of Mr. R. Giffen, 882

Norwood, Mr. C. M., *Kingston-on-Hull*
- Customs (Outport Officers), Res. 1727, 1739
- Parliamentary Oath (Mr. Bradlaugh), 1276
- Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention—Appointment of Select Committee, 1799
- Thames River, 2R. 146

O'Beirne, Major F., *Leitrim*
- Army—Brigade of Guards, 754
  - Troops in Ireland—2nd and 3rd Dragoon Guards, 873
- Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), Comm. 374; *add. cl.* 409; Consid. *cl.* 3, 652
- Land Law (Ireland), 2R. 1353
- Licensing (Metropolis), 754
- Post Office—Postal Deliveries (Ireland), 878

O'Brien, Sir P., *King's Co.*
- Agricultural Labourers' Habitations (Ireland), Res. 2008
- Land Law (Ireland), Leave, 939; 2R. 1919

O'Connor, Mr. A., *Queen's Co.*
- Alkali, &c. Works Regulation, Comm. *cl.* 3, Motion for reporting Progress, 1632, 1649
- Army Recruiting—Irish Recruits, 1549
- Criminal Law—Juvenile Offenders Act, 1819
- Customs (Outport Officers), Res. 1729, 1732, 1733, 1741
- India Office Auditor (Superannuation), 2R. 1921, 1924
- Ireland—Miscellaneous Questions
  - Consolidated Fund — Miscellaneous Pensions, 1015
  - Evictions, 797
  - Law and Justice—Penalties of Prosecutions, 1014
- Parliament—Public Business (Half-past Twelve Rule), Res. 1724
- Parliamentary Oath (Mr. Bradlaugh), 1290
- Parliamentary Oaths, Motion for Leave, 1619
- Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention, 2R. Motion for Adjournment, 437, 441, 969, 971

O'Connor, Mr. T. P., *Galway*
- Afghan War—Vote of Thanks for the Military Operations in Afghanistan, 1864
- Agricultural Labourers' Habitations (Ireland), Res. 2005, 2008
- Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), Consid. *cl.* 4, 682
- Elections in Foreign Countries, 560
- Ireland—Miscellaneous Questions
  - Criminal Law—Case of Joseph B. Walsh, 350, 462, 463, 563, 564
  - Landlord and Tenant—Charge against a Process Server, 871
  - Law and Justice—Legal Proceedings of Landlords, 11
  - Notices and Ejectments, 552
  - Peace Preservation Act—Arms Licences, 1962
  - Poor Law—Arrears of Rent, &c. 1836, 1837
  - Protection of Person and Property Act, 1881—Mr. Dillon, 1554, 1555, 1664, 1724;—Prisoners under the Act—Newspaper Editors, 1825

[*cont.*

O'Connor, Mr. T. P.—*cont.*
  Ireland, State of—Miscellaneous Questions
    Alleged Crimes and Outrages, 1821
    Convictions for "Boycotting," 365
    Co. Monaghan—Alleged Excess of Duty by Bailiffs, 1829
    County Sligo, Affray in, 887
    Evictions, 150, 151, 770, 774, 783;—Mohill Union, Co. Leitrim, 362
    Land League Meetings—Government Reporters, 151, 152
    Sheriffs' Sale at Howth, 1662
  Landed Proprietors (Ireland), 2R. 802
  Land Law (Ireland), 801; 2R. 1410
  Mutiny Acts—Corporal Punishment, 459
  Parliament—Public Business (Half-past Twelve Rule), Res. 1717, 1719
  Parliamentary Oaths, Motion for Bill, 2064

O'Conor, Mr. D. M., *Sligo Co.*
  Parliament—Public Business (Half-past Twelve Rule), Res. 1720

O'Donnell, Mr. F. H., *Dungarvan*
  Afghan War—Vote of Thanks for Military Operations in Afghanistan, 1868
  Africa, South — The Transvaal — Religious Toleration, 156
  Agricultural Labourers' Habitations (Ireland), Res. 1995
  Alkali, &c. Works Regulation, Comm. *cl.* 3, 1642
  Army—Public Worship—Political Sermons, 869, 871
  Criminal Law—Queen v. Bradlaugh and Another—"Fruits of Philosophy," 1826
  Greece, Affairs of, Res. 2042
  India—Afghanistan—Political Affairs, 358;—Yakoub Khan and Abdurrahman, 457;—Ameer, The, 887
    Nagas Territory, 364
  India and China—The Opium Trade, 1495
  Ireland—Evictions, 796
    Protection of Person and Property Act, 1881—Prisoners under the Act—Newspaper Editors, 1826
  Ireland, State of—Miscellaneous Questions
    Alleged Outrage by Soldiers, Co. Cork, 357
    Collision in Mayo, 886
    Riot at Dungarvan, 868
  Parliament—Business of the House, 1840
    Easter Recess, 1052
  Parliamentary Oath (Mr. Bradlaugh), 1250
  Teinds (Scotland), 2R. 423

O'Donoghue, The, *Tralee*
  Ireland—Crime—The Police at Knocknagree, Co. Kerry, 1079
    Land Law, 1411;—Recovery of Rent by Writ, 1550;—Yearly Tenants, 1838
  Parliament—Business of the House, 1321

O'Gorman Mahon, The, *Clare*
  Ireland—Evictions, 783

O'Hagan, Lord (Lord Chancellor of Ireland)
  Local Courts of Bankruptcy (Ireland), 2R. 249

O'Kelly, Mr. J., *Roscommon*
  Afghan War—Vote of Thanks for the Military Operations in Afghanistan, 1854
  Ireland—Miscellaneous Questions
    Poor Law Bill—Arrears of Rent, &c. 1834, 1836
    Protection of Person and Property Act, 1881—Mr. Jasper Tully, a Prisoner under the Act, 1654
    Royal Irish Constabulary—Buckshot, 1013

Onslow, Mr. D. R., *Guildford*
  Asia, Central—English Intrigues at Merv, 560, 561
  Controverted Elections—Parliamentary Elections Act, 1868, &c.—Reported Boroughs, 466
  Guildford, Kingston, and London Railway, 2R. 338
  India—Afghanistan—Miscellaneous Questions
    Candahar (Political Affairs), 10;—Withdrawal of British Troops, 551
    Military Operations—Vote of Thanks to Sir Frederick Roberts and the Army, 474, 475, 562
  India and China—The Opium Trade, 1482
  India Office Auditor (Superannuation), 2R. 1923
  Parliamentary Oath (Mr. Bradlaugh), 1251
  Parliamentary Oaths, 1527, 1559; Motion for Leave, 1628
  Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Wales), 2R. 1759

Oranmore and Browne, Lord
  Landlord and Tenant (Ireland) Act—Lord Oranmore and Browne, 858, 859

Ordnance Survey—The Neighbourhood of Hertford
  Question, Mr. Abel Smith; Answer, Mr. Shaw Lefevre *April* 1, 457

O'Shaughnessy, Mr. R., *Limerick*
  Land Law (Ireland), 2R. 1125, 1602
  Public Health—Cholera at Chicago—Butterine, 364

O'Shea, Mr. W. H., *Clare*
  Army Re-organization—Distinguished Service Pensions, 12
  Fisheries (Ireland)—The Mackerel Fishery, 1535
  House of Commons—Additional Accommodation for Members—House of Lords, 1023

O'Sullivan, Mr. W. H., *Limerick Co.*
  Agricultural Holdings (Distress for Rent), Res. 1689
  Agricultural Labourers' Habitations (Ireland), Res. 1973
  Butter—Spurious Compounds, Res. 508
  Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Wales), 2R. 1764
  Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 618

Otway, Mr. A. J., *Rochester*
- Afghan War—Vote of Thanks for the Military Operations in Afghanistan, 1869
- Alkali, &c. Works Regulation, 2R. 427; Comm. *cl.* 3, 1644
- Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), 2R. 39
- Customs (Outport Officers), Res. 1741

Paget, Mr. R. H., *Somersetshire, Mid*
- Africa, South — The Transvaal (Military Operations), 461
- Highways—Maintenance of Main Roads, Res. 47
- Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention, 2R. 946

Palmer, Mr. J. H., *Lincoln*
- Parliament—Public Business (Half-past Twelve Rule), Res. 1710, 1726
- Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention, Appointment of Select Committee, 1800

Parker, Mr. C. S., *Perth*
- West Indies—Currency, 352

Parliament

LORDS—

Private Bills, Ordered, That no Private Bill brought from the House of Commons shall be read a second time after Tuesday the 14th day of June next [and other Orders] *April* 1, 451

Private and Provisional Order Confirmation Bills, Ordered, That Standing Orders Nos. 92. and 93. be suspended; and that the time for depositing petitions praying to be heard against Private and Provisional Order Confirmation Bills, which would otherwise expire during the adjournment of the House at Easter, be extended to the first day on which the House shall sit after the recess *April* 7

The Ministry—Resignation of the Duke of Argyll, Personal Explanation, The Duke of Argyll *April* 8, 993

Easter Recess, House adjourned *April* 8, to Thursday the 5th of *May* next.

COMMONS—

Controverted Elections

Wigan, Judges' Certificate and Report received *April* 4, 550

Knaresborough—Report of the Royal Commissioners, Question, Mr. Jackson; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *Mar* 29, 147

The Parliamentary Elections Act, 1868, *and the Parliamentary Elections and Corrupt Practices Acts* 1879 *and* 1880—*The Reported Boroughs,* Questions, Sir R. Assheton Cross, Colonel Taylor; Answers, The Attorney General *Mar* 31, 352; Questions, Mr. Morgan Lloyd, Sir R. Assheton Cross, Mr. Onslow; Answers, The Attorney General *April* 1, 465;—*Disqualification for Corrupt Practices,* Question, Mr. Rylands; Answer, The Attorney General *April* 5, 760;—*Scheduled Solicitors,* Question, Mr. Rylands; Answer, The Attorney General *April* 25, 1080;—*Boston Election,* Questions, Mr. Mellor, Mr. Warton,

[*cont.*

Parliament—Commons—*Controverted Elections—cont.*

Mr. E. Stanhope; Answers, Mr. Speaker, The Attorney General *May* 2, 1546; Questions, Mr. Mellor, Mr. Warton; Answers, The Attorney General *May* 6, 1963;—*Sandwich Election Commission,* Question, Mr. Lewis; Answer, The Attorney General *May* 6, 1956

Parliamentary Representation — The Vacant Seats, Question, Mr. Lewis; Answer, The Attorney General *May* 6, 1956

Rules and Orders—Questions—Printing Replies, Question, Mr. Leake; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *April* 5, 762

The Ministry—Resignation of the Duke of Argyll, Question, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *April* 8, 1029

Elections in Foreign Countries—Corrupt Practices and the Ballot, Question, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke *April* 4, 560; Question, Mr. Cavendish Bentinck; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke *April* 5, 774

Private Bills

Ordered, That Standing Orders 129 and 39 be suspended, and that the time for depositing Petitions against Private Bills, or against any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order, or Provisional Certificate, and for depositing duplicates of any Documents relating to any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order, or Provisional Certificate, be extended to Monday the 25th instant (*The Chairman of Ways and Means*) *April* 8

John Dillon, Esquire, Letter from the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland informing the Speaker of the arrest of Mr. John Dillon, a Member of this House, under the Act for the better Protection of Person and Property in Ireland; short debate thereon *May* 4, 1744

The Easter Recess, Moved, "That this House, at its rising, do adjourn until Monday 25th April" (*Mr. Gladstone*) *April* 8, 1036; after debate, Question put, and agreed to

Adjournment, Moved, "That this House, at its rising, do adjourn till To-morrow at Eight o'clock p.m." (*Lord Richard Grosvenor*) *April* 25, 1181; Question amended, and agreed to

Resolved, That this House, at its rising, do adjourn till this day at Nine o'clock p.m

Business of the House

Scotch Bills, Question, Mr. Ramsay; Answer, The Lord Advocate *Mar* 31, 368;—Question, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *April* 1, 494;—*The Bankruptcy Bill,* Question, Mr. Monk; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain *April* 5, 770;—Questions, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answers, Mr. Gladstone *April* 5, 773; *April* 7, 890;—*Land Law (Ireland) Bill,* Question, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *April* 8, 1030; Question, The O'Donoghue; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *April* 28, 1321;—*The*

[*cont.*

PARLIAMENT—COMMONS — *Business of the House* —cont.

Parliamentary Oaths Bill, Questions, Mr. Newdegate, Lord Randolph Churchill ; Answers, Mr. Gladstone *May* 5, 1824 ;—*Proclamation of Co. Dublin—The Arrest of Mr. Dillon,* Question, Mr. Parnell ; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *May* 5, 1839 ;—*Morning Sitting for Tuesday,* Notice, Mr. A. J. Balfour *May* 6, 1967

Orders of the Day

Orders of the Day, subsequent to the Order for the Second Reading of the Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual) Bill, postponed until after the Notices of Motions relating to the Maintenance of Main Roads and Fishing Vessels' Lights (*Mr. Gladstone*) *Mar* 28, 19

Orders of the Day, subsequent to the Order for the Consideration, as amended, of the Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual) Bill, deferred until after the Notice of Motion for leave to introduce the Bankruptcy Bill (*Mr. Gladstone*) *April* 4

Orders of the Day postponed until after the Notices of Motions for leave to introduce the Land Law (Ireland) Bill and the Bankruptcy Bill (*Mr. Gladstone*) *April* 7

Parliament—House of Commons (*Accommodation*)

Questions, Sir Edward Reed, Mr. O'Shea ; Answers, Mr. Shaw Lefevre *April* 8, 1023

Select Committee appointed, " to consider the proposals for the increased accommodation of the House, and to Report to the House what use shall be made of the Rooms proposed to be given up by the House of Lords " (*Mr. Shaw Lefevre*) *April* 27

Parliament — New Writ for Knaresborough

Moved, " That Mr. Speaker do issue his Warrant to the Clerk of the Crown to make out a New Writ for the electing of a Member to serve in this present Parliament for the Borough of Knaresborough, in the room of Sir Henry Meysey Meysey-Thompson, whose Election has been declared to be void " (*Lord Richard Grosvenor*) *May* 5, 1870 ; after short debate, Motion agreed to

Parliamentary Oath (*Mr. Bradlaugh*)

Question, Mr. Gibson ; Answer, The Attorney General *Mar* 31, 353 ; Question, Mr. Schreiber ; Answer, The Attorney General *April* 7, 884 ; Question, Mr. Mac Iver ; Answer, Mr. Speaker *May* 2, 1530

Parliamentary Oath (*Mr. Bradlaugh*)—*New Writ for the Borough of Northampton*

Moved for, "New Writ for Northampton Borough,—in the room of Charles Bradlaugh, esquire, who, since his election, has vacated his seat in Parliament by sitting and voting in this House without having taken and subscribed the oath prescribed by Law " (*Mr. Labouchere*) *April* 1, 475 ; after debate, Motion agreed to

Parliamentary Oath (*Mr. Bradlaugh*)

Mr. Bradlaugh having come to the Table to take and subscribe the Oath, Moved, " That, having regard to the Resolution of this House of the 22nd June 1880, and to the Reports and Proceedings of the two Select Committees therein referred to, Mr. Bradlaugh be not permitted to go through the form of repeating the words of the Oath prescribed by the Statutes, 29 Vic. c. 19, and 31 and 32 Vic. c. 72 " (*Sir Stafford Northcote*) *April* 26, 1183

Amendt. to leave out from " That," and add "in a case where a Member, duly elected, presents himself at the Table in conformity with the call of Mr. Speaker, and in proceeding to comply with the formalities prescribed for the taking of Parliamentary Oaths, without qualification, this House will not, on the ground of information extraneous to the transaction, offer any impediment to the fulfilment of the intention of such Member " (*Mr. Davey*) *v.* ; Question proposed, " That the words, &c."

Question, " That the Member for Northampton be now heard," put, and agreed to

The hon. Member having addressed the House from the Bar, withdrew ; after debate, Question put ; A. 208, N. 175 ; M. 33

Div. List, A. and N. 1238

Main Question put, and agreed to

Mr. Bradlaugh having again advanced to the Table of the House was directed by Mr. Speaker to withdraw ; — and refusing — Moved, " That Mr. Bradlaugh do now withdraw " (*Sir Stafford Northcote*) ; after short debate, Question put, and agreed to

Mr. Bradlaugh refusing to obey the order of the House was, by the direction of Mr. Speaker, removed by the Serjeant at Arms below the Bar ; after further debate, Moved, " That this House do now adjourn " (*Mr. Joseph Cowen*) ; Question put, and agreed to

Mr. Bradlaugh having presented himself at the Table of the House to take and subscribe the Oath required by Law as Member for Northampton, he was ordered by Mr. Speaker to withdraw ; but refusing to obey was conducted by the Serjeant at Arms below the Bar *April* 27, 1252 ; after short debate, Moved, " That this House do now adjourn " (*Mr. Labouchere*) ; after further long debate, Motion withdrawn

Parliament—Public Business (*Half-past-Twelve Rule*)

Standing Order relative thereto [18th February, 1879] read *May* 3, 1706

Moved, " That this Rule shall not apply to the Motion for leave to bring in a Bill, nor to any Bill which has passed through Committee of the whole House " (*Mr. Monk*)

Amendt. to insert before the first word " Bill," the word " Government " (*Mr. Robert Fowler*) ; Question proposed, " That the word ' Government ' be there inserted ; " after short debate, Moved, " That the Debate be now adjourned " (*Sir R. Assheton Cross* ; after further short debate, Question put, and agreed to ; Debate adjourned till Thursday

[*cont.*

Parliament—Public Business—(Half-past Twelve Rule)—cont.
Question, Mr. Monk ; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *May* 5, 1828 ; Notice, Mr. Monk ; Question, Sir John Mowbray ; Answer, Mr. Speaker *May* 5, 1839

Parliament—Sittings of the House
Resolved, That whenever the House shall meet at Two of the clock, the Sitting of the House shall be held subject to the Resolutions of the House of the 30th day of April 1869 (*Mr. Hibbert*) *April* 7

PARLIAMENT—HOUSE OF COMMONS
Sat First
May 5—The Earl of Saint Germans, after the death of his brother

PARLIAMENT—HOUSE OF COMMONS
New Writs Issued
April 1—*For* Saint Ives, *v.* Sir Charles Reed, knight, deceased
For Northampton Borough, *v.* Charles Bradlaugh, esquire, who, since his election, has vacated his seat in Parliament by sitting and voting in this House without having taken and subscribed the oath prescribed by Law
April 6—*For* Sunderland, *v.* Sir Henry Marshman Havelock - Allan, baronet, V.C.C.B., Chiltern Hundreds
April 8—*For* Chester County (Western Division), *v.* Sir Philip De Malpas Grey Egerton, baronet, deceased
May 5—*For* the Borough of Knaresborough, *v.* Sir Henry Meysey Meysey - Thompson, void Election

New Members Sworn
April 25—Charles Campbell Ross, esquire, *Saint Ives*
Henry James Tollemache, esquire, *Chester County* (Western Division)
April 28—Samuel Storey, esquire, *Sunderland*

Parliamentary Oaths Act—Legislation
Observations, Mr. Gladstone ; Questions, Sir Stafford Northcote, Mr. Newdegate ; Answers, Mr. Gladstone *April* 29, 1422 ; Question, Observations, Mr. Onslow, Mr. R. N. Fowler, Mr. J. G. Talbot, Earl Percy ; Reply, The Attorney General *April* 29, 1527

Parliamentary Oaths Bill
Question, Mr. Newdegate ; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *May* 2, 1556
Moved, "That the Orders of the Day, subsequent to the Order of the Day for resuming the Adjourned Debate on the Second Reading of the Land Law (Ireland) Bill, be postponed until after the Notice of Motion for the introduction of the Parliamentary Oaths Bill" (*Mr. Gladstone*) ; after short debate, Moved, "That this House do now adjourn" (*Mr. Lewis*) ; Question put ; A. 43, N. 318 ; M. 275 (D. L. 189)

[*cont.*

Parliamentary Oaths Bill—cont.
Original Question again proposed ; after short debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Mac Iver*) ; after further short debate, Motion withdrawn
Original Question put, and agreed to

Parliamentary Oaths Bill
Questions, Mr. Newdegate, Colonel Makins ; Answers, The Attorney General, Mr. Gladstone *May* 2, 1556
Motion for Bill *May* 2, 1618 ; after debate, Moved, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair" (*Mr. Attorney General*), 1621 ; Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Lord Randolph Churchill*) ; Motion agreed to ; Debate adjourned
Debate resumed *May* 6, 2046 ; Moved, "That the Debate be further adjourned till Tuesday next, at Two of the clock" (*Lord Frederick Cavendish*)
Amendt. to leave out "at Two of the clock" (*Mr. Arthur Balfour*) ; Question proposed, "That 'at Two of the clock,' &c. ;" after debate, Question put ; A. 128, N. 122 ; M. 6 (D. L. 195)
Main Question proposed ; Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Ritchie*) ; after short debate, Question put ; A 115, N. 127 ; M. 12 (D. L. 196)
Main Question again proposed ; Moved, "That this House do now adjourn" (*Mr. Chaplin*) ; after short debate, Question put ; A. 100, N. 121 ; M. 21 (D. L. 197)
Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Sir H. Drummond Wolff*) ; Question put, and agreed to ; Debate adjourned

PARNELL, Mr. C. S., *Cork*
Africa, South — The Transvaal (Military Operations)—Surrender of Potchefstroom, 367
Agricultural Labourers' Habitations (Ireland), Res. 1985, 1988
Ireland—Miscellaneous Questions
  Constabulary—Alleged Excess of Duty at Newcastle, 1544, 1545
  Criminal Law—Case of Joseph B. Walsh, 564
  Ejectments, 889
  Land Law—Recovery of Rent by Writ, 1550
  Peace Preservation Act—Arrest of Mr. Hodnett, 1413
  Poor Law—Arrears of Rent, &c. 1837
  Protection of Person and Property Act, 1881—Mr. Dillon, 1554 ;—Newspaper Editors, 1825
Ireland, State of—Alleged Outrage by Soldiers, Co. Cork, 356, 357
  Evictions, 791 ;—Mohill Union, Co. Leitrim, 362
Land Law (Ireland), Leave, 933 ; 2R. 1164, 1593, 1617, 1841
Parliament—Business of the House, 1839, 1840
Parliamentary Oaths, Motion for Leave, 1618, 1620

PATRICK, Mr. R. W. COCHRANE-, *Ayrshire, N.*
Technical Education, 533

Patronage of Benefices (Church of England)
Moved, "That, in the opinion of this House, the simoniacal evasions of the law, and other scandals connected with the exercise and disposal of private patronage in the Church of England, are such as to call for remedial measures of the most stringent and radical character" (*Mr. Edward Leatham*) *Mar* 29, 178
Amendt. to leave out from "House," and add "the Reports of the Select Committee of the House of Lords on Church Patronage, and of the Royal Commission on the sale, exchange, and resignation of Ecclesiastical Benefices, disclose evils connected with the exercise and disposal of Church Patronage which call for legislation at the earliest possible moment" (*Mr. Stuart Wortley*) *v.*; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after short debate, Amendt. and Motion withdrawn

PEASE, Mr. A., *Whitby*
Africa, South—Basutos (Negotiations), 1183

PEASE, Mr. J. W., *Durham, S.*
British Burmah—Consumption of Opium, 764
China—Mixed Court of Shanghai—Chinese Criminals, 758
Highways—Maintenance of Main Roads, Res. 50; Amendt. 52
India and China—The Opium Trade, 1451
India (Finance, &c.)—Opium Taxation, 1417
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 638

PEDDIE, Mr. J. DICK-, *Kilmarnock, &c.*
Court of Session (Scotland)—The Vacant Judgeship, 1312
Elections (Closing of Public Houses), 2R. 242
Teinds (Scotland), 2R., Motion for Adjournment, 421, 424

PEEK, Sir H. W., *Surrey, Mid.*
Africa, South—The Transvaal (Negotiations)—"Suzerainty," 1534
Guildford, Kingston, and London Railway, 2R. Amendt. 324

PEEL, Mr. A. W., *Warwick Bo.*
Metropolitan Open Spaces Act (1877) Amendment, 2R. 224
Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention, 2R. 942

PELL, Mr. A., *Leicestershire, S.*
Agricultural Holdings (Distress for Rent), Res. 1680
Butter (Spurious Compounds), Res. 522, 524
Extraordinary Tithe Rent Charges, Motion for a Select Committee, 1650
Local Taxation—Annual Statement, 1319

[cont.

PELL, Mr. A.—*cont.*
London City (Parochial Charities), 2R. 342
Public Health—Small-Pox (Metropolis), 1315
Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention, 2R. 434, 439, 442; Amendt. 940, 968

PERCY, Right Hon. Earl, *Northumberland, N.*
Africa, South—The Transvaal—"Suzerainty," 1831
Alkali, &c. Works Regulation, 2R. 429; Comm. *cl.* 2, 1178; *cl.* 3, 1638
Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), Comm. 371; Consid. *cl.* 4, 668; *cl.* 6, 684
Extraordinary Tithe Rent Charges, Motion for a Select Committee, Motion for Adjournment, 1651
Greece, Affairs of, Res. 2046
Ireland, State of—Riot at Midleton, Co. Cork, 360
Metropolitan Open Spaces Act (1877) Amendment, 2R. Amendt. 221, 227
Parliament—Easter Recess, 1051
Parliamentary Oaths, 1529; Motion for Bill, 2067
Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention, 2R. 442

Petty Sessions Clerks (Ireland) Bill
(*Mr. Litton, Mr. James Richardson*)
c. Read 2°, after short debate *April* 6, 839 [Bill 41]

Pier and Harbour Orders Confirmation Bill (*Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. Evelyn Ashley*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *April* 28 [Bill 143]

PLAYFAIR, Right Hon. Mr. Lyon (Chairman of Committees of Ways and Means and Deputy Speaker), *Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities*
Alkali, &c. Works Regulation, Comm. *cl.* 3, 1632, 1637
Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), Comm. *add. cl.* 416
Butter (Spurious Compounds), Res. 512
Customs (Outport Officers), Res. 1738
Leases, Comm. *cl.* 3, 88
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 627, 641

PLUNKET, Right Hon. D. R., *Dublin University*
Land Law (Ireland), 2R, 1126
Landlord and Tenant (Ireland) Act, 1870, Commission (The Earl of Bessborough's)—The Evidence, 13

Poor Law (England and Wales)
The Oldham Guardians—Catholic Children, Question, Mr. Bellingham; Answer, Mr. Dodson *Mar* 28, 5
Workhouse at Champion Hill, Question, Mr. Roundell; Answer, Mr. Dodson *April* 7, 885

[cont.

Poor Law (*England and Wales*)—cont.
Workhouse Inmates—Religious Attendance, Question, Mr. Summers; Answer, Mr. Dodson *Mar* 31, 353

Poor Law (*Ireland*) *Bill—Arrears of Rent, &c.*
Questions, Mr. O'Kelly, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Parnell, Mr. A. M. Sullivan; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster, Mr. Gladstone *May* 5, 1834

Portugal—The Lorenzo Marques Treaty
Question, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke *April* 7, 867; Question, Mr. W. Cartwright; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke *May* 6, 1958

Post Office
Indicators to Pillar Letter-Boxes, Question, Mr. Bryce; Answer, Mr. Fawcett *Mar* 28, 17
Postal Deliveries (*Ireland*), Question, Major O'Beirne; Answer, Mr. Fawcett *April* 7, 878
Post Office Act, 1837—*Detention and Opening of Letters*, Question, Mr. A. M. Sullivan; Answer, Mr. Fawcett *Mar* 31, 343; Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. Fawcett *April* 4, 564
Telegraph Department, Dublin, Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. Fawcett *April* 7, 869

Post Office (Land) Bill
(*Mr. Fawcett, Lord Frederick Cavendish*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *May* 5 [Bill 150]

POWER, Mr. J. O'Connor, *Mayo*
Army—Non-Commissioned Officers, 765
Ireland—Miscellaneous Questions
Evictions, 770
Magistracy—Ballyhannis Petty Sessions, 1011
Protection of Person and Property Act, 1881—Treatment of Prisoners under the Act, 1538
State of—Distress in Castlebar, 1010
Land Law (Ireland), 2R. 1881
Technical Education, 541

POWER, Mr. R., *Waterford*
Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, 1881—Arrest of Mr. Dillon, 1664

Power of Representatives (*Abroad*)
Amendt. on Committee of Supply *April* 29, To leave out from "That," and add "the power claimed and exercised by the representatives of this Country in various parts of the world to contract engagements, annex territories, and make war in the name of the Nation without authority from the Central Government is opposed to the principles of the British Constitution, is at variance with recognised rules of International Law, and is fraught with danger to the honour and true interests of the Country" (*Mr. Richard*) *v.*, 1424; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after debate, Question put; A. 72, N. 64; M. 8 (D. L. 188)

POWIS, Earl of
Army Organization—New Scheme, 694

PRICE, Captain G. E., *Devonport*
Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual)—Summary Punishments, 1026
Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), Consid. *cl.* 4, Motion for Adjournment, 664, 672, 680; Amendt. 682, 683
Greece, Affairs of, Res. 2037
India—Cinchona Plant, 1011
Mutiny Acts—Corporal Punishment, 459
Navy—Supply of Seamen, 1182

Prisons (*England*) *Act*, 1877
Maidstone Gaol, Questions, Mr. Akers-Douglas; Answers, Sir William Harcourt *April* 4, 559; *April* 7, 888
Newcastle and Morpeth Prisons, Question, Sir Matthew White Ridley; Answer, Mr. Courtney *May* 2, 1536

Protection of Person and Property (*Ireland*) *Act*, 1881—See under *Ireland*

Public Health
MISCELLANEOUS QUESTIONS
Cholera at Chicago—Butterine, Question, Mr. O'Shaughnessy; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain *Mar* 31, 364
Metropolis (*Law Costs*)—*Hampstead Hospital Case*, Question, Mr. Firth; Answer, Mr. Dodson *Mar* 31, 363
Putrid American Hams, Question, Mr. Dixon-Hartland; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain *April* 5, 769
Sale of Food and Drugs Act—Oleo-margarine, Question, Mr. Severne; Answer, Mr. Dodson *May* 5, 1820
Small-Pox (*Metropolis*), Question, Sir Sydney Waterlow; Answer, Mr. Dodson *April* 7, 888; Questions, Mr. Puleston; Answers, Mr. Dodson *April* 8, 1024; Question, Mr. Pell; Answer, Mr. Dodson *April* 28, 1315; Question, Colonel Makins; Answer, Mr. Dodson *April* 29, 1418; Questions, Baron Henry De Worms, Mr. Dawson; Answers, Mr. Dodson *May* 5, 1822;—*Hospital Tents*, Question, Colonel Makins; Answer, Mr. Dodson *May* 6, 1959
Vaccination—Cow-Pox, Question, Mr. P. A. Taylor; Answer, Mr. Hibbert *Mar* 29, 148

Public Offices, The—Writers and Copyists
Question, Mr. Ritchie; Answer, Lord Frederick Cavendish *April* 29, 1415

PUGH, Mr. L. P., *Cardiganshire*
Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention, 2R. 437, 958

PULESTON, Mr. J. H., *Devonport*
Africa, South—The Transvaal—Peace Negotiations—Repayment of Loan, 1025
Census, 1881, 1024
France—Monetary Conference at Paris, 475
Public Health—Small Pox, 1024

Ramsay, Mr. J., *Falkirk, &c.*
Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), Comm. *add. cl.* 414
Parliament—Public Business, 368
Teinds (Scotland), 2R. 421, 425

Rathbone, Mr. W., *Carnarvonshire*
Alkali, &c. Works Regulation, Comm. *cl.* 3, 1634
Extraordinary Tithe Rent Charges, Motion for a Select Committee, 1651
Highways—Maintenance of Main Roads, Res. 71
Power of Representatives (Abroad), Res. 1434, 1444
Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Wales), 2R. 1753, 1754

Reed, Sir E. J., *Cardiff*
House of Commons—Additional Accommodation for Members—The House of Lords, 1023
Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Wales), 2R. 1778

Ribblesdale, Lord
Army Organization—New Scheme, 709

Richard, Mr. H., *Merthyr Tydvil*
Power of Representatives (Abroad), Res. 1424

Richardson, Mr. J. N., *Armagh Co.*
Land Law (Ireland), 2R. 1104
Petty Sessions Clerks (Ireland), 2R. 841
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 615

Richmond and Gordon, Duke of
Earl of Beaconsfield, K.G., The Late, 1802
His Imperial Majesty the Emperor of All the Russias—H.R.I.H. The Duchess of Edinburgh's Answer to Message of Condolence, 1926

Ridley, Sir M. W., *Northumberland, N.*
Prisons (England) Act, 1877—Newcastle and Morpeth Prisons, 1536

Ritchie, Captain C. T., *Tower Hamlets*
Army Re-organization — The Uniforms — Militia Officers, 1818
Customs and Inland Revenue, Comm. 1921
India—Madras Irrigation Company, 1416
Metropolitan Water Supply, 1083
Parliamentary Oaths, Motion for Bill, Motion for Adjournment, 2053
Public Offices—Writers and Copyists, 1415
Thames River, 2R. Amendt. 96, 97, 121, 122, 127, 131, 144, 147
Ways and Means — Financial Statement — Silver Duties, Statement, 1297

River Floods Prevention Bill [Bill 35]
(*Mr. Magniac, Mr. Dodds, Mr. Hubbard, Mr. Biddulph, Sir Charles Reed*)
c. Committee discharged * *April* 8, and Bill committed to the Select Committee on Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention Bill

Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention Bill [H.L.] (*Mr. Dodson*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *Mar* 31, 430; Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Chaplin*); after short debate, Question put; A. 36, N. 78; M. 38 (D. L. 174)
Original Question again proposed; Moved, "That this House do now adjourn" (*Mr. Arthur O'Connor*); after short debate, Question put; A. 29, N. 69; M. 40 (D. L. 176)
Original Question again proposed; Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Long*); after short debate, Question put, and agreed to; Debate adjourned
Questions, Viscount Folkestone, Mr. Heneage; Answers, Mr. Dodson *April* 5, 773
Debate resumed *April* 7, 940
Amendt. to leave out "now," and add "upon this day six months" (*Mr. Pell*); Question proposed, "That 'now,' &c.;" after debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Storer*); after further short debate, Question put; A. 51, N. 118; M. 67 (D. L. 181)
Question put, "That 'now,' &c.;" A. 118, N. 42; M. 76 (D. L. 182)
Main Question put, and agreed to; Bill read 2° [Bill 120]
Moved, "That the Bill be referred to a Select Committee;" Motion agreed to; Bill committed to a Select Committee
Moved, "That the Select Committee do consist of Nineteen Members" *May* 4, 1799; after short debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. A. H. Brown*); Question put, and agreed to; Debate adjourned

Roberts, Mr. J., *Flint, &c.*
Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Wales), 2R. 1748

Rogers, Mr. J. E. Thorold, *Southwark*
Church Patronage, 2R. 984
Highways—Maintenance of Main Roads, Res. 70
Land Law (Ireland) 2R. 1606, 1610

Roundell, Mr. C. S., *Grantham*
Poor Law (Metropolis)—Workhouse at Champion Hill, 885

Russell, Mr. C., *Dundalk*
Land Law (Ireland), Leave, 931, 932; 2R. 1337

Russell, Mr. G. W. E., *Aylesbury*
Church Boards, 2R. Amendt. 1304

Russia—See title *His Imperial Majesty the Emperor of All the Russias*

Russia—Central Asia—See title *Central Asia*

RYLANDS, Mr. P., *Burnley*
Africa, South—The Transvaal—The Boers, 1816
Alkali, &c. Works Regulation, Comm. 1173
Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), 2R. 29
Berlin Conference—The French at Tunis, 8
Cyprus—Taxation, 867
London City Lands (Thames Embankment), 2R. 741
Monument to the Right Hon. the Late Earl of Beaconsfield, K.G. — The Inscription, 1960
Parliament — Public Business (Half-past-Twelve Rule), Res. 1712
Parliamentary Elections Act, 1868 — Disqualification for Corrupt Practices, 760
Scheduled Solicitors, 1080
Parliamentary Oath (Mr. Bradlaugh), 1250, 1256, 1258
Power of Representatives (Abroad), Res. 1446

ST. ALBANS, Duke of
Lord Chamberlain's Department—Egress from Theatres (Metropolis), 689

Sale of Food and Drugs Act—Oleo-margarine
Question, Mr. Severne; Answer, Mr. Dodson *May* 5, 1820

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Wales) Bill
(*Mr. Roberts, Mr. Richard, Mr. Samuel Holland, Mr. Hussey Vivian, Mr. Rathbone*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *May* 4, 1748; after debate, Question put; A. 163, N. 17; M. 146 (D. L. 193)
Bill read 2° [Bill 3]

SALISBURY, Marquess of
Africa, South—The Transvaal (Negotiations) —Miscellaneous Questions
Peace Arrangements, 314, 316, 318
Slavery, 450
Withdrawal of Troops, 446
Turkey—Sir A. H. Layard, late H.M. Ambassador at the Porte, Address for Papers, 1005

SAMUELSON, Mr. B., *Banbury*
Technical Education, 548

SANDON, Right Hon. Viscount, *Liverpool*
Parliamentary Oaths, Motion for Bill, 2059

SCHREIBER, Mr. C., *Poole*
Parliamentary Oath (Mr. Bradlaugh), 884

Science and Art
The British Museum — Electric Lighting, Question, Mr. Albert Grey; Answer, Mr. Spencer Walpole *Mar* 31, 360
The Geological Survey, Question, Sir John Hay; Answer, Mr. Mundella *April* 5, 757

SCLATER-BOOTH, Right Hon. G., *Hants, N.*
Butter (Spurious Compounds), Res. 524
Highways—Maintenance of Main Roads, Res. 68
Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention, 2R. 947, 968

SCOTLAND
MISCELLANEOUS QUESTIONS
Circuit Courts, Question, Mr. Cameron; Answer, The Lord Advocate *April* 7, 873
County Representative Boards, Question, Mr. J. W. Barclay; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *April* 28, 1320
Court of Session — The Vacant Judgeship, Question, Mr. Dick-Peddie; Answer, The Lord Advocate *April* 28, 1312
The Census — The Gaelic Language, Question, Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh; Answer, The Lord Advocate *May* 2, 1536
The Treasury Minute on Scotch Banks, Question, Mr. Anderson; Answer, Lord Frederick Cavendish *April* 7, 873
Vagrancy in Counties, Question, Mr. Cameron; Answer, The Lord Advocate *April* 7, 873

Sea Fisheries (Clam and Bait Beds) Bill
(*The Lord Sudeley*)
l. Read 2ª *April* 5, 690 (No. 53)
Committee* *April* 7
Report* *April* 8
Read 3ª* *May* 5

SELWIN-IBBETSON, Sir H. J. *Essex, W.*
Parliamentary Oaths, Motion for Bill, 2048, 2069

SEVERNE, Mr. J. E., *Shropshire, S.*
Sale of Food and Drugs Act—Oleo-margarine, 1820

SEXTON, Mr. T., *Sligo*
Agricultural Labourers' Habitations (Ireland), Res. 1998, 2004
Army—Public Worship—Political Sermons, 870
Ireland, State of—Miscellaneous Questions
Conflict near Clogher—Verdict of "Wilful Murder," 1658, 1660
Ejectments—Number of Families, 1660
Evictions in the West of Ireland, 473
Land League Meetings—Speech of Mr. Dillon, 1421, 1554
Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, 1881—Arrest of Mr. Dillon, 1663, 1830
Prisoners in Kilmainham Gaol, 9, 1964
Parliament—New Writ for Knaresborough, 1872

SHAW, Mr. W., *Cork Co.*
Agricultural Labourers' Habitations (Ireland), Res. 2003
Banking Laws Amendment, 2R, 1791
Butter (Spurious Compounds), Res. 523
Land Law (Ireland), Leave, 927; 2R. 1915

[*cont.*

SHAW, Mr. W.—*cont.*
  Landlord and Tenant (Ireland) Act, 1870, Commission (The Earl of Bessborough's)—The Evidence, 880, 881
  Lunacy Law Assimilation (Ireland), 2R. 819
  Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Wales), 2R. 1777

SHERBROOKE, Viscount
  Turkey—Sir A. H. Layard, late H.M. Ambassador at the Porte, Address for Papers, 1006

SIDMOUTH, Viscount
  Naval Education, 1930

SIMON, Mr. Serjeant J., *Dewsbury*
  Jamaica—Its Government as a Crown Colony, 877
  Parliamentary Oath (Mr. Bradlaugh), 1283 ;—New Writ for the Borough of Northampton, 488

Skipton and Kettlewell Railway (Extension to Aysgarth) Bill (by Order)
c. Considered, after short debate *April* 8, 1010

SMITH, Right Hon. W. H., *Westminster*
  Land Law (Ireland), 2R. Motion for Adjournment, 1409, 1410, 1571
  Navy—Armament of H.M. Ships, 1319, 1320
    Destruction of H.M.S. "Doterel," 1965
  Turkey—British Trade at Smyrna, 762

SMITH, Mr. A., *Herts*
  Ordnance Survey in the Neighbourhood of Hertford, 457

SMYTH, Mr. P. J., *Tipperary*
  Landed Proprietors (Ireland), 2R. 801, 802
  Land Law (Ireland), 2R. 1613

SOLICITOR GENERAL, The (Sir FARRER HERSCHELL), *Durham*
  Married Women's Property (Scotland), 3R. 1527

Solway Fisheries (Scotland) Bill
(*Mr. Ernest Noel, Mr. J. Maxwell-Heron, Mr. Anderson*)
c. Ordered ; read 1° * *April* 27 [Bill 141]

SOMERSET, Duke of
  Naval Education, 1953

SPEAKER, The (Right Hon. H. B. W. BRAND), *Cambridgeshire*
  Agricultural Labourers' Habitations (Ireland), Res. 1985, 2008, 2011, 2014
  Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), Consid. 651
  Asia, Central—Advance of the Russians, 468, 469, 470
  Butter (Spurious Compounds), Res. 524
[*cont.*

SPEAKER, The—*cont.*
  Controverted Elections—Parliamentary Elections Act, 1881, &c.—Boston Election, 1547
  Coroners (Ireland), Nomination of Select Committee, 1742
  Customs (Outport Officers), Res. 1741, 1742
  Greece, Affairs of, Res. 2045
  Highways—Maintenance of Main Roads, Res. 52
  India and China—The Opium Trade, 1477
  Landed Proprietors (Ireland), 2R. 802
  Land Law (Ireland), 2R. 1110, 1130, 1410, 1617, 1618
  London City Lands (Thames Embankment), 2R. 750
  Married Women's Property (Scotland), Consid. 1179
  Monument to the Right Hon. the late Earl of Beaconsfield, 1665
  Parliament—Business of the House, 1032
  Parliament—Public Business (Half-past Twelve Rule), Res. 1710, 1719, 1839
  Parliamentary Oath (Mr. Bradlaugh), 1184, 1207, 1241, 1243, 1244, 1245, 1252, 1255, 1256, 1257, 1531 ;—New Writ for the Borough of Northampton, 479
  Parliamentary Oaths, 1559, 1565, 1566 ; Motion for Leave, 1618, 1619, 1621, 1625, 2048, 2053
  Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, 1881—Prisoners under the Act, 1654
  Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention, 2R. 971
  Teinds (Scotland), 2R. 423
  Thames River, 2R. 131

SPENCER, Earl (Lord President of the Council)
  Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts—Foot-and-Mouth Disease, 90
  Landlord and Tenant (Ireland)—Lord Oranmore and Browne, 859
  Landlord and Tenant (Ireland) Act, 1870, Commission (The Earl of Bessborough's)—The Evidence, 3

STANHOPE, Earl
  Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), Comm. *cl.* 7, 857

STANHOPE, Hon. E., *Lincolnshire, Mid.*
  Afghan War—Vote of Thanks for the Military Operations in Afghanistan, 1865
  Church Patronage, 2R. 845, 974, 983, 985, 986, 990
  Controverted Elections—Parliamentary Elections Act, 1868, &c.—Boston Election, 1547
  Highways Acts — Surveyors of Highways—Accounts, 1413
  India—Finance, &c.—Budget Statement, 460
  Parliamentary Oaths, Motion for Bill, 2070
  Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention, 2R. 945
  Russia — Central Asia — Recall of General Skobeleff, 1422

STANLEY, Right Hon. Colonel F. A., *Lancashire, N.*
  Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), 2R. 25 ; Comm. 376 ; *add. cl.* 400, 416

STANLEY, Hon. E. L., *Oldham*
Education Department (England)—Board and Voluntary Schools, 357
School Accommodation, 152
Patronage of Benefices (Church of England), Res. 216
Power of Representatives Abroad, Res. 1448

STANLEY OF ALDERLEY, Lord
Tunis—The Enfida Case, 862
Turkey—Sir A. H. Layard, late H.M. Ambassador at the Porte, Address for Papers, 1005

STEVENSON, Mr. J. C., *South Shields*
Alkali, &c. Works Regulation, Comm. *cl.* 3, 1631
Coinage (Decimal System), Res. 165

Stolen Goods Bill [H.L.]
(*The Lord Chancellor*)
l. Presented; read 1ª* *April* 5 (No. 60)

STORER, Mr. G., *Nottinghamshire, S.*
Agricultural Holdings (Distress for Rent), Res. 1687
Customs and Inland Revenue, 2R. Amendt. 1515
India and China—The Opium Trade, 1514
Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention, 2R. Motion for Adjournment, 962, 967
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 613

STRATHEDEN AND CAMPBELL, Lord
Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), 2R. 800
Army Organization—New Scheme, 693
Turkey—Sir A. H. Layard, late H.M. Ambassador at the Porte, 549; Address for Papers, 995, 1006

STRATHNAIRN, Lord
Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), Comm. 852; *cl.* 4, 855
Army Organization—New Scheme, 731

STUART, Mr. H. VILLIERS-, *Waterford Co.*
Land Law (Ireland), Leave, 938; 2R. Amendt. 1130, 1410

SUDELEY, Lord
Naval Education, 1945
Sea Fisheries (Clam and Bait Beds), 2R. 690

Suez Canal Company, The—The British Shares
Questions, Mr. Labouchere, Lord George Hamilton; Answers, Mr. Gladstone *Mar* 31, 348; Question, Mr. Monk; Answer, Lord Frederick Cavendish *April* 4, 554; Notice of Question, Baron Henry De Worms *April* 7, 866; Question, Baron Henry De Worms; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *April* 8, 1021

SULLIVAN, Mr. A. M., *Meath*
Africa, South—The Transvaal (Military Operations)—Surrender of Potchefstroom, 367
Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), Comm. *add. cl.* 402
Criminal Law—"Irish World," 1019
Customs Service—Out-door Officers—Competitive Examination, 351
Ireland—Miscellaneous Questions
Criminal Law—Case of Joseph B. Walsh, 463
Irish Land Act, 1870—Compensation for Disturbance—The Return, 1083
Poor Law—Arrears of Rent, &c. 1837
Protection of Person and Property Act—Prisoners under the Act — Newspaper Editors, 1825
Royal Irish Constabulary—Buckshot, 1013
Ireland, State of—Alleged Outrage by Soldiers, Co. Cork, 356
Land Law (Ireland), 2R. 1123
Parliament—Easter Recess, 1041
Parliamentary Oath (Mr. Bradlaugh), 1255
Post Office Act, 1837—Detention and Opening of Letters, 343

SULLIVAN, Mr. T. D., *Westmeath*
Alkali, &c. Works Regulation, Comm. *cl.* 3, 1647
Dublin—Young Ireland Debating Society—Alleged Interference of the Police, 1832
Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, 1881—Prisoners under the Act—Newspaper Editors, 1824, 1825

Summary Jurisdiction (Ireland) Bill
(*Mr. Litton, Mr. Errington, Mr. Broadhurst*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°," *April* 6, 843; Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Brodrick*); after short debate, Question put, and agreed to; Debate adjourned

SUMMERS, Mr. W., *Staleybridge*
Africa, South—Natal, Native Customs in, 1534
Sekukuni, 457
Africa, West—Gold Coast, 460
Endowed Schools—Hulme's Charity—Commissioners' Scheme, 1414
Medical Acts—Victoria University, 1824
Poor Law — Workhouse Inmates — Religious Attendance, 353

TALBOT, Mr. J. G., *Oxford University*
Parliamentary Oaths, 1529
Patronage of Benefices (Church of England), Res. 202

TAYLOR, Right Hon. Colonel T. E., *Dublin Co.*
Africa, South—The Transvaal—Protection to Loyal Inhabitants, 885
Parliamentary Oaths, Motion for Bill, 2067

TAYLOR Mr. P. A., *Leicester*
Public Health—Vaccination—Cow-Pox, 148
Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Wales), 2R. 1776
Vaccination Acts—Case of Mr. J. Abel, of Farringdon, 1310

Teinds (Scotland) Bill
(*The Lord Advocate, Secretary Sir William Harcourt*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *Mar* 31, 417; Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Dick-Peddie*); after short debate, Motion withdrawn
Main Question put, and agreed to; Bill read 2°
Committee *—R.P. *April* 8 [Bill 118]

Thames River Bill (by Order)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" (*Mr. Evelyn Ashley*) *Mar* 29, 96
Amendt. to leave out from "That," and add "the character and objects of this Bill are such as to constitute it a measure of public policy, which ought not to be dealt with by any Private Bill" (*Mr. Ritchie*) *v.*; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after long debate, Amendt. and Motion withdrawn; Bill withdrawn

Thames River (No. 2) Bill
(*Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. Evelyn Ashley*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *May* 4 [Bill 148]

THORNHILL, Mr. T., *Suffolk, W.*
Ireland, State of—Alleged Outrage at Muckross, 1422, 1541

TOTTENHAM, Mr. A. L., *Leitrim*
Army—Public Worship—Political Sermons, 869
Criminal Law—The "Irish World," 1018, 1019
Land Law (Ireland), 1028; 2R. 1364, 1398
Parliament—Easter Recess, 1041, 1054
Tramways (Ireland) Acts Amendment, Comm. *cl.* 7, 972

Trade and Commerce
Import and Export of Woollen Goods, Questions, Mr. Mac Iver; Answers, Mr. Chamberlain *April* 4, 566; *April* 28, 1307
The New French General Tariff, Questions, Mr. Kynaston Cross, Mr. Gourley; Answers, Sir Charles W. Dilke *May* 2, 1539
[See title *France*]

Trade and Manufactures — Exports and Imports
Question, Mr. Mac Iver; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain *April* 4, 558

Tramways (Ireland) Acts Amendment Bill (*Major Nolan, Mr. Corry, Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Mr. Gray, Mr. Tottenham, Mr. O'Shea, Mr. Collins, Mr. Litton*)
c. Report of Select Comm. * *April* 4 [No. 156]
Bill re-committed * *April* 4 [Bill 102]
Committee (*on re-comm.*); Report *April* 7, 972
Read 3° * *April* 25
l. Read 1ª * (*Lord Monteagle*) *May* 5 (No. 74)

TREVELYAN, Mr. G. O. (Secretary to the Admiralty), *Hawick, &c.*
Navy—Miscellaneous Questions
Armament of H.M. Ships, 1320
Corporal Punishment, 754
Court Martial at Sydney—Case of C. P. Stamp—H.M.S. "Wolverine," 758
H.M.S. "Doterel," Destruction of, 1747, 1748, 1833, 1966
H.M.S. "Inflexible," 759
Marines, The, 769
Quartermasters of Royal Marines, 11
Supply of Seamen, 1182

Tunis
Disturbances on the Frontier, Questions, Baron Henry De Worms, Mr. Montague Guest; Answers, Sir Charles W. Dilke *April* 5, 764
The Enfida Case, Question, Observations, Earl De La Warr, Lord Stanley of Alderley; Reply, The Earl of Kimberley *April* 7, 860
The Krouhmir Tribes—Military Preparations of France, Question, Mr. Montague Guest; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke *April* 8, 1021
[See title *France and Tunis*]

Turkey
British Trade at Smyrna, Question, Mr. W. H. Smith; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke *April* 5, 762
The Berlin Conference—The French at Tunis, Questions, Mr. Rylands, Mr. Montague Guest; Answers, Sir Charles W. Dilke *Mar* 28, 8;—*Greek Inhabitants of Ceded Turkish Provinces*, Questions, Lord Randolph Churchill; Answers, Sir Charles W. Dilke *Mar* 28, 15
Treaty of Berlin—Article 61—*Armenia*, Question, Mr. Baxter; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke *April* 5, 752

Turkey—Sir A. H. Layard, Late H.M. Ambassador at the Porte
Postponement of Notice, Lord Stratheden and Campbell *April* 4, 549
Moved, That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for Copies of the despatches which explain the withdrawal of Sir Henry Layard from the Embassy at Constantinople (*The Lord Stratheden and Campbell*) *April* 8, 995; after short debate, Motion agreed to

Turkey—The Land Law—Admission of Foreigners
Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, for the Protocol, dated the 18th of June 1867, entitled 'Regulation for the admission of foreigners to enjoy real property throughout the Ottoman dominions'" (*The Earl De La Warr*) *April* 8, 1008

Turkey and Greece
An Egyptian Contingent, Question, Mr. Arnold; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke *April* 8, 1029
Statistics, Question, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke *April* 8, 1027

[*cont.*

Turkey and Greece—cont.
  The Frontier Question, Question, Mr. Coope; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke *Mar* 28, 19; Question, Mr. Bourke; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *April* 4, 554; Question, Mr. M'Coan; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke, 557; Question, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke *April* 5, 766; Question, Mr. Arthur Arnold; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke *May* 2, 1555

Turnpike Acts Continuance Act, 1880-81
  Select Committee appointed, "To inquire into the Fifth and Sixth Schedules of 'The Annual Turnpike Acts Continuance Act, 1880'" (*Mr. Hibbert*) *April* 4
  Committee nominated *April* 7; List of the Committee, 689

Tyler, Sir H. W., *Harwich*
  India — Afghanistan — Candahar (Political Affairs), 10
  Parliament—New Writ for Knaresborough, 1872
  Thames River, 2R. 147

Vaccination Acts—Case of Mr. John Abel, of Farringdon
  Question, Mr. P. A. Taylor; Answer, Mr. Dodson *April* 28, 1310

Vivian, Mr. H. Hussey, *Glamorganshire*
  Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Wales), 2R. 1775

Walpole, Right Hon. Spencer H., *Cambridge University*
  British Museum—Electric Lighting, 360

Walrond, Colonel W. H., *Devon, E.*
  Highways—Maintenance of Main Roads, Res. 54
  Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, 1881—Mr. Dillon, 1553

Walter, Mr. J., *Berkshire*
  Parliamentary Oath (Mr. Bradlaugh), 1207, 1267

Warton, Mr. C. N., *Bridport*
  Agricultural Holdings (Distress for Rent), Res. 1687
  Alkali, &c. Works Regulation, Comm. *cl.* 2, 1630
  Army Discipline and Regulation (Annual), Consid. *cl.* 4, 681
  Colonial Governors, 1959, 1960
  Controverted Elections—Parliamentary Elections Act, 1868, &c.—Boston Election, 1547, 1964
  Elections (Closing of Public Houses), 2R. 247
  Entail (Scotland), 158
  Extraordinary Tithe Rent Charges, Motion for a Select Committee, 1651
  Ireland, State of—Speech of Mr. Dillon at Thurles, 467, 872
  Land Law (Ireland), 2R. 1107; Motion for Adjournment, 1110

[*cont.*

Warton, Mr. C. N.—*cont.*
  Leases, Comm. *cl.* 3, 88
  Married Women's Property (Scotland), 3R. Motion for Adjournment, 1521
  Metropolitan Open Spaces Act (1877) Amendment, 2R. 225
  Parliament—Easter Recess, 1055
  Parliamentary Oath (Mr. Bradlaugh), 1293; —New Writ for the Borough of Northampton, 493
  Parliamentary Oaths Act, 1422; Motion for Bill, 2058, 2060
  Power of Representatives Abroad, Res. 1449
  Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Wales), 2R. Amendt. 1752, 1754, 1755, 1760
  Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 641

Waterlow, Sir S. H., *Gravesend*
  Alkali, &c. Works Regulation, Comm. Amendt. 1170; *cl.* 2, Amendt. 1177, 1178, 1629; *cl.* 3, 1640
  Public Health—Small-Pox (Metropolis), 888
  Thames River, 2R. 116

Water Provisional Orders Bill
  (*Mr. Ashley, Mr. Chamberlain*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *May* 3 [Bill 146]

Watney, Mr. J., *Surrey, E.*
  Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 610

Waugh, Mr. E., *Cockermouth*
  Copyhold Enfranchisement, 2R. 834

Waveney, Lord
  Africa, South—The Transvaal—Surrender of Potchefstroom, 1928
  Candahar, 90

WAYS AND MEANS
  Miscellaneous Questions
  Inland Revenue
    Beer Licences (Ireland), Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *Mar* 29, 153
    Tax on Horses and Carriages, Questions, Mr. Birley, Mr. Armitage; Answers, Mr. Gladstone *May* 2, 1540

  The Financial Statement
    The Legacy and Probate Duties, Question, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *April* 5, 771; Questions, Mr. Gregory, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answers, Mr. Gladstone *April* 8, 1017
    The Silver Duties, Statement, Mr. Gladstone *April* 27, 1296
    Terminable Annuities and the Reduction of the National Debt, Question, Lord George Hamilton; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *April* 7, 874
    The Conversion of Terminable Annuities, Question, Sir John Hay; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *April* 29, 1420

WAYS AND MEANS
Considered in Committee *April* 4, 601—Financial Statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer on moving the first Resolution,
"That, towards raising the Supply granted to Her Majesty, the Duties of Customs now charged on Tea shall continue to be levied and charged on and after the 1st day of August, 1881, until the 1st day of August, 1882, on importation into Great Britain or Ireland (that is to say): on
s. d.
Tea . . . . . the lb. 0 6"
After long debate, Resolution agreed to
Other Resolutions moved, and, after debate, agreed to
Resolutions reported *April* 7, 971; after short debate, Resolutions agreed to
Ordered, That a Bill be brought in upon the said Resolutions
[See title *Customs and Inland Revenue Bill*]

Weights, Measures, and Coinage (Decimal System)
Moved, "That, in the opinion of this House, the introduction of a Decimal System of Coinage, Weights, and Measures ought not to be longer delayed" (*Mr. Ashton Dilke*) *Mar* 29, 158
Amendt. to leave out from "That," and add "a Select Committee be appointed to inquire whether any basis can be found for a decimal system that would not so seriously disturb existing conditions as to make it practically inexpedient to change" (*Mr. Anderson*) *v.*; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after short debate, Question put, and negatived
Question put, "That those words be there added; A. 28, N. 108; M. 80 (D. L. 171)

West Indies, The—The Currency
Question, Mr. Parker; Answer, Mr. Grant Duff *Mar* 31, 352

Whitbread, Mr. S., *Bedford*
Agricultural Holdings (Distress for Rent), Res. 1689
Parliamentary Oath (Mr. Bradlaugh), 1278
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 608

Whiteboy Acts Repeal Bill
(*Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Justin M'Carthy, Mr. Gray, Mr. A. M. Sullivan*)
c. Ordered* *April* 4

Whitley, Mr. E., *Liverpool*
Alkali, &c. Works Regulation, Comm. *cl.* 3, 1639
Judicature Acts—The Amended Rules and Orders, 558
[*cont.*

Whitley, Mr. E.—*cont.*
Married Women's Property (Scotland), 3R. 1525
Metropolitan Open Spaces Act (1877) Amendment, 2R. 226

Wiggin, Mr. H., *Staffordshire, E.*
Agricultural Holdings (Distress for Rent), Res. 1690
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 639

Wild Fowl Act, 1880
Question, Mr. Jacob Bright; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *May* 5, 1822

Williams, Mr. B. T., *Carmarthen*
Agricultural Holdings (Distress for Rent), Res. 1669

Williams, Mr. S. C. E., *New Radnor*
Church Patronage, 2R. Motion for Adjournment, 985

Williamson, Mr. S., *St. Andrews, &c.*
Banking Laws Amendment, 2R. 1788

Willis, Mr. W., *Colchester*
Church Patronage, 2R. Motion for Adjournment, 980, 984
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 602

Wilmot, Sir J. E., *Warwickshire S.*
Agricultural Labourers' Habitations (Ireland), Res. 1984, 1985
Army (Changes in Organization)—Regimental Organization, 1957
Bankruptcy Bill—Estates in Liquidation, 1957
Metropolitan Open Spaces Act (1877) Amendment, 2R. 227
Parliamentary Oaths, Motion for Leave, 1625

Wilson, Mr. C. H., *Kingston-upon-Hull*
Customs (Outport Officers), Res. 1736

Wodehouse, Mr. E. R., *Bath*
Africa, South — The Transvaal (Political Affairs), 347

Wolff, Sir H. D., *Portsmouth*
France and Tunis—Outbreak of the Kroubmir Tribes—Military Operations, 1316
Land Law (Ireland), 2R. 1912
Parliamentary Oaths, Motion for Bill, Motion for Adjournment, 2071

Wortley, Mr. C. B. Stuart-, *Sheffield*
Patronage of Benefices (Church of England), Res. Amendt. 197

Yorke, Mr. J. R., *Gloucestershire, E.*
Parliamentary Oath (Mr. Bradlaugh), 1284

END OF VOL. CCLX., AND FOURTH VOL. OF SESSION 1881.

BIBL.
LONDIN
UNIV.